

**PRESBYTERY OF
WESTERN
NORTH CAROLINA**



(U S A)

MINUTES

**ONE HUNDRED FORTY-SECOND
STATED MEETING**

April 29, 2025

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**The Presbytery of Western North Carolina
142nd Stated Meeting
April 29, 2025
Montreat Conference Center
Montreat, NC**

CALL TO ORDER

Ruling Elder Ken Murchison, Moderator, convened the 142nd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina at 9:03 a.m. with prayer.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

With the meeting of the 142nd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina having been duly convened, Moderator Ken Murchison opened the meeting with the prayer of invocation.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Coordinating Ministry has directed that we begin each Presbytery meeting with a land acknowledgment. Although various groups of indigenous peoples have populated the land that now forms our Presbytery, the Cherokees were the principal inhabitants at the time Europeans first arrived in Western North Carolina. Between 1830 and 1850, the United States military forced Cherokees along with members of the Muscogee, Seminole, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations to migrate to the newly created Indian Territory west of the Mississippi River. This displacement along the Trail of Tears remains one of the saddest chapters in our country's treatment of Native Americans. Notwithstanding this forced migration, a significant number of descendants of the original inhabitants remain in Western North Carolina as the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation.

As A Declaration of Faith (1967) reminds us, "[w]e are charged to remember our past to be warned and encouraged by it, not to live it again." Today we continue our acknowledgement by specifically remembering that we live, worship and serve in the region of the Native lands of the Cherokee peoples among others; paying our respects to elders of the past and present, known and unknown. Let us do our faithful work mindful of them.

MONTREAT CONFERENCE CENTER

Richard DuBose, President of Montreat Conference Center, welcomed the body to the Conference Center, called attention to changes to the grounds of Montreat by Hurricane Helene, and the good works that continue at Montreat.

WELCOME

Rev. Keith Grogg, Pastor at Montreat Presbyterian Church, brought greetings from their church. Thanks were extended to the Fellowship Committee of Montreat Presbyterian Church for the bountiful refreshments provided, and the work of other Presbyterian Churches in the area.

APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Ken Murchison, Moderator appointed the following standing committees:

Resolution of Thanks and Presbytery in Brief:

- Mark Stanley, Teaching Elder
- Becky Stanley, Teaching Elder

Bills and Overtures:

- Wanda Neely, Teaching Elder
- Alan Purtill, Teaching Elder, Tryon Presbyterian Church
- Sharon Lytle, Ruling Elder, Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

Tellers:

- Keith Grogg, Teaching Elder, Montreat Presbyterian Church
- Mike Ballard, Ruling Elder, Black Mountain Presbyterian Church
- Ellen Dean, Ruling Elder, Montreat Presbyterian Church
- Betsy Stow, Teaching Elder, First Presbyterian Church, Franklin
- Laurie Furr-Vancini, Teaching Elder, Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church

Prayers of Intercession

- Jill Isola, Teaching Elder, Northminster Presbyterian Church

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):*=Retired

*Robert M. Abel	P	*Kat Achtemeier	E	Mark Achtemeier	A
*Jefferson Aiken, Jr.	E	*Merriam Alexander	P	*Terry Alexander	E
Kevyn Amos	P	*Stephen Aschmann	E	*James Aydelotte	E
Patricia Bacon	A	*Tony Baker	E	*Edna Banes	E
*Alan Barooddy	E	*Ashley Beavers	E	Joseph Bennett	P
*Cynthia M. Benz	E	*Lynn Bledsoe	E	*Randall Boggs	E
David Bonnema	P	*Ronald Botsford	E	*Lee Bowman	E
*Richard Boyce	P	Grace Boyer	P	David Bradley	E
Ryan Brakemeyer	A	Troy Braswell	A	*Ronald Brauer	E
*Sandra Brown	E	Thomas Brown	P	William Buchanan	P
*Monty Burnham	E	*Constance Button	E	*Joey T. Byrd	E
*David Cameron	E	*Kathryn J. Cameron	P	*John T. Campbell	E
Kathy Campbell	P	Amy Cantrell	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	A	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	E
*Dent C. Davis	E	Heather Wood Davis	A	Holly K. Davis	P
*Susan Denne	E	Janet DeWater	E	*Edward D. Donnell	E
*Ellen H. Dozier	P	*Steven Eason	E	*Robert Edmunds	E
Leah E. Epps	P	*Lee S. Feero, Jr.	E	David Carter Florence	P
Richard A. Floyd	P	*Edward Forsyth	E	Clarence D. Fouse, III	P
*Kevin E. Frederick	E	Keith B. Freeman	P	Alice Schaap Freeman	P
*John L. Frye, Jr.	E	Laurie Furr-Vancini	P	*R. Curtis Fussell, III	E
*Tempe Fussell	P	*Willis Gaines	P	*Paul Galbreath	E
*Lewis F. Galloway	E	Robert D. Gamble	P	*David Garnett	P

Lisle Garrity	A	Tee S. Gatewood	A	*Denise Geiger	E
David Germer	P	Samantha Gonzalez-Block	A	*Gregory Grana	E
Keith Grogg	P	*Decherd Guess	P	Rebecca Gurney	P
John Hagmann	A	Lindsay Haislip	E	*Michal H. Hall	E
*Terry L. Hanna	P	*Patrick Hardy	E	Randall A. Hardy	A
*Martin L. Harkey, III	P	Luke Harkema	A	Laurey Harrell	A
*William G. Heck	E	Julie Hester	P	*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	*George B. Hutchins	E	Dennis Eugene Hysom	A
Jill V. Isola	P	Lindsay Jacaruso	A	*Donald Jafvert	E
*William M. Janes	E	Esta M. Jarrett	P	*Cecil M. Jividen	E
Caitlin Johnson	A	*G. Wallace Johnson	E	Katherine D. Johnson	P
Patrick Johnson	A	Franklin Jones	A	Lucas Jones	A
Rebecca S. Jones	A	Shannon D. Jordan	A	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	E	Lee Kruse	A
*Michael Lamm	E	*John H. LaMotte	E	*John C. Laughlin	E
*Margaret P. Lauterer	P	*James E. Layman	P	*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	E	William Lowery	A
*Robert L. Lowry	E	*Alexandra Lusak	E	*David R. Lytle	E
*Kathleen Madigan	E	*J. Whit Malone	E	Andrew Mangione	P
*Marjorie Marsh	P	*Joan C. Martin	E	*W. Tyler Martin	E
Matt Matthews	P	Rachel Matthews	P	John S. McCall	A
Sandra McClinton	A	*Robert A. McCully, Jr.	E	*David W. McKee	E
Michael T. McKee	E	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	A	*Anne Morgan	E
*S. Keith Morrison	E	Toby Mueller	P	*David E. Mulford	E
*D. Cameron Murchison	P	*David Nash	E	*Wanda Neely	P
*William K. Neely	P	*Thomas G. Nelson	E	Elizabeth D. Newman	E
*Richard Nygren	E	Daniel J. Oedy	A	*O'Hyun Park	E
Andy Parkey	A	*Albert G. Peery, Jr.	E	*Margaret B. Peery	E
Lance Perry	P	*Martha Jane Petersen	E	Ann Philbrick	P
*J. Thomas Phillips	P	*James N. Poling	E	Michael J. Poulos	P
*Donald G. Price	E	Caroline Proctor	A	*E. Allen Proctor, Jr.	E
Edyth P. Pruitt	A	Tamara Puffer	P	Allan Purtill	P
*Jay K. Rabuck	E	Daria L. Ragan	A	*Earl M. Rash	E
Mary Elizabeth Ray	E	*Patricia Reid	E	*Calvin Rice	E
*G. Harriss Ricks	E	Mary Katherine Robinson	P	William (Billy) Robinson	A
*David Roquemore	E	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
*Michael Shepard	P	Rachel Shepherd	A	Marcia Mount Shoop	A
Mary Elizabeth Sigmon	P	Brad Simpson	P	Wirt Skinner	A
Allen Smith	P	Chad Smith	P	David B. Smith	A

Lance Smith	A	Paul S. Smith	A	*Becky B. Stanley	P
*J. Mark Stanley	P	*Daniel G. Stitt	E	*Margie B. Stansell	E
Carol Steele	P	Betsy Stow	P	Cynthia R. P. Strickler	A
*William B. Sweetser, Jr.	E	Dana Sutton	A	*Christopher Taylor	E
*George Thompson, Jr.	P	*Beverly Thompson	P	Keith J. Thompson	P
Denise Thorpe	A	Yvonne M. Thurmond	A	*Russell D. Tillotson, Sr.	E
Daniel Tipton	A	*Kathleen Rankin Tompkins	E	Margaret LaMotte Torrence	E
Lynn Turnage	P	Christina B. Tutterow	A	*Robert J. Tuttle	P
*Melissa Anne Upchurch	E	William Upchurch, Jr.	E	*Gary Van Brocklin	P
Lauren S. Vanacore	E	Susan Verbrugge	E	Byron A. Wade	P
*Rockwell P. Ward	E	Samuel P. Warner	A	Robert M. Warren	P
Lynn Webber	P	*Judith Weger	E	Kimberleigh E. Wells	E
*Joseph Welker, Jr.	P	*Barbara R. White	P	*Parker T. Williamson	A
Emily L. Wilmarth	P	*V. Otis Wilson, Jr.	E	Chris Wingard	A
*W. Graham Wood, Jr.	E	Rebecca Young	A		

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

Linda Abel	P	Philip Adams	A	Phillip Ashley	A
Robert Ayala	P	Sally Beghtol	E	Kerry Border	P
Vickie Burgess	A	Reed Conley	P	Tamika Garrison	P
John Hall	P	Beth Hall	P	Lynn Honeycutt	A
Robin Honeycutt	P	Linda Johnson	A	James Koone	A
Peggy Koone	A	Rick Leissner	E	James Millsaps	A
Marla Patchel	A	Randy Patterson	A	John Pea	P
Leslie Peterson	P	Marcia Reighley	A	Russell Reighley	A
James Tate	A	James Taylor	A	Renee Warthen	A
Roger Wise	P				

The following MEMBERS OF THE COORDINATING MINISTRY, COMMISSION ON MINISTRY, and TEAM CHAIRS WERE ENROLLED at this meeting of Presbytery:

John Auten	A	Martha Campbell (GA)	P	Ellen Cinq-Mars	A
Bob Forsythe	P	Corise Gambrell	P	Helen Hall	A
Valerie Holcombe	A	Dennis Howell	A	Ann Lampron	A
Melvin Meares	P	Doug Michael	A	Katherine Mull	A
Ken Murchison	P	Gary Oakley	A	Laura Sigmon	A
Sue Johnson	P	Ron Tingle	A	Jane Vann	A
Jane Laping	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	A	Leslie McLeod	A
Mary Lou Nash	A	Heath Rada	A	Lynn Thomas	A
Patricia Tuttle	A				

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

Arbor Dale (2)	A		
Asheville, First (3)	Judy Albertson	LeNoir Medlock	Cat Kessler

Banner Elk (2)	Laura Russell		
Belmont, First (4)	Margaret Wilkins Meg Spivey	Paula Wallace	Ashley Bruce
Black Mountain (3)	Ann White	Mike Begley	Mary Carroll Dodd
Brevard-Davidson River (3)	Rick Clark	Janice Hiner	
Bridgewater (2)	A		
Brittain (2)	Nancy Norris		
Brittain's Cove (2)	A		
Bryson City (2)	A		
Buladean (2)	A		
Burnsville, First (2)	Margie Lang		
Calvary (3)	A		
Canton (2)	A		
Cherryville, First (2)	Wade Stroupe		
Columbus (2)	A		
Crossnore (2)	A		
Dallas, First (2)	A		
Dixon (2)	A		
Dorland Memorial (2)	A		
Dulatown (3)	A		
Etowah (2)	A		
Fletcher (2)	A		
Forest City, First (2)	A		
Franklin, First (2)	Nancy Browder		
Gastonia, First (3)	A		
Good Hope (2)	A		
Grace Covenant (2)	A		
Grassy Creek (1)	A		
Green Mountain (1)	A		
Green Street (2)	A		
Greenway (1)	Susan Barnett		
Hayesville (1)	E		
Hendersonville, First (1)	A		
Hickory, First (2)	Judith Ray	Nat Auten	
Highlands, First (1)	A		
Ironton (1)	A		
Jack's Creek (1)	A		
Kenilworth (1)	Meg G. Elliott		
Lenoir First (1)	A		
Long Creek (1)	Susan Smith		
Love's Chapel (2)	A		
Lowell (1)	Bobby Massey		
Marion, First (1)	A		
Marshall (1)	Carolyn Ogburn		
Micaville (1)	A		
Mills River (1)	David McMuntry		
Montreat (1)	Ellen Henschen		
Morganton, First (2)	Sally DeAugustinis	Amber Bernard-Gantt	
Morrison (1)	A		

Mount Holly, First (1)	E		
New Hope (Asheville) (1)	Terri Carpenter		
New Hope (Gastonia) (1)	Risa Brandon		
Newdale (1)	A		
Newland (1)	E		
Newton First (2)	Jim Payne		
Northminster (1)	Michael Kelly		
Oakwood (1)	A		
Old Fort (1)	A		
Olney (1)	A		
Pine Street (2)	A		
Pineola (1)	A		
Quaker Meadows (1)	Anita Woods		
Reems Creek-Beech (1)	Jeff Curtis		
Ridgeview (1)	A		
Robinson Memorial (1)	A		
Rutherfordton (2)	A		
Ryburn Memorial (2)	A		
Shelby (2)	A		
Sherrill's Ford (1)	A		
Shiloh, Grover (1)	A		
Siloam (1)	A		
Southminster (2)	A		
Spruce Pine, First (1)	E. L. Nutter		
Sweetwater (1)	Don W. Humphrey		
Sylva, First (1)	A		
Third Street (2)	Allen Lowery		
Trinity (2)	Tom Karvonen		
Tryon (2)	Catherine Lynch		
Union (1)	A		
Union Mills (1)	A		
Unity (2)	A		
Vians Valley (1)	A		
Waldensian (2)	Barbara Nagy	Alan Griffin	
Walnut (1)	A		
Warren Wilson (1)	Sharon Lytle		
Waynesville, First (1)	A		

Ministers	90
Elders	42
Teams	6
DCE	0
Visitors & Corresponding Members	22
TOTAL	160

The following Corresponding Members were in attendance:

- Olanda Carr, Jr., Senior Ministry Relations Officer, Presbyterian Foundation, Charlotte, NC
- David Jenkins, Honorably Retired, Grace Presbytery
- Patrick Willson, Honorably Retired, Santa Fe Presbytery
- Steve Pardue, Vice-President, Commercial Insurance Advisor, CountyBanc Insurance Services, Simpsonville, SC
- El Stewart, Hands and Feet of Asheville, NC

APPROVAL OF DOCKET

Rev. Dr. Ann Philbrick, the Stated Clerk, presented the docket and moved the approval of the docket as presented in the Presbytery Packet. The motion was approved by common consent.

9:00 Call to Order **Ken Murchison, Moderator**

Convene with Prayer of Invocation **Ken Murchison, Moderator**

Land Acknowledgment **Ken Murchison, Moderator**

Appointment of Standing Committees **Ken Murchison, Moderator**

Resolution of Thanks

Bills and Overtures

Tellers

Presbytery in Brief

Recognition of Elders Attending for First Time, Visitors, and Corresponding Members

Certification of Quorum **Ann Philbrick, Stated Clerk**

Approval of Docket

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 team report from which it was drawn.)

Stated Clerk's Report **Ann Philbrick** **B**

(Work of the Clerk, Presbytery Meeting Dates, Administrative Commission Reports)

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

Nominating/Representation Team **I**

Finance Team **FF**

Building H.O.P.E. **BH**

Summary of the 255th Stated Assembly Synod of the Mid-Atlantic **II**

9:40 Service of Worship
Worship leader: Robert Gamble

10:30 Speak Out (10 minutes)

10:40 Coordinating Ministry (10 minutes) **Dana Seiler** **C**
(Work of the team, including enrolling of House of Mercy as a new worshipping community and dissolution of FPC Bessemer City.)

Commission on Ministry <i>(20 minutes)</i>	Michael Poulos	D
<i>(Introduce new ministers and recommendations for Presbytery approval.)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of Rev. Chad Smith 		

11:15 ORDER OF THE DAY

Implementation Team <i>(25 minutes)</i>	Melvin Meares
<i>(Presentation of the work of team.)</i>	

11:45 LUNCH

1:00 Reconvene

Presbyterian Foundation <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Olanda Carr	
Hands and Feet of Asheville	Megan McMillan	
<i>(Presentation of their work this year and seeking young adults interested in being Fellows.)</i>		
Youth Team <i>(5 minutes)</i>	David Germer	Y
<i>(Work of the Team)</i>		
Commissioned Pastor Team <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Wayne Drummond/Kerry Border	OO
Guatemala Partnership <i>(3 minutes)</i>	Sarah Robinson	Q
<i>(Report from the team and their recent visit to Guatemala)</i>		
Recommendation on Proposed Amendments <i>(30 minutes)</i>	Ann Philbrick	B
<i>(Information regarding the Proposed Amendments may be found in the Stated Clerk's Report, Stated Clerk Attachment 2)</i>		
Amendment 24E – Michael Poulos		
COM recommends approval of this amendment.		
Amendment 24G – Michael Poulos		
COM recommends approval of this amendment.		
Amendments 24K – Bob Forsythe		
PJC recommends approval of this amendment.		
Amendment 24L – Bob Forsythe		
PJC recommends approval of this amendment.		
Amendment 24-M – Ken Murchison		
Coordinating Ministry recommends approval of this amendment		
Report of Disaster Recovery Coordinator <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Anne Waple	X
Report of Bills and Overtures <i>(as/if needed)</i>		
Report of the General Presbyter <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Byron Wade	GP
Prayers of Intercession		
Benediction and Adjournment	Ken Murchison	

CONSENT AGENDA

The Stated Clerk, Rev. Dr. Ann Philbrick, explained the rules for the Consent Agenda. She then moved the consent agenda as presented in the packet. The consent agenda and committee/team reports were approved by common consent. (Appendix A)

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

- Nominating/Representation Team (Appendix B)
- Finance Team (Appendix C)
- Building Hope (Appendix D)
- Report from Presbyterian Women (Appendix E)
- Summary of the 255th Stated Assembly-Synod of the Mid-Atlantic (Appendix F)
- Malawi Leadership Team Report (Appendix S)

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

Rev. Dr. Ann Philbrick, the Stated Clerk, presented recommendations 1 through 4 included in the Stated Clerk's report, stating that these recommendations had previously been approved in the Consent Agenda.

The Stated Clerk, then presented recommendation 5. The recommendation was approved by common consent.

The Stated Clerk then recommended that the Administrative Commission for the West Asheville Presbyterian Church, having completed its work, be dissolved effective April 29, 2025, with the thanks of the Presbytery for its good work. The motion was seconded and adopted by common consent.

She then referred to items 6 and 7 for information.

- CA 1. THAT Ken Murchison, Ann Philbrick, and Robbin Buchanan be requested to prepare the minutes of this Presbytery meeting for approval at the July 29, 2025 Presbytery meeting.**
- CA 2. THAT the minutes of the January 25, 2025 Stated Meeting of Presbytery be approved as submitted.**
- CA 3. THAT the April 2025 report of the following Administrative Commissions be received and entered into the permanent record of Presbytery: (Appendix G)**
Administrative Commission for West Asheville
Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding Ministry
- CA 4. THAT the minutes of the installation of the following be placed into the record of Presbytery:**
Betsy Stowe (Appendix H)
- 5. THAT the Presbytery of Western North Carolina follows the special arrangements at this meeting of Presbytery for the discussion and actions on the process for voting on the Proposed Amendments to the Constitution. That copies of the Proposed Amendments for discussion and action can be found within Stated Clerk Attachment 2. (Appendix I)**

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

6. **THAT the 143rd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina will be held on Saturday, July 26, 2025, virtually via ZOOM.** *THAT the deadline for written reports for this meeting is Thursday, July 3, 2025. THAT the deadline for an overture is Monday, June 30, 2025.*
7. **THAT the following procedure for reviewing sessions records for 2024 in the year 2025, will be as follows:**
 - A. Each clerk will gather the 2024 Session minutes for her/his congregation.
 - B. No later than September 1, 2025, use the standard checklist to review your records as follows:
 1. Write the name of your church at the top, indicating “2024” as the year.
 2. For each item on the list, check “yes” or “no.”
 3. If “yes,” in the column labeled “comment,” indicate one instance where the item can be found in your minutes.
 - i. If your minutes are numbered with consecutive pages, just indicate a page number.
 - a. If your minutes are not numbered consecutively through the year, indicate the date of the meeting where an instance of the item is found.
 4. If “no,” provide any explanation you may want to share in the column labeled “comment.”
 5. In the same column labeled “comment,” add any comments you would like to make regarding any item.
 - C. On the reverse side of the checklist—or on another sheet of paper if you prefer—make a note of any issues you have encountered with any items on the checklist. Especially if some are not clear and the parenthetical references to the *Book of Order* do not clarify them, please let us know what may need more explanation.
 - D. If specific questions arise as you work on the checklist, feel free to call Ann Philbrick on her cell number (615-922-0845). She will be happy to help, or to find the help needed.

So that we can certify 100% compliance with the review of Session Records at the October 2025 meeting of Presbytery of Western North Carolina, please complete the checklist and return it to the Stated Clerk by September 1, 2025, either by

1. Email to aphilbrick@presbyterywnc.org) or
2. Regular mail: 114 Silver Creek Road, Morganton, NC 28655

SERVICE OF WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

Worship was led by the Rev. Robert Gamble, Director of *This Child Here* in Ukraine. He preached a sermon titled “Rehearsing Moses,” based on Exodus 3:1–10. Assisting in worship were:

- Rev. Mary Katherine Robinson and Rev. David Carter Florence – Black Mountain Presbyterian Church
- Rev. Keith Grogg – Montreat Presbyterian Church
- Rev. Laurie Furr-Vancini – Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church
- Olya Balaban – Manager of the *This Child Here* program in Ukraine

The service concluded with the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, led by Reverends Robert Gamble, David Carter Florence, Mary Katherine Robinson, Keith Grogg, Laurie Furr-Vancini, and Bob Tuttle.

Music was provided by Aaron Price, Director of Music and Worship Arts at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church, and Noah Hijleh, soloist and senior at Montreat College.

COORDINATING MINISTRY

On behalf of the Coordinating Ministry, Teaching Elder Dana Seiler presented informational items 1 through 10, which required no formal action. She highlighted that several of the items deserved particular attention.

Rev. Seiler then invited George and Beverly Thompson to provide a brief update, as outlined in item 4 of the report on the dissolution of First Presbyterian Church in Bessemer City, which occurred on February 17, 2025. They also led the assembly in prayers of thanksgiving.

Rev. Seiler invited Rev. David Bonnema of the Church Vitality Team to share additional information regarding items 7 and 9 from the report. Rev. Bonnema announced that the House of Mercy in Asheville, NC, has been officially welcomed as a New Worshipping Community within the PC(USA). He also provided an update on the team's Outreach Grant Project.

Chad Smith, pastor of House of Mercy in Asheville, NC, shared insights into the ministry's origins and growth. He explained that the ministry primarily serves three key demographics: former evangelicals, individuals impacted by the prison-industrial complex, and those who have left Christianity.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

- 1. THAT a list of upcoming events of the Presbytery can be found on the back of the Presbytery Docket.**
- 2. THAT the Coordinating Ministry approved Rev. Pete Peery to fill the At-Large Member vacancy for the Leadership Team of the Coordinating Ministry for 2025.**
- 3. THAT the Coordinating Ministry approved a \$1,000 grant to Green Mountain Church from the Small Church Support Fund for a Lenten video project related to "Lament and Hope" following Hurricane Helene.**
- 4. THAT the Coordinating Ministry, acting on behalf of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina (per Standing Rules IV.D.17) approved unanimously the request of the First Presbyterian Church, Bessemer City, following a consultation with the congregation by Presbytery Associates George and Beverly Thompson, that the congregations ministry conclude and that it be dissolved as of February 17, 2025. In taking this action, the Coordinating Ministry assigned oversight to the previously established Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding their Ministry, with the following responsibilities and authority:**
 - To support pastorally the remaining member of the church whose petition to presbytery has been approved that its ministry be concluded and the congregation be dissolved.
 - To hold the member on the roll of Presbytery and transfer her membership to a congregation of her choosing.
 - To oversee the dissolution of the congregation, close the church (G-3.0301a), and take possession of its 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).

5. **THAT the Coordinating Ministry approved Anne Waple, Disaster Recovery Coordinator, to be authorized to seek PDA funding for a part-time position to help with scheduling work groups.**
6. **THAT the Coordinating Ministry approved the following resolution regarding four small encroachments related to the Camp Woodson property to Conserving Carolina. Conserving Carolina agreed to prepare documents. Mike Begley, attorney, reviewed deeds and issues concerning the encroachments and prepared the resolutions to give encroachment to adjoining landowners.**

RESOLVED, that the Coordinating Ministry of the Non-Profit convened on February 12, 2025, to authorize and designate a corporate officer.

RESOLVED, that the Non-Profit may act on behalf of the property commonly known as CAMP WOODSON (Buncombe County PIN#0606-9722-580-0000) in its sale and may Quit Claim Areas A, B, C, & D (recorded in Plat Book 244, Page 147, Buncombe County Registry) to the respective adjoining owners.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that KENNETH M. MURCHISON, as Vice President, is authorized and directed to do all things reasonable and necessary in order to effectuate the conveyance, including but not limited to the execution of all title conveyance documents.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Company agrees to indemnify and to hold harmless The Van Winkle Law Firm ("Van Winkle") from any and all claims, demands, losses, damages, costs, and expenses suffered or incurred by Van Winkle resulting from or arising out of any action authorized by this Resolution.

7. **THAT the Coordinating Ministry approved requests from Church Vitality that the House of Mercy in Asheville, NC become a New Worshipping Community of the PCUSA within the bounds of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. The Coordinating Ministry approved funding in the amount of \$30,000 per year for the next three years. Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Asheville, NC has agreed to be the partner church and handle matters of polity for the worshipping community.**
8. **THAT the offering collected during worship at the January 25, 2025, Presbytery meeting at Brevard-Davidson River would be donated to Black Mountain Home, designated specifically for the local Whitewater Cove Campus, a ministry supported by the host church.**
9. **THAT the Coordinating Ministry approved to grant Church Vitality's request for an Outreach Grant Project. This pilot project will offer grants of up to \$5,000 for each approved church application in its first year. The Coordinating Ministry has approved \$100,000 from Presbytery's unrestricted funds for the Church Vitality Outreach Grants Project.**

- 10. THAT pursuant to the provision in the Standing Rules that allows the Coordinating Ministry to act on behalf of Presbytery on urgent matters between presbytery meetings, it did the following:**

APPROVED THE VALIDATION OF MINISTRY FOR:

- A. Lynne Keel as Director of Programs at Montreat Conference Center, Montreat through January 25, 2026.
- B. Nathan Sell as Chaplain at The Asheville School in Asheville through January 25, 2026.
- C. Denise Thorpe as the Coordinator in North Carolina with the Ministry Collaborative through January 25, 2026.
- D. Clay Fouse as CPE Supervisor at the VA Hospital in Asheville and as National Program Coordinator for Clinical Pastoral Education for the National Veteran Affairs Chaplain Service through January 25, 2026.

APPROVED THE RELEASE FROM VALIDATED MINISTRY WITH THANKS:

- A. Daniel Tipton, as Grief Services Coordinator with Four Seasons Hospice.
- B. Tamara Puffer, as Minister of Vulnerability at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Asheville.

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

Teaching Elder Michael Poulos reported on the actions taken by the Commission on Ministry on behalf of the Presbytery. (Appendix J)

Teaching Elder Michael Poulos reported that following:

Retirement:

- David Lytle, effective December 16, 2022 (retroactive)

Teaching Elder Michael Poulos reported that the Commission on Ministry approved the changes to the Former Pastor Policy. (Appendix K)

**COMMISSION ON MINISTRY
II. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMISSION ON MINISTRY**

Teaching Elder Michael Poulos presented the following recommendations on behalf of the Commission on Ministry:

- I. Recommended to the Presbytery approval of recommended changes to the Presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Policy. (The changes were presented as a first reading at the January 2025 Presbytery Meeting.) (Appendix L)

The COM recommends adoption of the changes to the Presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Policy. As the motion comes from a Commission, there is no second needed.

The changes to the Presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Policy were approved.

- II. Recommended to Presbytery a first reading of revisions to Policy for Transitional to Installed Pastor with anticipated debate and action at the July 2025 presbytery meeting. Revisions are to include Associate Pastors in the policy. (Appendix M)

The first reading of revisions to the Policy for Transitional to Installed Pastors was received by the Presbytery.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

III. VALIDATION OF MINISTRIES

On behalf of the Commission on Ministry, Teaching Elder Michael Poulos moved that the Presbytery re-validate the ministries of the following: (Appendix J)

- A. Carol Steele as Vice President for Programs at Montreat Conference Center through April 29, 2026.
- B. David Bradley as Pastoral Counselor through April 29, 2026
- C. Ryan Brakemyer as Pastor of Grace Reformed UCC in Newton through April 29, 2026.
- D. Lynne Keel as Director of Programs at Montreat Conference Center, Montreat through January 25, 2026.
- E. Nathan Sell as Chaplain at The Asheville School in Asheville through January 25, 2026.
- F. Denise Thorpe as the Coordinator in North Carolina with the Ministry Collaborative through January 25, 2026.
- G. Clay Fouse as CPE Supervisor at the VA Hospital in Asheville and as National Program Coordinator for Clinical Pastoral Education for the National Veteran Affairs Chaplain Service through January 25, 2026.

The recommendations were approved by common consent without objection.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW COLLEAGUE

On behalf of the Examinations Sub-Committee and Commission on Ministry, Teaching Elder Michael Poulos introduced Chad Smith, for Temporary Membership, the organizing pastor of the House of Mercy who has applied to become a PC(USA) pastor. He spoke briefly. His Statement of Faith and Faith Journey was included in the report of the Commission on Ministry. (Appendix J)

- Chad Smith, from Evangelical Presbyterian Church, as Organizing Pastor for House of Mercy New Worshipping Community effective April 1, 2025.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Melvin Meares was called upon to lead the Presbytery through the Vision Implementation Team report. (Appendix T) The new design for the Presbytery which outlined the structure and format was explained in detail. The design being implemented was structured to,

- align more closely with the Mission Statement of the Presbytery
- move to a design that focused on encouraging and supporting ministries that the congregations of the Presbytery have a passion for pursuing
- strengthen relationships among the churches within their neighborhood
- shift from a “committee” structure to a “team” in order:
 - to remove barriers to participation in ministries. Open to every member of a congregation, not just pastors and elders
 - to increase flexibility in ministry project involvement, duration, timing, and conclusion
 - to encourage churches to share and join together in ministry to have a greater impact.

RECESS

The 142nd meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina recessed for lunch at 11:45 a.m. with prayer by Rev. Dr. Wanda Neely, Vice-Moderator.

RECONVENE

The Moderator reconvened the 142nd meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina following lunch at 1:05 p.m.

GREETINGS FROM MINISTRY PARTNERS

- **Presbyterian Foundation** – Olanda Carr, Ministry Relations Officer at the Presbyterian Foundation brought greetings and then addressed the body with updates and information on the work of the Presbyterian Foundation.
- **Hands and Feet of Asheville** – Rev. Meg McMillan, pastor at Mills River Presbyterian Church, brought greetings from Hands and Feet of Asheville She shared information about their program and the Young Adult Transformation Collective (YATC).

YOUTH TEAM

Beth Gunn reported on behalf of the Youth Team. Upcoming events for the youth of Presbytery of WNC were announced. She also announced that the Presbyterian Youth Council Leadership Team has switched from an application process to an invitational process. (Appendix N)

- May 3, 2025 – Adventure Day at Camp Grier
- July 28-31, 2025 – Triennium, National Youth Conference at Louisville, KY
- September 27, 2025 – Pathways Youth Gathering at Montreat, NC
- November 8-9, 2025 – Youth Overnight Retreat at Camp Grier

COMMISSIONED PASTOR TEAM

Ruling Elders Kerry Border and Wayne Drummond brought greetings from the Presbytery of Western North Carolina's Church Leadership School and shared a brief history of the Leadership School and its positive results over the past 25 plus years. (Appendix O)

GUATEMALA PARTNERSHIP

Sarah Robinson, PWNC Guatemala Partnership Coordinator, spent time sharing of the work of the partnership and the partnership's mission. She shared that the Presbytery in Guatemala is growing, but that their needs are substantial. Another highlight in her report was the Microloan Project which is a project of the Presbyterian Women from Suchitepequez and Sur Occidente Presbyteries and the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. (Appendix P)

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS (Appendix I)

Stated Clerk, Ann Philbrick, referred to the Presbytery the five remaining amendments that were being brought before the Presbytery of WNC for action.

Michael Poulos, chair of the Commission on Ministry, presented recommendations for Amendments 24-E and 24-G. The Commission on Ministry recommended approval of both amendments. The motions were APPROVED.

On behalf of the Permanent Judicial Commission, Bob Forsythe presented the recommendations for Amendments 24-K and 24-L. The Permanent Judicial Commission recommended approval of Amendment 24-K and 24-L. The motions were APPROVED.

Ken Murchison, Moderator presented Amendment 24-M on behalf of the Coordinating Ministry. The Coordinating Ministry recommended approval of Amendment 24-M. The motion was APPROVED.

Amendment	Subject	Ministry/Team	Action
24-E	PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS G-2.0504b Temporary Pastoral Relationships	Commission on Ministry	APPROVED
24-G	DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS G-2.0901 Congregational Meeting	Commission on Ministry	APPROVED
24-K	INVESTIGATION -Referral to Investigating Committee D-7.0501	Permanent Judicial Commission	APPROVED
24-L	ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE Administrative Leave D-7.0902b	Permanent Judicial Commission	APPROVED
24-M	Episcopal-Presbyterian Agreement on Local Sharing of Ministries	Coordinating Ministry	APPROVED

DISASTER RECOVERY

Anne Waple, Disaster Recovery Coordinator, reported on the response efforts across the Presbytery of Western North Carolina in the six months following Hurricane Helene. She highlighted the tremendous progress that has been made, while also emphasizing that there is still significant work ahead. The Presbytery of Western North Carolina will be host to three PDA sites welcoming volunteers in May 2025. The host sites will be New Hope Presbyterian Church, Asheville, First Presbyterian Church in Spruce Pine, and Canton Presbyterian Church, Canton. (Appendix Q)

BILLS and OVERTURES

On behalf of the Bills and Overtures Team, Tom Phillips reported that they did not have any business to convey at this meeting.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER

Rev. Dr. Byron Wade, General Presbyter, reported on his travels through the Presbytery and how he continues to witness the ways in which the Lord is a Waymaker. (Appendix R)

Dr. Wade recognized Presbytery Associate, Bob Ayala, who will be retiring at the end of May for having served on the staff of Presbytery for 10 years. Bob served the Mayland Fellowship and has been invaluable.

Dr. Wade also shared about an upcoming webinar being made available for the members of the Presbytery on May 27, 2025 entitled, “On The Border.” This will be a free webinar on Zoom concerning ministry at the U.S. Mexican Border. The webinar will be led by Rev. Marta Pumroy and topics of discussion will include what life is like on the border, complexities of current immigration and support for migrants.

RESOLUTION OF THANKS

Rev. Mark Stanley, Member-at-Large, shared the following Resolution of Thanks:

WHEREAS, faithful Presbyterians gathered for the 142nd meeting of the Presbytery of Western NC at Montreat Conference Center on Tuesday April 29th; and

WHEREAS, we enjoyed the gift of a most beautiful Spring day; and

WHEREAS, our meeting began with Holy worship and Communion including a brave and timely proclamation of the Word accompanied by a talented team of worship leaders and musicians; and

WHEREAS, Presbytery Staff prepared and made available copious copies of dockets and agendas and facilitated a seamless and orderly event (as usual!); and

WHEREAS, we were blessed with the opportunity to welcome a NEW Church into our Presbytery, House of Mercy New Worshipping Community alongside their Pastor and members in attendance; and

WHEREAS, we considered and approved Five Proposed Amendments to the Book of Order; and

WHEREAS, we heard a report of the Implementation Team for our ever-reforming structure; and

WHEREAS, we heard an inspirational report of the life-changing work of the organization, “Hands and Feet of Asheville;” and

WHEREAS, we were gratified to hear reports of the work of the presbytery through its council, staff, and teams; and

WHEREAS, we enjoyed a delicious meal in the unique setting that only Montreat can provide; and

WHEREAS, we all found our lives of faith strengthened by our time together in fellowship with God’s Spirit;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Presbytery of Western North Carolina expresses its thanks to everyone who had anything to do with planning, organizing, moderating, leading, working behind the scenes and on the stage, preparing and serving refreshments and lunch, parking cars, leading worship, giving a report (or two!), providing us all with a clean, comfortable and altogether delightful space for our time together. Above all, we give thanks and praise to the great and loving God we serve together.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Rev. Jill Isola, Pastor at Northminster Presbyterian Church, led the Presbytery in prayers of intercession.

BENEDICTION AND ADJOURNMENT

With the business of the 142nd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina completed, and adjournment voted, Moderator Ken Murchison adjourned the meeting at 2:04 p.m. with prayer.

NEXT MEETING

The 143rd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina will be held on Saturday, July 26, 2025 virtually by ZOOM.

These minutes were prepared by the following:

Ken Murchison, Moderator

Ann Philbrick, Stated Clerk

Robbin Buchanan, Assistant Stated Clerk

These minutes are to be approved by Presbytery on July 26, 2025, at the 143rd Stated Meeting to be held virtually, by ZOOM.

APPENDICES

- A. Consent Agenda**
- B. Nominating/Representation Team Report**
- C. Finance Team Report**
- D. Building Hope Report**
- E. Report from Presbyterian Women**
- F. Summary of the 255th Stated Assembly-Synod of the Mid-Atlantic**
- G. Administrative Commission Report for West Asheville Presbyterian Church, and Churches Concluding Their Ministry**
- H. Minutes of Installation – Betsy Stowe**
- I. Proposed Amendments to the Constitution**
- J. Commission on Ministry Report**
- K. Former Pastor Policy**
- L. PWNC Sexual Misconduct Policy**
- M. Transitional to Installed Pastor Policy**
- N. Youth Team Report**
- O. Commissioned Pastor Report**
- P. Guatemala Partnership Report**
- Q. Disaster Recovery Coordinator Report**
- R. Report of the General Presbyter**
- S. Malawi Leadership Team Report**
- T. Ministry Through Teams**

*For a copy of the Appendices, please contact the Presbytery Office.
(828/438-4217 or rbuchanan@presbyterywnc.org)*

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 4 FROM THE STATED CLERK'S REPORT

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

- CA 1. THAT Ken Murchison, Ann Philbrick, and Robbin Buchanan be requested to prepare the minutes of this Presbytery meeting for approval at the July 29, 2025 Presbytery meeting.**
- CA 2. THAT the minutes of the January 25, 2025 Stated Meeting of Presbytery be approved as submitted.**
- CA 3. THAT the April 2025 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
- CA 4. THAT the minutes of the installation of the following be placed into the record of Presbytery:**
 - Betsy Stowe

RECOMMENDATION 1 thru 7 FROM THE NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION REPORT

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

- | | | | |
|----|----|--|---|
| CA | 1. | <u>Finance Team</u>
Mr. Skip Hughes (Highlands, First) | Class of 2026 |
| CA | 2. | <u>Personnel Team</u>
Mr. Louis Vinay (Morganton, First) | Class of 2027 |
| CA | 3. | <u>Coordinating Ministry</u>
Rev. Lindsay Jacaruso | Class of 2025 |
| CA | 4. | <u>Examinations Team</u>
Mr. Roger Burns (Newdale)
Mrs. Ginger Bruce (Banner Elk) | Class of 2025
Class of 2027 |
| CA | 5. | <u>Equipping Disciples Ministry</u>
Rev. Will Upchurch (Long Creek)
Rev. Allan Purtill (Tryon)
Mrs. Helen Hall (Dulatown) | Class of 2025
Class of 2026
Class of 2027 |
| CA | 6. | <u>Strengthening Congregations Ministry</u>
Rev. Sarah Grace Montgomery
Rev. Becky Stanley (Retired)
Ms. Betty Davenport (Gastonia, First) | Class of 2025
Class of 2026
Class of 2027 |
| CA | 7. | <u>Engaging in Mission Ministry</u>
Ms. Martha Campbell (Montreat)
Ms. Sue Johnson (Belmont, First)
Rev. Esta Jarrett (Canton) | Class of 2025
Class of 2026
Class of 2027 |

NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION TEAM

April 29, 2025

The Nominating/Representation Team presents the following nominations to fill vacancies within the Class of 2027 and other open positions. The next team meeting will take place on May 17, 2025.

The Nominating/Representation Team is tasked with filling team/committee positions throughout the year. To assist in this process, we encourage you to reflect on your interest in serving on a Presbytery team/committee or to suggest someone who may be well-suited for service.

Please be mindful of the Presbytery by-laws, which state: "Committee members shall serve a term of three (3) years, divided into equal classes. No committee member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. Ordinarily, an individual may serve on only one Presbytery committee at a time."

We offer our heartfelt gratitude and praise to God for your dedicated service.

CA	1.	<u>Finance Team</u> Mr. Skip Hughes (Highlands, First)	Class of 2026
CA	2.	<u>Personnel Team</u> Mr. Louis Vinay (Morganton, First)	Class of 2027
CA	3.	<u>Coordinating Ministry</u> Rev. Lindsay Jacaruso	Class of 2025
CA	4.	<u>Examinations Team</u> Mr. Roger Burns (Newdale) Mrs. Ginger Bruce (Banner Elk)	Class of 2025 Class of 2027
CA	5.	<u>Equipping Disciples Ministry</u> Rev. Will Upchurch (Long Creek) Rev. Allan Purtill (Tryon) Mrs. Helen Hall (Dulatown)	Class of 2025 Class of 2026 Class of 2027
CA	3.	<u>Strengthening Congregations Ministry</u> Rev. Sarah Grace Montgomery Rev. Becky Stanley (Retired) Ms. Betty Davenport (Gastonia, First)	Class of 2025 Class of 2026 Class of 2027
CA	4.	<u>Engaging in Mission Ministry</u> Ms. Martha Campbell (Montreat) Ms. Sue Johnson (Belmont, First) Rev. Esta Jarrett (Canton)	Class of 2025 Class of 2026 Class of 2027

Finance Team
Feild Russell & Don Scofield – Co-Chairs
April 29, 2025

For information only the Finance Team presents:

- ◆ The ‘Operating Budget Summary’ of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as of March 31, 2025, BB-2.
- ◆ The ‘Balance Sheet’ of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as of March 31, 2025 compared to December 31, 2024, BB-4.
- ◆ The ‘Hurricane Helene Fund Financial Statement’ of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as of March 31, 2025, BB-5.

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

APPENDIX C BB-2

PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY AS OF MARCH 31, 2025

ACCOUNT	2025 ANNUAL BUDGET	2025 YTD BUDGET	2025 YTD ACTUAL	% OF ANNUAL BUDGET	2024 YTD ACTUAL
INCOME:					
Unified Giving from Churches	\$ 674,195	\$ 168,549	\$ 157,127	23.3%	\$ 153,810
Other Income	22,000	5,500	5,607	25.5%	6,303
Anticipated Grants/Income	6,500	1,625	6,500	100.0%	6,000
Transfer From Existing Funds-NWC	35,000	8,750	8,750	25.0%	9,375
Transfer From Existing Funds-Disaster Recovery	100,000	25,000	15,600	15.6%	-
Transfer From Existing Funds-Legal Work	10,000	2,500	3,215	32.1%	11,369
Income From Investment	237,318	-	-	0.0%	-
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 1,085,013</u>	\$ 211,924	\$ 196,798	18.1%	\$ 186,857
EXPENSES:					
General Assembly Per Capita/Unified Giving	\$ 165,000	\$ 41,250	\$ 38,455	23.3%	\$ 36,828
Synod Per Capita	14,562	3,641	3,394	23.3%	3,264
Institutions & Agencies	4,000	1,000	932	23.3%	893
Strengthening Congregations Ministry					
Church Vibrancy Team	20,196	5,049	2,986	14.8%	4,611
Youth Ministry Team / Council	21,450	5,363	2,051	9.6%	991
Faith Formation Team	4,700	1,175	-	0.0%	-
Campus Ministry Team	9,500	2,375	2,250	23.7%	2,250
Equipping Disciples Ministry					
New Worship Community Team	35,000	8,750	8,750	25.0%	9,375
Digital Church Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Community Outreach Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Peace and Justice Team	2,500	625	126	5.1%	-
Disability Inclusion Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Engaging in Mission Ministry					
Hunger Programs Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Self-Development of People Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Disaster Assistance Team	103,000	25,750	15,600	15.1%	(148)
Housing Team	1,000	250	-	0.0%	-
Guatemala Leadership Team	27,000	6,750	1,394	5.2%	1,042
Malawi Leadership Team	4,000	1,000	-	0.0%	-
Leadership Ministry					
Commission on Ministry	2,750	688	130	4.7%	278
Examinations Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Validated Ministry Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Preparation for Ministry Team	5,400	1,350	59	1.1%	644
Commissioned Pastors Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Church Leadership School Team	50	13	(1,575)	-3150.0%	(1,005)
Coordinating Ministry					
Coordinating Ministry	21,857	5,464	750	3.4%	750
Permanent Judicial Commission	500	125	-	0.0%	-
Nominating / Representation Team	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Personnel Team	536,947	134,237	121,291	22.6%	111,818
Finance Team	79,600	19,900	20,846	26.2%	22,726
Stated Clerk Expenses					
Stated Clerk	26,000	6,500	8,122	31.2%	11,921
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 1,085,013</u>	\$ 271,253	\$ 225,561	20.8%	\$ 206,239
NET INCOME/(LOSS)		<u>(59,330)</u>	<u>(28,762)</u>		<u>(19,381)</u>

APPENDIX C BB-3

Presbytery of Western North Carolina
Preliminary Balance Sheet (Prior to Completion of 2024 Annual Audit)
As of Mar 31, 2025

	Mar-25	Dec-24
ASSETS		
Cash (checking and on hand)	\$ 976,498	\$ 1,030,031
Money Market	\$ 257,120	\$ 257,088
Certificates of Deposit	\$ 212,055	\$ 212,055
Investments (Prebyterian Foundation) ¹		
Presbytery of WNC	\$ 4,683,226	\$ 4,737,166
Building HOPE ³	\$ 1,468,783	\$ 1,478,285
Malawi-GAP Ebenezer School Scholarships ³	\$ 173,806	\$ 177,284
Receivables (Sales tax refunds due)	\$ 173	\$ 402
Notes Receivables - Property ²	\$ 1,499,737	\$ 1,519,266
TOTAL FINANCIAL ASSETS	\$ 9,271,398	\$ 9,411,578
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES		
Payables (within the next twelve months)(FICA/State W/H)	\$ -	\$ 972
Payables (beyond next twelve months)	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ -	\$ 972
NET ASSETS (Defined as assets less liabilities)		
Undesignated Funds		
Funds available for general purposes	\$ 2,604,504	\$ 2,727,207
Sale of Church Property	\$ 1,354,267	\$ 1,349,622
Subtotal	\$ 3,958,771	\$ 4,076,829
Designated by General Council		
Sale of Church Property (Notes Receivable) ²	\$ 1,499,737	\$ 1,519,266
New Church Development	\$ 205,513	\$ 207,013
Physical Plant Needs	\$ 53,652	\$ 53,652
Korean Church Mission Gift	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Subtotal	\$ 1,858,902	\$ 1,879,931
Donor Restricted		
General Assembly/Synod/ Mission Co-Workers/Crisis Relief/Special Offerings	\$ 94,035	\$ 86,846
Building HOPE ³	\$ 1,542,876	\$ 1,582,965
Hurricane Helene Relief Fund	\$ 489,883	\$ 452,494
Daily Change	\$ 92,347	\$ 77,187
Men in the Mirror	\$ 29,236	\$ 25,849
Malawi-Nkhoma Hospital	\$ 114,250	\$ 107,849
Malawi-Ebenezer School	\$ 61,789	\$ 55,727
Malawi-GAP Ebenezer School Scholarships ³	\$ 173,806	\$ 177,284
Malawi-Mission Trips	\$ 36,983	\$ 15,970
Guatemala Scholarship/Partnership Needs/Projects	\$ 67,972	\$ 72,811
Guatemala Health/Nutrition	\$ 36,817	\$ 36,817
Guatemala Microloans	\$ 11,504	\$ 10,692
Guatemala Mission Trips	\$ 16,174	\$ 20,500
Disaster Relief Coordinator Fund	\$ 179,127	\$ 194,727
Passthru Funds and Other Activities	\$ 506,925	\$ 536,127
Subtotal	\$ 3,453,724	\$ 3,453,846
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$ 9,271,398	\$ 9,410,607
TOTAL LIABILITES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 9,271,398	\$ 9,411,578

Notes:

- 1: Invested 60% Stocks 40% Bonds through the Presbyterian Foundation
- 2: Mortgages held by the Presbytery on Swannanoa/Westminster/W Avenue/John Knox properties
- 3: Any diffenence is due to some of the asset residing in Cash, Checking or Money Market accounts

APPENDIX C BB-4

Hurricane Helene Fund Financial Statement

As of 3/31/25

Collected

Oct-24	94,413.78
Nov-24	68,314.00
Dec-24	316,266.65
Jan-25	21,858.00
Feb-25	74,514.47
Mar-25	17,016.00

Total Collected \$ 592,382.90

Expensed

Nov-24	(500.00)	Payment to Micaville PC (FPC Napa gift)
Nov-24	(500.00)	Payment to Marshall PC (FPC Napa gift)
Nov-24	(500.00)	Payment to Green Mtn PC (FPC Napa gift)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to Dorland Memorial PC (GC approved for damages)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to Green Mtn PC (GC approved for damages)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to Green Street PC (GC approved for damages)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to Jack's Creek PC (GC approved for damages)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to Marshall PC (GC approved for damages)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to Micaville PC (GC approved for damages)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to New Hope PC (Asheville) (GC approved for damages)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to Black Mtn PC (GC approved for direct assistance)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to Grace Covenant PC (GC approved for direct assistance)
Dec-24	(2,500.00)	Grant to FPC Marion (GC approved for direct assistance)
Mar-25	(1,000.00)	Grant to Green Mtn PC - Community Healing (Lenten video Project)
Mar-25	(25,000.00)	Grant to Marshall PC - Church Repair
Mar-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to Marshall PC - Direct Relief to Community
Mar-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to Tryon PC - Direct Relief to Community
Mar-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to Grace Covenant PC - Direct Relief to Community
Mar-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to FPC, Marion - Direct Relief to Community
Mar-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to Warren-Wilson PC - Direct Relief to Community

Total Expensed \$ (102,500.00)

Current Balance \$ 489,882.90

APPENDIX D

Building H.O.P.E. Financial Statement

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

As of 3/31/25

Campaign Totals		Ministry details			
		Malawi	Camp Grier	Vital Churches	Guatemala
Collected	\$1,973,651.41	\$899,680.70	\$374,056.53	\$383,804.86	\$316,109.32
Gain/Loss (subject to market fluctuations)	\$618,727.68	\$297,789.61	\$77.47	\$156,266.97	\$164,593.63
Campaign Expenses	\$107,280.01	\$48,903.15	\$20,332.25	\$20,862.14	\$17,182.47
Utilized	\$922,222.97	\$361,209.32	\$352,011.84	\$71,570.81	\$137,431.00
Available for Requests	\$1,562,876.11	\$787,357.84	\$1,789.91	\$447,638.88	\$326,089.48

Malawi (Health Care & Education)	
Projects	Utilized
Rural Health Clinics*	\$64,587.54
Rural Health Clinic Housing*	\$99,019.78
Research Accountability	\$5,000.00
Mobile Health Unit	\$61,786.00
Medicines Fund	\$114,200.00
Ebenezer Institute Endowment Fund	\$16,616.00
* Per General Council approval, Aug 2024, requests for Rural Health Clinics and or Clinic Housing can come from either line item	

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	\$10,999.81
Supplement Leadership Support	\$9,000.00
Supplement Pastoral Support	\$0.00
Pastoral Education	\$1,535.00
<i>Consultants, Seminars & Upgrades in Technology</i>	
Hardware & Software	\$15,500.00
Websites	\$0.00
Consultants & Seminars	\$0.00

Guatemala (Education)	
Projects	Utilized
Higher Education Endowment	\$55,600.00
Fund for Theological Education of Pastors	\$58,000.00
Libraries/Teacher/Parent Formation Programs	\$18,881.00
Dream Goals	\$4,950.00

Building HOPE Campaign website:

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

APPENDIX E

LL-1

MODERATOR'S REPORT

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

April 29, 2025

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina held their Spring Gathering at First Presbyterian Church, Gastonia on April 5, 2025. Seventy-five women attended. There were reports by Susan Maveety on the Microloan Project and by the Rev. Bobbi White on mission work in Malawi. In addition to the usual business, Presbyterian Women presented a Faith Fund grant to Presbyterian Women from First Presbyterian, Gastonia to assist in the work of the Dream Center Academy, which provides tutoring programs for at risk students. A PW scholarship was presented to Evan Oldenburg from First Presbyterian, Asheville. The offering went to Children's Hope Alliance, which provides support for children who are in foster care.

The Reverend Grace Boyer was the speaker, referencing the topic of "Finding Resilience, Joy and Identity in Jesus Christ," which is the subject of the next *Horizons* Bible Study by Rashell Hunter. The Reverend Boyer shared her experiences as a pastor, educator, and chaplain which offer wisdom and strength to those searching for resilience, joy and identity.

Corise H. Gambrell, Moderator

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina



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

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

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



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



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

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

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



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

Virtual Prophetic Witness: A Challenge from the Co-Moderator - Joining us

via Zoom, Co-Moderators Tony Larson and Cece Armstrong brought a commanding message from afar—Tony from San Antonio and Cece from Charleston. They spoke candidly and with conviction about the path of



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

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

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

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

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



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



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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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



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



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

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

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



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

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

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

APPENDIX F

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

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



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

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

Honoring a Legacy: Celebrating Rev. Warren Lesane



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

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

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



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

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

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

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

APPENDIX G

STATED CLERK ATTACHMENT 1

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION REPORTS

April 29, 2025

West Asheville Presbyterian Church: The AC has taken the necessary steps to convey the property to the Reparations Stakeholder Authority of Asheville (RSAA), per the action of the presbytery on January 25, 2025. Legal documents have been signed, and the AC and presbytery staff are managing the final, last-minute issues to complete the transfer.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcia Mount Shoop and Patrick Johnson, Co-chairs

Churches concluding their Ministry: The AC currently has oversight of two properties: one from the former Saluda Presbyterian Church and one from the former First Presbyterian Church of Bessemer City. The AC is pursuing steps to transfer the Saluda Fellowship Hall to the Saluda Pop-Up Pantry and the Church Sanctuary to the Saluda Historical Committee. The AC is working to secure the First PC, Bessemer City building and is in conversation with a potential buyer. There are no remaining funds from the former congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Brittain, Chair

APPENDIX H

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

Rev./Ms./Mr. Rev. Betsy Stow

As Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Franklin Church(es)

The Commission, according to the appointment of Western North Carolina Presbytery met at the First Presbyterian Church, Franklin Church at 3:00 ~~AM~~ PM on February 20 25.

Present were: Ministers Byron Wade, Keith Grogg, Tom Phillips, Kelley Connelly

Elders Gail Lehman, Bruce Henderson, Delaine Nelson, Martha Rich

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

Christine Roy Yoder, Susan Blaydes

A quorum was present, and the meeting was opened with prayer, led by the Presbytery appointed Moderator, Byron Wade 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, _____ assisted in the leadership of worship;

Christine Roy Yoder preached the sermon _____ from the text Exodus 3:1-12;

Byron Wade reminded the congregation of the meaning of this service and proposed the Constitutional questions to the minister; Byron Wade proposed the Constitutional questions to the congregation.

These being answered in the affirmative Rev Betsy Stow was (ordained with prayer and the laying on of hands, and) installed as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church(es) agreeably to the Word of God and the Book of Order.

The charge to the pastor was delivered by Keith Grogg, and to the congregation by Tom Phillips. The newly installed pastor pronounced the benediction.

Following the service, the Commission reconvened, read and approved the minutes, and adjourned with prayer, led by _____, or a motion was made, and approved, to let the moderator and clerk approve the minutes and be adjourned with the benediction.

Moderator

Byron Wade

Clerk

Keith Grogg

APPENDIX I

STATED CLERK ATTACHMENT 2

PROCESS FOR VOTING ON THE AMENDMENTS

We ask that members of the Presbytery consider “Seeking to be Faithful Together” as they discuss, debate, and vote on the amendments. It can be downloaded from this link:

<https://pcusa.org/resource/seeking-be-faithful-together-guidelines-presbyterians-times-disagreement>

Members are also encouraged prior to the meeting to either download copies of the Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), approved at the 226th General Assembly, from this link: <https://pcusa.org/resource/proposed-amendments-constitution> or review in Stated Clerk Attachment 2.

The five amendments are before the Presbytery by action of the General Assembly in 2024. The question present by each amendment is: “Shall the constitution be amended as proposed by Amendment 24-x.” Presbytery votes in either the Affirmative or the Negative (Yes or No) having received the advice of the ministries/teams outlined below.

The Coordinating Ministry allowed the Stated Clerk to refer the five amendments to ministries/teams for review and recommendations regarding the proposed amendments.

The amendments will be handled as follows:

1. A representative of the ministry/team will briefly explain the amendment and its rationale.
2. The floor will be open to debate. There will be a time for discussion and debate, alternating pros and con.
3. Five minutes, following the explanation from the ministry/team briefing will be allocated for each Amendment.

Amendment	Subject	Ministry/Team	Recommendation
24-E	PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS G-2.0504b Temporary Pastoral Relationships	Commission on Ministry	AFFIRMATIVE
24-G	DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS G-2.0901 Congregational Meeting	Commission on Ministry	AFFIRMATIVE
24-K	INVESTIGATION -Referral to Investigating Committee D-7.0501	Permanent Judicial Commission	AFFIRMATIVE
24-L	ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE Administrative Leave D-7.0902b	Permanent Judicial Commission	AFFIRMATIVE
24-M	Episcopal-Presbyterian Agreement on Local Sharing of Ministries	Coordinating Ministry	AFFIRMATIVE

Proposed Amendments to the Constitution And Episcopal-Presbyterian Agreement on Local Sharing of Ministries

These amendments to the *Book of Order* and the agreement were approved by the 226th General Assembly (2024) and recommended to the presbyteries for their vote.

24-D — G-2.0504b

PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

G-2.0504b TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS (POL-05)

The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall Section G-2.0504b, Temporary Pastoral Relationships, be amended as follows:

(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

...

Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed ~~twelve~~ *thirty-six* months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. ...

Background and Rationale

An increasing number of congregations are being served by temporary pastors. Extending the specified period of service from 12 to 36 months will provide these congregations a stronger sense of stability. It would save both sessions and presbyteries considerable time and paperwork if they did not have to renegotiate a contract every year, giving them more time to attend to the tasks of interim/transitional ministry rather than continuous contract negotiation. Finally, given that the average time that it takes a congregation to move from the end of one pastoral relationship to the start of another pastoral relationship is longer than 12 months, the church should be able to make provision for temporary pastor contracts that are longer than 12 months.

Advice – From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 226th General Assembly (2024) to approve POL-05. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the Assembly that POL-05 identifies a helpful improvement in the language by retaining a specific standardized time length for temporary pastoral relationships, as well as providing a practical time length in response to the current missional context.

The Assembly Committee on Polity approved Item POL-05, 34/0. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item POL-05, 397/8.

For the full report on POL-05 go to
<https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001129>

24-E — G-2.0504b

PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

G-2.0504b TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS (POL-08 2)

The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0504b in the Form of Government be amended as follows?

(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

G-2.0504b Temporary Pastoral Relationships

Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. When a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery, may obtain the services of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place.

Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. A minister of the Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co- pastor, or associate pastor.

When the temporary pastoral relationship ends, no non-disclosure agreement shall be allowable.

A non-disclosure agreement, also known as a confidentiality agreement, is an agreement that outlines confidential material, knowledge, or information that is to remain confidential. Such an agreement binds the party or parties who have signed it and prevents them from discussing any information included in the contract with anyone not authorized by the agreement.

Background and Rationale

In the vows we take at ordination, we (ruling elders, teaching elders, and deacons) promise to serve one another, God, and God's church with love (W-4.0404). Non-disclosure agreements indicate the opposite has happened, and tend to engender speculation rather than truth-seeking. While there are specific instances when police or a court may forbid the sharing of information, those circumstances would not require any non-disclosure agreement for the parties specified so the ruling can be honored without any agreement. Similarly, a proper order of a permanent judicial

commission (PJC) would also take precedence over any such agreement entered into by the parties, and this would in no way preclude a PJC from making its own determination.

As pertains to a church and a pastor, a non-disclosure agreement invites speculation that is typically a disservice to all parties. The dissolution of pastoral relationships is similar to divorce in that the absence of information often results in speculation of the circumstances that can be far worse than the actual circumstance and can brand a pastor with erroneous behavior or brand a congregation as damaging to pastors. Further, if the dissolution involved a traumatic event from inappropriate behavior either on the part of a pastor or members of the congregation, the non-disclosure agreement would prevent the congregation from processing the collective trauma appropriately, so they would be unlikely to put it behind them. Dysfunction in the congregation as a result of unprocessed trauma typically carries over to negatively affect the next pastoral relationship.

Advice – From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 226th General Assembly (2024) to approve Item POL-08, with amendment.

The overture seeks to amend two sections of the Constitution, G-2.0901 and G-2.0504b, by prohibiting non-disclosure agreements at the dissolution of installed and temporary pastoral relationships. There have been numerous General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GA PJC) decisions against contractual non-disclosure agreements, also called “Confidentiality Statements” or “Confidentiality Agreements.” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that Item POL 08 identifies a helpful improvement by making explicit in the *Book of Order* a principal prohibition against such contracts. (See GA PJC (1990, 202-1, Baumann v. Bellefield Church); GA PJC (2006, 217-1, Hope, et al. v. Pby of San Francisco); GA (1998, 165, 16.0199, Req. 98-4).)

Advice – From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 226th General Assembly (2024) **approve POL-08.**

The policy statement “[God’s Work in Our Hands](#)” (1995) says:

“The glory of God shines in God’s own first work of creation before it shines in any work of our hands. It can shine in every fragment of faithful human work done in response to the One in whose image we are created. As the Creator God continues to create, we can participate through our work. By working with integrity and responsibility toward all our neighbors and all of creation; by treating other workers and ourselves with respect, compassion, and gratitude and by seeking forgiveness from God for the imperfections in our work; we bring ourselves and our work to God as an offering. This we understand to be good work, pleasing to God.”

It is not infrequent for calls between congregations and ministers, educators, and other church employees to end in acrimony. The practice of requiring non-disclosure agreements as a

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condition of severance precludes the opportunity for the light of God's glory to shine on every fragment of faithful human work, inhibits treating one another with respect and compassion, and prohibits individuals and congregations from authentically seeking forgiveness from God for the imperfections in our work.

The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the overture language following advice from the ACC and then approved Item POL-08 2, 40/0. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item POL-08 2, 393/11.

For the full report on POL-08, go to
<https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001169>

22-G — 2.0901

DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

G-2.0901 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING (POL-08 1)

The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-2.0901 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?

(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

An installed pastoral relationship may be dissolved only by the presbytery. Whether the minister of the Word and Sacrament, the congregation, or the presbytery initiates proceedings for dissolution of the relationship, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation to consider the matter and to consent, or decline to consent, to dissolution. *No non-disclosure agreement shall be allowable.*

A non-disclosure agreement, also known as a confidentiality agreement, is an agreement that outlines confidential material, knowledge, or information that is to remain confidential. Such an agreement binds the party or parties who have signed it and prevents them from discussing any information included in the contract with anyone not authorized by the agreement.

Background and Rationale

In the vows we take at ordination, we (ruling elders, teaching elders, and deacons) promise to serve one another, God, and God's church with love (W-4.0404). Non-disclosure agreements indicate the opposite has happened, and tend to engender speculation rather than truth-seeking. While there are specific instances when police or a court may forbid the sharing of information, those circumstances would not require any non-disclosure agreement for the parties specified so the ruling can be honored without any agreement. Similarly, a proper order of a permanent judicial commission (PJC) would also take precedence over any such agreement entered into by the parties, and this would in no way preclude a PJC from making its own determination.

As pertains to a church and a pastor, a non-disclosure agreement invites speculation that is typically a disservice to all parties. The dissolution of pastoral relationships is similar to divorce in that the absence of information often results in speculation of the circumstances that can be far worse than the actual circumstance and can brand a pastor with erroneous behavior or brand a congregation as damaging to pastors. Further, if the dissolution involved a traumatic event from inappropriate behavior either on the part of a pastor or members of the congregation, the non-disclosure agreement would prevent the congregation from processing the collective trauma appropriately, so they would be unlikely to put it behind them. Dysfunction in the congregation as a result of unprocessed trauma typically carries over to negatively affect the next pastoral relationship.

Advice – From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

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The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 226th General Assembly (2024) to approve Item POL-08, with amendment.

The overture seeks to amend two sections of the Constitution, G-2.0901 and G-2.0504b, by prohibiting non-disclosure agreements at the dissolution of installed and temporary pastoral relationships. There have been numerous General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GA PJC) decisions against contractual non-disclosure agreements, also called “Confidentiality Statements” or “Confidentiality Agreements.” The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that Item POL-08 identifies a helpful improvement by making explicit in the *Book of Order* a principal prohibition against such contracts. (See GA PJC (1990, 202-1, Baumann v. Bellefield Church); GA PJC (2006, 217-1, Hope, et al. v. Pby of San Francisco); GA (1998, 165, 16.0199, Req. 98-4).)

Advice – From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 226th General Assembly (2024) approve POL-08.

In the policy statement “[God’s Work in Our Hands](#)” (1995), it is stated:

“The glory of God shines in God’s own first work of creation before it shines in any work of our hands. It can shine in every fragment of faithful human work done in response to the One in whose image we are created. As the Creator God continues to create, we can participate through our work. By working with integrity and responsibility toward all our neighbors and all of creation; by treating other workers and ourselves with respect, compassion, and gratitude and by seeking forgiveness from God for the imperfections in our work; we bring ourselves and our work to God as an offering. This we understand to be good work, pleasing to God.”

“The glory of God shines in God’s own first work of creation before it shines in any work of our hands. It can shine in every fragment of faithful human work done in response to the One in whose image we are created. As the Creator God continues to create, we can participate through our work. By working with integrity and responsibility toward all our neighbors and all of creation; by treating other workers and ourselves with respect, compassion, and gratitude and by seeking forgiveness from God for the imperfections in our work; we bring ourselves and our work to God as an offering. This we understand to be good work, pleasing to God.”

It is not infrequent for calls between congregations and ministers, educators, and other church employees to end in acrimony. The practice of requiring non-disclosure agreements as a condition of severance precludes the opportunity for the light of God’s glory to shine on every fragment of faithful human work, inhibits treating one another with respect and compassion, and prohibits individuals and congregations from authentically seeking forgiveness from God for the imperfections in our work.

The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the overture language following advice from the ACC and then approved Item POL-08 1, 40/0. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item POL-08 1, 393/11.

For the full report on POL-08, go to
<https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001169>

24-K — D-7.0501

INVESTIGATION

D-7.0501 REFERRAL TO INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE (POL-02)

The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall D-7.0501 Referral to Investigating Committee be amended as follows:

(Added text is in *italics*.)

When a clerk of session or the stated clerk of a presbytery receives an allegation, without undertaking further inquiry, that clerk shall then report to the council only that an offense has been alleged without naming the *person* accused or the nature of the alleged offense and *shall* refer the statement of allegation promptly to an investigating committee, which shall conduct an inquiry as defined below. *Pursuant to G-4.0302, the clerk shall report to civil legal authorities any knowledge of harm, or risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or adult lacking mental capacity.* The clerk of session or stated clerk shall also inform the accuser of the disciplinary process and their rights and responsibilities in the process.

Background and Rationale

Editor's note: The original rationale was written for language which was significantly amended by the General Assembly. This edited rationale is limited to those sections of the rationale which apply to the approved proposed amendments.

The context for D-7.0501 is the procedure by which submission of a formal accusation of a disciplinary offense prompts the council of a church or presbytery to form an investigating committee and commence the disciplinary process of the *Book of Order*.

Disclosing relevant information as our primary moral obligation follows in G-4.0302, the Mandatory Reporting provision. Here is the explicit mandate to take positive action to protect vulnerable people by disclosing information to authorities. It reiterates the primary moral value which prioritizes protecting people at risk. G-4.0302 makes clear the substantive basis for disclosing: "...knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity..." Knowledge is essential to being able to act preventively.

The second part of the moral and polity framework is our obligation which is implicit in Chapter 7 of the Book of Order Disciplinary Process. D-7.0201a. and D-7.1501b. both address accountability in circumstances when a person "knew, or reasonably should have known of the reasonable risk of sexual abuse of another... [and] failed to take reasonable steps to minimize the

risk.” The moral commitment in Chapter 7 is that we are responsible for recognizing a risk and that once we know, we are obligated to act to reduce the possibility of harm.

Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

Editor’s note: The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised that the 226th General Assembly (2024) disapprove the original recommendation of Item POL-02. The committee amended the original recommendation. This edited advice is limited to those sections of the advice which apply to the approved proposed amendments.

The *Book of Order* includes provisions designed to protect the vulnerable, such as requirements for administrative leave or other restrictions when there has been an allegation of sexual abuse (D-7.09), and requirements for sexual misconduct and child and youth protection policies (G-3.0106). The confidentiality provisions for the exercise of pastoral care state explicitly that confidentiality is not to be used to keep secret allegations of abuse and mandate reporting to ecclesiastical and civil authorities, especially in a situation where an individual “reasonably believes that there is a risk of future physical harm or abuse” (G-4.0302).

The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the original Recommendation significantly then approved Item POL-02, 37/0. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item POL-02, 401/4.

For the full report on POL-02, go to
<https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001123>

24-L — D-7.0902b

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

D-7.0902b ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE (POL-04)

The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall D-7.0902B Administrative Leave be amended as follows:
(Added text is in *italics*.)

Regardless of the employment status of the minister of the Word and Sacrament, the members designated in accordance with D-3.0102, shall determine as quickly as possible, after receiving the written allegations and providing the accused an opportunity to be heard, whether the risk to a congregation and/or to other potential victims of abuse requires *paid* administrative leave or other restrictions upon the minister's service when considered in light of the nature and probable truth of the allegations. Such *paid* administrative leave or restrictions will continue until either the matter is resolved in one of the ways prescribed in the disciplinary process or until the leave or restrictions are altered or removed by members of the commission. *The cost shall be borne by the employing entity whenever possible or be shared by the presbytery as necessary.*

Background and Rationale

This amendment would preserve the due process rights of all ministers of the Word and Sacrament accused of sexual misconduct without diminishing the protections afforded to the alleged or potential victims of that misconduct.

Since the imposition of administrative leave was first authorized on July 3, 2005, until the adoption of Church Discipline on July 9, 2023, all ministers and presbyteries throughout the denomination were subject to a single, standard process when allegations of sexual misconduct were received. That process provided presbyteries the necessary mechanism for imposing administrative leave while requiring that the leave be paid.

The imprecision and ambiguity of the current language in D-7.0902 fails to provide a standard process applicable throughout the denomination. The text of D-7.0902 fails to define the administrative leave as either paid or unpaid. The conspicuous omission or deletion of “paid administrative leave” from the text of D-10.0106 in the Church Discipline, and the substitution of simply “administrative leave” in D-7.0902, lead to at least two plausible interpretations: first, that all administrative leave is to be unpaid, and second, that each presbytery can set its own policy as to whether the leave is to be paid or unpaid. Such imprecision and ambiguity do not provide an acceptable constitutional standard to be applied equally to all ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

I. Unpaid Administrative Leave is Improper. If the drafters' intent was that all administrative leave is to be unpaid, that result unfairly and improperly deprives ministers of the Word and Sacrament of vital due process protections.

A. Unpaid Leave Undercuts the Presumption of Innocence. The imposition of unpaid administrative leave within days of receipt of allegations, before even an investigative committee has been appointed, is completely inconsistent with and dramatically undercuts the presumption of innocence set forth in D-8.0201.c. Not only is a minister stripped of all ecclesiastical authority, but the presbytery immediately deprives the minister of any right to compensation as set forth in the terms of call to which the minister and congregation have agreed and which the presbytery approved.

B. Diminished Standard of Proof. The current language in D-7.0902.b. allows the forfeiture of all compensation based upon a demonstrably lower standard of proof than that required for an ultimate finding of guilt. D-7.0902.b. allows the imposition of administrative leave based on the "probable truth of the allegations." D-8.0902 allows a finding of guilt only "when a comparison and consideration of all the evidence compels an abiding conviction that the material facts necessary to prove the charge are true." Relying on phraseology from the Rules of Discipline, those standards of proof would have been probable cause and beyond reasonable doubt. Regardless of the phraseology incorporated into Church Discipline, the quantum of proof required under D-7.0902.b. is dramatically less than that in D-8.0902.

C. Pretrial Forfeiture of Compensation is Punitive. "[T]he exercise of church discipline is one for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it, for redeeming, *not for punishing*." D-1.01 (Emphasis added). The forfeiture of all compensation within days of receipt of allegations, before an investigation or trial, is tantamount to punishment before an adjudication of guilt and is contrary to the constitutional objectives.

Advice – From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 226th General Assembly (2024) to approve Item POL-04.

Section D-7.0902 provides a process for determining whether administrative leave should be required when an allegation of sexual abuse has been received against a minister of the Word and Sacrament. When the Rules of Discipline were updated in 2022, Section D-7.0902 of Church Discipline replaced D-10.0106. The former D-10.0106 expressly required administrative leave to be "paid." The word "paid" is missing from the new D-7.0902. Section D-7.0902 is equally silent on whether administrative leave should be unpaid. It is simply silent.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution agrees with the rationale offered in support of reinserting the requirement that administrative leave be paid and believes that the omission of the word "paid" was an oversight. POL-04 also inserts clarifying language, "The cost shall be borne by the employing entity whenever possible or be shared by the presbytery as necessary." The Advisory Committee on the Constitution has no objection to the clarifying language and believes it could be helpful to the church.

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The Assembly Committee on Polity approved Item POL-04, 38/0. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item POL-04, 403/9.

For the full report on POL-04, go to
<https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001127>

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REVIEW OF PROPOSED EPISCOPAL-PRESBYTERIAN AGREEMENT ON LOCAL SHARING OF MINISTRIES

The proposed agreement represents the third step in a gradual expansion of shared ministries between The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Although it expands possibilities of ordained clergy serving in ecumenical ministries and in placements within the other denomination, it stops short of mutual recognition of ordained ministries. The parties do agree, however, to remain in dialogue to consider that question.

The proposal acknowledges that both denominations “reflect the threefold ordered ministries expressed by Ignatius of Antioch (bishop, presbyter, and deacon),” while recognizing that the two polities “express them differently.” It also declares that both “have recognized the gift of . . . the ministry of oversight, locally adapted as expressed in the 2017 Churches Uniting in Christ mutual recognition [of] ordered ministry.”

The significant step of the proposed agreement is to permit a limited exchange of ordained ministers between the two churches. Specifically, it allows acceptance of Episcopal presbyters (i.e., priests) to serve in “Presbyterian placements and in ecumenical ministries where the Presbyterian Church has the right of appointment”; and it allows acceptance of Presbyterian presbyters (i.e., ministers of word and sacrament or teaching elders) to serve in “Episcopal placements and in ecumenical ministries where the Episcopal Church has the right of appointment.” The proposal extends these permissions only to ordained clergy, not ruling elders or commissioned pastors in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or deacons in The Episcopal Church. Interestingly, it provides that individuals serving in these roles may celebrate the sacraments, but directs them to use the worship resources of the church in which they are ordained unless the diocesan bishop or the presbytery authorizes to use the resources of the denomination in they are serving.

The proposed agreement indicates that the Ecclesiastical Authority of the inviting body, not the individual presbyter, should initiate the process of exchange and that it should consult with the Ecclesiastical Authority of the presbyter. Only presbyters who have been ordained for three years and active in ministry of their denomination are available for the exchange. Presbyters who serve in an exchange remain members of their denomination, are eligible for the denomination’s benefits, and are subject to the jurisdiction of the denomination. Appointments are for two-to-four year terms, which may be renewed.

The proposal also includes a suggested order of service for installation of the presbyter and provides that both the diocese and the presbytery should be invited to attend. After a detailed rationale for the proposed agreement, the proposed agreement includes with detailed glossaries of terms used by each denomination.

The agreement seems a logical progression toward an eventual goal of mutual recognition of ordained ministries. As indicated in the rationale for the proposal, the agreement represents a small step toward ending the historical divisions of the church. It also provides opportunities for the joint planting of new worshipping communities. Therefore, I move that the Coordinating Ministry recommend that the Presbytery of Western North Carolina vote in favor of the proposed agreement.

Ken Murchison, Moderator

24-M Episcopal-Presbyterian Agreement on Local Sharing of Ministries

Send to presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote pursuant to G-5.0203 (ECU-05)

Episcopal-Presbyterian Agreement on Local Sharing of Ministries

THE WAY FORWARD

In our current agreement, our two churches agreed “that authorized ministers of our churches may, subject to the regulations of the churches and within the limits of their competence, carry out the tasks of their own office in congregations of the other churches when requested and approved by the diocesan bishop and local presbytery.” Furthermore, a conditional was established on this point of agreement that “because we do not yet have reconciliation and full interchangeability of ordained ministries, all authorization for these special opportunities must conform to the *Book of Common Worship* and the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church*.”

Our current agreement also calls the two denominations to “encourage diocesan bishops and presbyteries to provide a regular occasion for planning, discussing, resourcing for missional, educational and liturgical life together. In addition, to explore possibilities for new church development and redevelopment together,” as well as provide a process to support and implement the above recommendations (guidelines).

Our two churches have agreed to be in dialogue for the specific purpose of considering the question of the mutual recognition of ordained ministries, as a step towards the unity that is Christ’s will for his Church. Our current agreement enabled The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in June of 2017 to formally and publicly participate in the

Churches Uniting in Christ recognition of ordered ministry. This public proclamation underscores and casts away possible barriers of our current agreement to move forward in missional partnership.

On the basis of converging but not yet wholly compatible understandings of the ordained ministry, and sufficient agreement in faith and ministry, together with a marked growing together of our two churches over recent decades, this group proposes that our churches deepen our current relationship.

Sharing in ecumenical ministry

We agree with the World Council of Churches' 2013 *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* in regard to ordered ministry, there is no single pattern of ministry in the New Testament, though all churches would look to Scripture in seeking to follow the will of the Lord concerning how ordained ministry is to be understood, ordered and exercised. At times, the Spirit has guided the Church to adapt its ministries to contextual needs (cf. Acts 6:1-6). Various forms of ministry have been blessed with the gifts of the Spirit. Early writers, such as Ignatius of Antioch, insisted upon the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon. This pattern of three related ministries can be seen to have roots in the New Testament; eventually it became the generally accepted pattern and is still considered normative by many churches today... Among the several means for maintaining the Church's apostolicity, such as the scriptural canon, dogma and liturgical order, ordained ministry has played an important role. Succession in ministry is meant to serve the apostolic continuity of the Church.⁶

Both The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reflect the threefold ordered ministries expressed by Ignatius of Antioch (bishop, presbyter and deacon), however in our polities express them differently or "locally adapted" and both denominations hold, in the broad ecumenical sense, apostolic succession.⁷ Both The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have recognized the gift of *episkopé*, the ministry of oversight, locally adapted, as expressed in the 2017 Churches Uniting in Christ mutual recognition or ordered ministry.

⁶ *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (Faith and Order Paper No. 214) (Geneva: WCC, 2013), 26. Cf. Ignatius of Antioch's Letter to the Magnesians 6 and 13; Letter to the Trallians 7; Letter to the Philadelphians 4; Letter to the Smyrnaeans 8.

⁷ See *The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (Philadelphia: PCUSA, 1789), "bishop" and "pastor" are interchangeable, and it is the pastor, as moderator of the session, that oversees as a member of the presbytery and presides at the ordination of elders and deacons. Cf. "The Successor to Peter: A Paper for Discussion from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)", Unilateral Discussion PC(USA) and Vatican. Louisville, Kentucky, December 6-7, 2000. Endnote 5, "It may be of some interest that prior to the 1983 reunion of the northern and southern branches of Presbyterianism, the Book of Order of the northern branch, the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., offered several titles for ministers of Word and Sacrament, among them the title 'bishop.' If one looks, say, at the roll calls in the minutes of the Presbytery of Philadelphia around the middle of the nineteenth century one will read 'The following bishops were in attendance.....' The concept was that every installed pastor of a congregation is bishop of a congregationally constituted diocese. He or she is surrounded by presbyters or 'elders' and assisted by 'deacons.'" Here, on a small scale, as a parochial diocese, Presbyterians have the historic threefold ministry expressed by Ignatius.

Specifically, the ecumenical dialogue between The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in round two and in this round three, recognize that diocese bishops and presbytery moderators have similar constituted ecclesial authority and expression of the gift of *episkopé* as it relates to presiding at ordination, as well as installing or instituting a presbyter to a pastoral relationship.

Guided by the World Council of Churches' 1982 foundational paper, *Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry*, Chapter VI, as well as the 2013 *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* (Faith and Order Paper No. 214), presbyteries and dioceses are strongly encouraged to invite presbytery moderators and diocese bishops to participate in each other's celebrations of ministry, not only ordinations but also installations and institutions, and bishops and moderators share an ecumenical blessing. It is also strongly encouraged in their ordination of presbyters that each also includes bishops from other denominations with whom each church shares recognition of mutual ministry (i.e. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Northern Province and the Southern Province of the Moravian Church in America). Finally, we fervently pray that when a presbytery moderator is installed, an Episcopal bishop or their designee be present, and when an Episcopal bishop is consecrated, a Presbyterian moderator or their designee be present, and both be invited in those moments of celebration to share an ecumenical blessing.

Limited orderly exchange of ministers

Within the current agreement (2008-2009), and without exceeding the discretion of The Episcopal Church bishops and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) presbyteries, there shall be provision for the following exchange of ordered ministers between our churches:

- the acceptance of Episcopal presbyters (those ordained and referred to as *priests*) in Presbyterian placements and in ecumenical ministries where the Presbyterian Church has the right of appointment;
- the acceptance of Presbyterian Church presbyters (specifically those ordained and consecrated to the ministry of the Word, Sacrament, and teaching, referred to as *ministers of Word and Sacrament* or *teaching elders*) in Episcopal appointments such as ecumenical ministries and cooperating parishes where the Episcopal Church has the right of appointment.
- This agreement does not enable ordained ruling elders and commissioned pastors (also known as commissioned ruling elders) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), nor deacons of The Episcopal Church or Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), to be considered.

THE GUIDELINES FOR LIMITED ORDERLY EXCHANGE OF MINISTERS

For missional purposes and in consultation between the diocesan bishop and local presbytery, a presbyter may be licensed (permitted) by the appropriate Ecclesiastical Authority to serve under the following guidelines.

The limited orderly exchange process begins with the identification of a ministry needed by the appropriate Ecclesiastical Authority of the inviting body and the identification of a presbyter from

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the sending body who may serve in that ministry setting.

The Church knows well that its mission is compromised at every point by its disunity, which continues at many levels despite the great ecumenical achievements of the last century. How can the Church credibly proclaim the unity of humankind when it is too fractured to recognize a common baptism and to gather around one eucharistic table in the one apostolic faith? We have institutionalized divisions in the Church and come to accept them as normal, forgetting that they are a stumbling-block and a barrier to faith for many. We overlook the fact that they stand in conflict with the will of Christ and amount to a refusal of the unity which is his gift.

The witness of the Church – its service of the mission of God – will be greatly enhanced by the overcoming of historic divisions between the churches⁴. The removal of barriers between our two churches, The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while not providing an instant or complete solution to the problems and challenges confronting the Church, will be a step of great importance, especially when seen together with other comparable steps being considered by our churches. In many places in rural and urban parts of the United States, for example our churches have diverse communities that have benefited greatly from the sharing of ordained ministries. Missionally, our two churches could expand in joint planting of new worshipping communities, as well as a partner in union or federated parishes which are referred to as *ecumenical congregations*.⁵ The matter is not less urgent, nor are the advantages less significant, in the deepening of our covenant relationship in order to establish new eucharistic communities and mission projects which feed the body, mind, and souls of God's people.

The proposals in this paper have been formulated out of our obedience to the Gospel and the better discharge of our call to mission. Unity is for the sake of mission. Changes in the socio-economic pattern of life in the U.S. in recent years provide an opportunity to develop the unity between our two churches. When Christians demonstrate in their lives that the barriers which divide the rest of society do not divide the Church, the Gospel is proclaimed. We may be certain that we are called, together, to grow in mission, the mission of the Church, within the mission of the triune God.

AFFIRMING THE CURRENT ECUMENICAL AGREEMENT

This group affirms the current Episcopal Presbyterian Agreement of 2008. Among these were:

- We acknowledge one another's churches as churches belonging to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church;
- We acknowledge that in our churches the Word of God is authentically preached and the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist are duly administered;

⁴ See The Book of Common Prayer p 855: "The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."

⁵ See *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes*. Edited by Jooseop Keum (Geneva: WCC, 2013).

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The Ecclesiastical Authority of the inviting body initiates the process of the limited orderly exchange between the placement or ecumenical ministry to be served and the presbyter. The presbyter does not initiate the process of exchange.

The inviting body shall consult with the appropriate Ecclesiastical Authority of the presbyter to determine the suitability of the potential service and to receive the concurrence of the sending body. The presbyter remains accountable to the sending church for the continuation of ministerial status.

Both The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) agree that experience in and knowledge of one's own tradition is seen as necessary before serving in a different tradition. Therefore, the limited orderly exchange of minister's opportunities are only open to presbyters who have been ordained for at least three years and active within the ministry of their denomination.

Presbyters serving in a limited orderly exchange position shall be temporary under this agreement. The service of presbyters should ordinarily be for a two- to four-year period, which may be renewed. Should a presbyter of one church intend to serve permanently in another church then the process of the transfer or reception of ministerial status should be followed according to the rules of the receiving Church.

Should a disciplinary process be necessary, the presbyter remains under the jurisdiction of the sending body, but the inviting body may be asked to participate as necessary.

Pension and medical coverage is through the church of ecclesiastical membership.

Functions

When a presbyter is licensed or commissioned by the appropriate Ecclesiastical Authority, the presbyter is authorized to:

- to exercise pastoral or administrative responsibility;
- lead public worship as a presbyter under the direction of diocesan bishop or presbytery;
- preach the Gospel;
- celebrate and administer the sacraments within the guidelines specified below;
- prepare persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, and shall function under the direction of diocesan bishop or presbytery;
- and present the good news of Jesus Christ in such a way that people are led to receive Christ as Savior and follow Christ as Lord in the fellowship of the Church, assisting with the diocese or presbytery's ministry of evangelism partnership.

While a presbyter serves a particular placement or ecumenical setting because we do not yet have reconciliation and full interchangeability of ordained ministries, as stated in the current agreement, all authorization for these special opportunities must conform to the Book of Common Worship and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the Book of

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Common Prayer and the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. What this means explicitly is that:

- Presbyterian presbyters will use the authorized or commended worship resources of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) unless authorized by the diocesan bishop to use Episcopal worship resources (with the exception of Eucharist prayers);
- Episcopal priests will use the authorized or commended worship resources of The Episcopal Church unless authorized by the presbytery to use Presbyterian worship resources;
- Priests and presbyters are bound to the Eucharist liturgies of their respective prayer books and denominational resources when they preside;
- Both priests and presbyters may use authorized or commended worship resources of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in which both churches are in full communion, including the Eucharist liturgies, with the authorization of the “inviting” Ecclesiastical Authority.

Training, Examination, and Oversight

A presbyter who serves under the terms of this Agreement on Limited Orderly Exchange of Ministers shall receive such preparation and instruction, or formation, as determined by the diocesan bishop or presbytery to be appropriate to the particular placement or ecumenical setting and length of time shall be determined by the Ecclesiastical Authority’s own rule.

The presbyter shall be examined by the appropriate Ecclesiastical Authority as to personal faith, motives for seeking to serve, and the areas of instruction determined by diocesan or presbytery.

The presbyter authorized under the terms of this Agreement shall work under the supervision of the diocesan bishop or presbytery. The diocesan bishop or presbytery may at any time withdraw this authorization for reasons it deems good and sufficient. A presbyter shall be assigned as a mentor and local supervisor.

An authorization may be for no more than four years, and no less than two. Within an appropriate time before the expiration of the commission, the presbyter shall review the covenant relationship with the diocesan bishop and presbytery. The commission may be renewed with the consent of all interested parties (i.e. diocesan bishop and presbytery, presbyter, authorized representative(s) of a particular placement or ecumenical ministry).

A presbyter who has been authorized and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry may continue to be listed as available to serve but is not authorized to perform the functions specified above until commission is renewed in order to serve in placement or ecumenical setting by the appropriate Ecclesiastical Authority.

Celebration of an Ecumenical Ministry

When the diocesan bishop or presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of a presbyter to serve a particular placement or ecumenical ministry providing the services described above, it shall

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commission and institute/install the presbyter to service as designated by the diocesan bishop or presbytery while also abiding by the following:

Both diocese and presbytery will be invited to the Service.

The inviting diocesan bishop or presbytery moderator shall, at the time of such celebration, read this preface to the Service:

The Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese/Presbytery is satisfied that A.B. accepts the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church and desires to serve this Church in full accord to [the Episcopal Presbyterian Agreement]. We are about to confer upon A.B. the grace and authority of Holy Orders/ordered ministry as this Church has received them and requires them for the exercise of the ministry of a presbyter.

The certificates of the commission shall contain the words:

Acknowledging the ministry which A.B. has already received and hereby adding to that commission the grace and authority of Holy Orders/ordered ministry as understood and required by this Church for the exercise of the ministry of a presbyter.

Following the rites of each church for instituting or installation, the presenters present the presbyter saying

In baptism, N. was clothed with Christ. N. was ordained a presbyter by Bishop N. of the Diocese of N./the Presbytery of N., and is now called by God through the voice of the church to serve as

_____.

The people respond

We remember with joy our common calling to serve Christ, and we celebrate God's call to N., to serve among us as _____.

The sending bishop or presbytery moderator asks the candidate to reaffirm their particular ordination in regard to a priest or a presbyter.

The inviting bishop or presbytery moderator addresses the presbyter, saying

While affirming and upholding your ordination vows as a presbyter in The Episcopal Church/Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while you labor in covenant relationship with the Diocese of N./Presbytery of N., will you honor the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ as this Church has received them? And will you, in accordance with the Constitution/canons of this Church, obey the ecclesiastical authority of the bishop and presbytery, and other ministers who may have authority over you and your work during this covenant relationship?

Answer

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I am willing and ready to do so, and I solemnly declare that I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Episcopal/Presbyterian Church as required in order to be commissioned to labor as _____ under covenant agreement of our two churches.

At the appropriate time during the service of institution or installation, the presbyter kneels facing the people and is surrounded by the bishop, presbytery moderator, and all other priests and presbyters. With the bishop and presbytery moderator's hands laid on the presbyter, as well as the other priests and presbyters, one of the following⁸, or a similar prayer, is said aloud by the inviting bishop or presbytery moderator

Come to our help, Lord, Holy Father, almighty and eternal God; you are the source of every honor and dignity, of all progress and stability. You watch over the growing family of humanity by your gift of wisdom and your pattern of order. When you had appointed high priests from among the people of Israel to lead your people, you also chose others to serve with them and to help them in their task; and so there grew up the ranks of presbyters and the offices of Levites, established by sacred rites.

In the desert, you extended the spirit of Moses to seventy wise men who helped him to rule the great company of his people. You shared among the sons of Aaron the fullness of their father's power, to provide worthy priests in sufficient number for the increasing rites and worship, and elders to care for the spiritual and temporal welfare of God's people. With the same loving care you gave companions to your Son's apostles to help in teaching the faith: they preached the gospel to the whole world. Lord, grant also to us such fellow workers, for we are weak and our need is greater. Provide for us presbyters who will provide for the worship and care of your people as we seek to be the body of Christ in the world.

Almighty Father, strengthen by your Holy Spirit this servant of yours the dignity of your eternal priesthood in Christ, as a servant of servants. Renew within him/her/them the Spirit of holiness. As a co-worker with bishops, pastors and fellow presbyters may he/she/they be faithful to the ministry that he/she/they receives from you, Lord God, and be to others a model of right conduct. May he/she/they be faithful in working with your people, as well as ordered deacons, fellow presbyters and pastors, so that the words of the Gospel may reach the ends of the earth, and the family of nations, made one in Christ, may become God's one, holy people. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

OR

⁸ Prayers adapted from Catholic Church, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, *Ceremonial of Bishops: Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope John Paul II* (Revised), "Rite of Ordination of Presbyter". Liturgical Press, 1989.

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O God, the source of all holiness, whose grace is ever effective, whose blessing is ever fulfilled, pour out on these servants of yours the gift of your blessed Holy Spirit. By their noble and exemplary lives let them prove that they are elders of the people, true to the Gospel of Christ our Lord and to the norms for presbyters as laid down by Paul to Timothy and Titus. Let them meditate on your law day and night, so that they may believe what they have read, teach what they have believed, and practice what they have taught. May justice, constancy, mercy, courage, and all the other virtues be reflected in their every way of life. May they inspire others by their example, and hearten them by their admonitions. May they keep pure and spotless the gift of their calling. For the worship of your people may they celebrate the mystery of Holy Communion and living a sacramental life in community. May they through persevering charity mature in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, reflecting Christ clearly, and rise on the day of the Resurrection with a good conscience, true faith, and the full gifts of the Holy Spirit. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

Followed by a declaration similar to

N., you are instituted/installed to service in this church as _____ in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through him.

Following the service of institution or installation, the Eucharistic celebrant shall be the bishop in Episcopal settings, and ordinarily the authorized presbyter in PC(USA) settings.

RATIONALE

PARTICIPANTS

Representing the Episcopal Church: the Rt. Rev. Eugene Taylor Sutton (co-chair), the Rev. Canon Elise Johnstone (co-vice chair), Dr. Michael Booker, Elizabeth Ring, the Rev. Dr. Joseph Wolyniak, and Richard Mammana and the Rev. Margaret Rose serving as staff.

Representing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): Ruling Elder Anne Bond (co-chair), the Rev. Dr. Neal Presa (co-vice chair), the Rev. Terri Ofori, the Rev. Dr. Christian Boyd, the Rev. Robert Foltz-Morrison, the Rev. Brooke Pickrell, the Rev. Brian Entz, and Ruling Elder Dr. Dianna Wright serving as staff liaison.

PREAMBLE: The Urgency of the Times

Such a Time as This

The Book of Esther recalls a time of great challenge. Likewise, our current time finds our world amid many challenges, including a global pandemic with still yet unknown overall effects on the Church. The global Christian Church around the world has found itself in a season of reinvention and redefinition. The events of 2020 have called us to ask ourselves what it truly means to be Christian.

Individual congregations have been challenged to adapt to a changing world in ways that have shattered our links with the past and old ways of doing church. In so doing, we have focused on the core duties of being Christ in the world. This has created both challenges and opportunities.

Global Pandemic and Racial Endemic

Our time stands in particular need of unity. Both the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Episcopal Church acknowledge the historical and present reality of sin of racism and white supremacy that denies the impartiality of God, the reconciling work of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit poured forth into all persons. Both bodies acknowledge their complicity and that they are called to end all racial discrimination, repenting and ministering to those injured by it. We cannot remain silent about this divisiveness, nor did Jesus: “Recognizing what they were thinking, Jesus said, ‘Any country that divides itself into groups which fight each other will not last very long.’” (Matt 12.25, GNT). Reform always comes from the margins, whether it be that prophetic voice crying in the wilderness or activists on city streets protesting the death of another person of color as if Black lives do not matter.

Accordingly, there is a present and historical urgency borne in this agreement is to move both churches toward that unity in mission. The triune mission of God is the foundation of the church’s unity and its mission in the world. It is among the last of Jesus’ prayers: “That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” (John 17.21, ESV) This document represents the culmination of many decades of dialogues between the Episcopal Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).¹

The Church, guided by God’s wisdom, can embrace this opportunity and examine how ecclesial

bodies can work together.

Tearing Down Ecclesiastical Barriers

Old walls had prevented mission and ministry together, and in this time of notable change, the participants of the bi-lateral dialogue between the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) invite our ecclesial bodies to consider this limited exchange agreement on the local sharing of ministries for passage at the General Convention 2021 and General Assembly 2022.

The old walls preventing work together have been torn down through a vastly changing world and church context. With the foundation of the 2008 Episcopal Presbyterian Agreement, our common full communion partners of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Moravian Church (Northern and Southern Provinces), our work together through Churches Uniting in Christ, work together in public witness as well as numerous collaborative local ministries, a pathway has been created for continued mission and ministry together, toward the unity that God calls us to.

Thus, the Presbyterian/Episcopal Dialogue requests our respective authorizing bodies to consider the following Agreement; to continue the Dialogue with future deliberations; and that both of our Heads of Communion commit themselves publicly to this effort and to consider a public celebration of our progress to date and our hope for the future.

Psalm 133:1 Oh, how good and pleasant it is, when kindred live together in unity! (St. Helena Psalter)

INTRODUCTION²

The Church does not live for itself. It is called into being by the Gospel of Jesus Christ to serve the mission of the triune God in the world. ‘The Church belongs to God. It is the creation of God’s Word and the Holy Spirit. It cannot exist by and for itself.’³ The mission of God is a single, all-embracing mission which confronts the Church with a range of complementary tasks. Impelled by the joyful duty of giving praise and thanks to God for all the blessings of creation and redemption, the Church seeks to serve God by making known the Good News of salvation and by meeting human need wherever it finds it. In accordance with God’s purpose to ‘gather up all things in Christ’ (Eph. 1:10), the Church is called to embody in an anticipatory way the reconciliation and communion of all people.

¹ The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have been in ecumenical dialogue since the 19th century.

² Adapted from *For the Sake of the Gospel: Mutual Recognition of Ordained Ministries in the Anglican and Uniting Churches in Australia*, 2001.

³ *The Nature and Purpose of the Church*, Faith and Order Paper No. 181 (Geneva: WCC, 1998), §9.

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- We acknowledge one another's ordained ministries as given by God and instruments of grace, and look forward to the time when the reconciliation of our churches makes possible the full interchangeability of ministers;
- We acknowledge that personal and collegial oversight (episcopé) is embodied and exercised in our churches in a variety of forms, episcopal and non-episcopal, as a visible sign of the Church's unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission, and ministry.
- We agree that The Episcopal Church will invite members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to receive Holy Communion in their churches and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will invite members of The Episcopal Church to receive Holy Communion in their churches. We encourage the members of our churches to accept this Eucharistic hospitality and thus express their unity with each other in the one Body of Christ.

In short, we recognize and affirm the validity of one another's churches which provide for their covenant communities word and sacrament, ordered ministries, as well as the embodiment and exercise of the ministry of oversight (communally, collegially, and personally). However, due to the divergence in our equally valid ecclesiastical polities, and to some extent, existing church traditions and customs limit interchangeability of ordered ministers, and thus full communion, at this time. Despite this recognition, this group believes it has prayerfully discerned a way forward through which our two churches may continue to journey together in a complementary manner and enriching each other as we participate in the mission of God.

PRESBYTERIAN GLOSSARY

***Apostolic function of episkopé** –The apostolic function of those who oversee the ministry of the church, as reflected in various New Testament texts, is the function exercised by the apostles in spreading the Gospel and exists so that the Church maintains its witness to Jesus Christ.

***Apostolic succession** – Continuity with the ministry of the early church, especially the disciples of Jesus. Reformed and Roman Catholics believe that there is an apostolic succession, though they locate that succession differently.

***Apostolic era** –The period of the history of Christianity when the original apostles of Jesus were still alive.

The Book of Common Worship (BCW) – A liturgical resource in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) consisting of various liturgies and prayers consistent with the *Directory for Worship* section of Book Two of the Constitution, *The Book of Order*. The BCW's most recent edition was published in 2018.

***Catholicity** – As described in the baptismal catechesis of Cyril of Jerusalem, refers not simply to geographic extension but also to the manifold variety of local churches and their participation in the fullness of faith and life that unites them in the one community.

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Church – The one holy catholic apostolic church in every time and in every place. Depending on context, may also refer corporately to an ecclesial communion/denomination, e.g. The Episcopal Church, The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Churches – Fellowship of ecclesial communions/denominations, e.g. Churches Uniting in Christ, World Council of Churches, World Communion of Reformed Churches.

church (lowercase “c”) – The local expression of an ecclesial communion/denomination, i.e. congregation, parish.

Commissioned Pastor (also known as commissioned ruling elder) – A ruling elder authorized by a presbytery to limited pastoral service assigned by a presbytery for a limited time. Commissioned pastors may be authorized by the presbytery to moderate session, administer the sacraments, and officiate marriages where permitted by state law.

Commissioning – An act of God through the voice of the Church whereby a council of the Church authorizes, blesses, and entrusts to an individual, usually one who is in ordered ministry, to discharge the duties and responsibilities of a particular ministry.

***Communion(s)** – The community fellowship gathered at the table together. Since we have not yet realized the goal of all churches being in communion with each other –essentially recognize

our being one Church as Christ prayed we would be –we are different communions gathering at different tables with only imperfect unity in Christ.

Constitution of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) – The governing documents that frame the ecclesial life of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Constitution consists of two parts: Book One is *The Book of Confessions*, expressing in twelve creeds, catechisms, confessions, and statements of faith what Presbyterians believe; and Book Two is *The Book of Order*, expressing how Presbyterians live out their confessional belief with respect to governance, church discipline, and principles of worship.

Councils – Duly constituted gatherings of ruling and teaching elders for discernment and decision-making for the spiritual welfare of the church. The councils of the church are the session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly. Each council is distinct but mutually related to one another, the action of one council is understood to be an action on behalf of the whole and the whole church's act through that appropriate council, with the larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, governing the smaller. The session consists of all teaching elders serving in a local congregation and active ruling elders. Presbytery, synod, and General Assembly consist of an equal number of teaching and ruling elders. (adapted from *The Book of Order*, F- 3.0203)

Covenant Partnership - An ecclesiastical and ecclesial relationship whereby each participating communion acknowledges that it is undertaking a serious commitment, one that involves actions as well as words. Covenant partnership cannot be achieved without awareness of existing differences and similarities among the partners; it will demand dedication to walking and working together in ways that may, at times, represent a break with the past. Walking together involves not only the likelihood, but also the certainty of mutual challenge and change; because of this commitment, each body will eventually be different in ways that presently cannot be seen. The partner churches commit themselves to this new relationship with seriousness of intent, and full assurance that the One who calls us to greater visible unity is faithful and worthy of trust. (*Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Covenant Agreement with the Moravian Church*, p. 9)

***Diakonia** – The ministry of service. Many churches ordain deacons, in others deacons are officers of the church but not ordained.

***Ecclesiology** –The theology of the nature and purpose of the church.

***Ecumenicity** –The character of being ecumenical –being concerned with the unity of the churches.

***Episcopacy** – The office of oversight of the church and its ministry. Every church has some way of overseeing the church, keeping it faithful to the Gospel, fostering its unity, and overseeing the work of the ministry and the work of the church in service to the world. In this dialogue, we have focused on episcopacy as a central ecumenical issue. Thus in this document the meanings of episcopacy are somewhat different in each communion.

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***Episkopé** – A Greek word meaning “oversight” from which we get the English word “episcopal,” indicating reference to a bishop or governance by bishops. In ecumenical dialogue, the use of the word episkopé has become the standard way to refer to the ministry of oversight, which includes, but is not limited to, the office of bishop. This use of episkopé has also become a way to invite those churches that have not retained the episcopal office to recognize that the ministry of that office is nevertheless present in and vital to their churches.

Executive Presbyter/General Presbyter – A chief administrative staff member employed and called by a presbytery to help provide pastoral care and guidance, administrative functions, and other such duties as determined by a presbytery in order to effectively support the mission and ministries of congregations, validated ministries, and teaching/ruling elders in that presbytery.

***Feast of Eucharist** – The Lord’s Supper, the word “Eucharist” means “thanksgiving,” the feast of the Lord’s Supper is a meal of thanksgiving. Also known as Holy Communion to denote that in the feasting of the bread and cup, the assembled community is in communion with the triune God and with the Church universal in every time and in every place.

Full Communion – An ecclesiastical and ecclesial relationship between churches characterized by the following: recognition of each other as churches in which the gospel is rightly preached and the sacraments rightly administered according to the Word of God; withdrawal of any historic condemnation by one side or the other as inappropriate for the life and faith of our churches today; continuation of recognition of each other's Baptism and authorize and encourage the sharing of the Lord's Supper among their members; recognition of each other's various ministries and make provision for the orderly exchange of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament; establishment of appropriate channels of consultation and decision-making within the existing structures of the churches; commitment of themselves to an ongoing process of theological dialogue in order to clarify further the common understanding of the faith and foster its common expression in evangelism, witness, and service; pledge themselves to living together under the Gospel in such a way that the principle of mutual affirmation and admonition becomes the basis of a trusting relationship in which respect and love for the other will have a chance to grow. (*A Formula of Agreement Between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ on Entering into Full Communion on the Basis of “A Common Calling,” p. 1*)

Holy Orders – Also known as ordered ministry, these designate ordained offices into which women and men are called by God and confirmed by councils of the church to serve the people of God. These offices include bishop/priest, pastor, elder, and deacon.

Interchangeability – Mutual recognition and mutual exchange of ordained ministers between two communions who have been duly authorized and commissioned by their respective ecclesiastical authority (diocesan bishop or presbytery).

Installation – A liturgical service whereby a council of the church officially places an ordinand in a particular ministry. An installed ordinand is ready to be commissioned with specific responsibilities and duties.

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***Koinonia** – A Greek word meaning community, communion, or fellowship.

***Legitimate diversity** – Legitimate diversity is diversity that does not violate a legitimate norm. Churches differ in what they consider legitimate diversity to include. “The Unity of the Church: Gift and Calling--The Canberra Statement” of the World Council of Churches, 1991 states that, “Diversity is illegitimate when, for instance, it makes impossible the common confession of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8); salvation and the final destiny of humanity as proclaimed in Holy Scripture and preached by the apostolic community.”

Moderator – A constitutional office of the various councils of the church whose origin is from the Church of Scotland, representing the unity of the Church in council. The office of moderator is to preside over the proceedings of the appropriate council, guiding the council to discern the will and mind of Christ, ensuring that such deliberation is done “decently and in good order.” (1 Corinthians 14:40) The moderator of a session is usually a teaching elder of a local congregation, or a commissioned pastor authorized by a presbytery, or another presbyter authorized by a presbytery. The moderators of a presbytery, synod, and General Assembly are elected by that respective council. The Moderator/Co-Moderators of the General Assembly is an ambassador of the Assembly, representing the “sign of the bond of unity, community, and mission in the life of the church.” (*Organization for Mission*, IV.A.2, pp. 6-7)

Ordered Ministry – Christ’s ministry and authority exercised through the ministry of the whole people of God, from whom certain women and men are specially called to particular functions in specific offices. The New Testament describes two primary ordered offices and their ordered ministry: the office of deacon to the ordered ministry of *diakonia* and the office of presbyter to the ordered ministry of Word and Sacrament (in the case of teaching elder) and the ordered ministry of shared governance (in the case of ruling elder).

Ordinands – Individuals who are inquiring or candidates for ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament and who are under care by a session and a presbytery.

***Presbyterian and presbyterian** – Presbyterian refers to a form of church organization in which the governance of the church is in the hands of the elders (presbyteros, oin Greek). Presbyterian with a capital P is the name of particular churches, which characterize themselves by their presbyterian polity and subscribe to the Reformed theological tradition.

Presbytery – A governing council in Presbyterian polity consisting of an equal number of teaching elders (ministers of Word and Sacrament) and ruling elders commissioned by the sessions of local congregations in a designated region.

***Recognition** – “Accept[ing] the legitimacy and authenticity of other churches as the Church in the dialogical process towards fuller communion.” (Timothy T. N. Lim, *Ecclesial Recognition with Hegelian Philosophy, Social Psychology, and Continental Political Theory* [Boston: Brill, 2017], 5.)

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Reformed – A Protestant theological tradition that is “in continuity with the classical Reformed theologians of the sixteenth century like Calvin and Bullinger, for example, and with the confessions of that tradition” (Jane Dempsey Douglass, “What is Reformed Theology?” The Princeton Seminary Bulletin 11, no. 1 (1990): 4.)

Ruling elder – Active members in a local congregation who have been elected by a local congregation, and ordained and installed by that congregation’s session to exercise shared spiritual leadership in the session and councils of the church with teaching elders.

Sacraments – “The Word of God enacted and sealed in the life of the Church, the body of Christ. They are gracious acts of God, by which Christ Jesus offers his life to us in the power of the Holy Spirit. They are also human acts of gratitude, by which we offer our lives to God in love and service. The Sacraments are both physical signs and spiritual gifts, including words and actions, surrounded by prayer, in the context of the Church’s common worship. They employ ordinary things—the basic elements of water, bread, and wine—in proclaiming the extraordinary love of God. The Reformed tradition recognizes the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper (also called Eucharist or Holy Communion) as having been instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ through the witness of the Scriptures and sustained through the history of the universal Church.” (*The Book of Order*, W-3.0401)

Session – A local governing council in Presbyterian polity consisting of the pastoral staff and ruling elders of a local congregation.

Stated Clerk/Clerk of Session – A constitutional office of the various councils (called a clerk of session in the case of a session) who preserves and defends the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), with the moderator of the appropriate council interpret the actions of that council, and insures the accurate recording of the appropriate council’s deliberations. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is understood to be the head of communion, and together with the Moderator/Co-Moderator of the General Assembly represents the unity of the Church. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is the chief ecumenical officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and is the chief executive officer of the Office of the General Assembly, one of six national agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Synod – “The intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its region. It shall consist of not fewer than three presbyteries within a specific geographic region.” (*The Book of Order*, G-3.0401)

Teaching elder (also known as a minister of Word and Sacrament) – An ordained office in Presbyterian polity to exercise spiritual leadership in and through the councils of the church by the ministries of preaching and teaching the Word, administering the Sacraments, and attending to the health of ecclesial life in a ministry context.

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World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) – A global fellowship founded in 2010 with the merger of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Reformed Ecumenical Council consisting of 233 member churches in 110 countries representing 100 million Christians from the Reformed, Presbyterian, United, Uniting, Congregational, and Waldensian theological traditions. The WCRC secretariat's headquarters is in Hanover, Germany, and is governed by a General Council that meets every seven years, and between General Councils is governed by an Executive Committee.

World Council of Churches (WCC) – A global fellowship founded in 1948 consisting of 350 member communions in 110 countries representing over 500 million Christians worldwide. The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are founding members of the WCC. The WCC secretariat's headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland and is governed by an Assembly that meets every seven years, and between Assemblies is governed by a Central Committee.

*From the "Glossary" section of *The One Body Of Christ: Ministry In Service To The Church and The World*, Roman Catholic –Reformed Dialogue of the United States, Round Eight: 2012-2017. pp. 4-5.

EPISCOPAL GLOSSARY

+**Anglican Communion** - Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury throughout the world. Member churches exercise jurisdictional independence but share a common heritage concerning Anglican identity and commitment to scripture, tradition, and reason as sources of authority. The Episcopal Church is the embodiment of the Anglican Communion in the USA and several other countries.

+**Anglicanism** - This way of life is the system of doctrine, and approach to polity of Christians in communion with the See of Canterbury (the bishop/diocese that is the ecclesiastical center for England and eventually all of the Anglican Communion). The term derives from the word which, in a variety of forms, refers to the people of the British Isles, and especially the English.

****Archdeacon** - A clergy person with a defined administrative authority delegated by the diocesan bishop.

#**Bishop** - One of the three orders of ordained ministers in the church, bishops are charged with the apostolic work of leading, supervising, and uniting the church. They stand in the historic succession, maintaining continuity with the ministry of the early Church and between Christian communities today. Bishops serve as chief pastors of the church, exercising a ministry of oversight and supervision. They are consecrated bishops for life. Since the bishop's ministry is a ministry of oversight, the term "episcopal" (derived from the Greek episcopos, "overseer") is applied to matters pertaining to bishops. An "episcopal" church is a church governed by bishops, and "episcopal" services are led by bishops.

****Bishop – Assistant** - A bishop, ordinarily a full-time member of the diocesan staff, who is appointed rather than elected and assists in carrying out the episcopal ministry of the diocese.

****Bishop – Assisting** - In common usage, a bishop who aides the diocese by providing additional episcopal services on a temporary basis. Appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the diocesan bishop, or the Standing Committee if there is no bishop.

****Bishop Coadjutor** - The elected bishop, with the right of succession upon the resignation of the diocesan bishop, who serves with the diocesan bishop.

****Bishop, Diocesan** - Also known as the Ordinary of a diocese. A diocesan bishop, as distinct from a suffragan, assistant, or coadjutor bishop. The term apparently springs from the understanding of "ordinary jurisdiction" which is held in canon law to be the jurisdiction "permanently and irremovably annexed to" the office of bishop. By canon, a bishop may not

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resign jurisdiction without the consent of the House of Bishops. A bishop must resign from all jurisdiction at the age of seventy-two.

****Bishop, Presiding** - Chief Pastor and Primate of the Episcopal Church.

****Bishop Provisional** - If a diocesan bishop resigns with no bishop coadjutor (who has the right of succession) a diocese may call a bishop provisional who serves as the bishop, with full authority, for an interim period of up to three years, until the consecration of a new diocesan bishop.

****Bishop Suffragan** - A bishop who does not automatically succeed a diocesan bishop. Elected by the diocese to serve indefinitely at the direction of the diocesan bishop.

+ ***The Book of Common Prayer*** - Official book of worship of the Episcopal Church. The BCP provides liturgical forms, prayers, and instructions so that all members and orders of the Episcopal Church may appropriately share in common worship. Anglican liturgical piety has been rooted in the Prayer Book tradition since the publication of the first English Prayer Book in 1549. The current and defining edition of *The Book of Common Prayer* for the Episcopal Church was ratified in 1979.

****The Book of Occasional Services** - Book of optional services and texts prepared by the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music.

****Canon** - The word has several different meanings in the church.

- 1) The canon of scripture
- 2) Church law
- 3) As an ecclesiastical title, a canon may be a member of the clergy or laity on the staff of a cathedral, diocese or other institution
- 4) In liturgy, the fixed portion of the Great Thanksgiving

****Canon to the Ordinary** - Clergy or lay person who serves as assistant to the diocesan bishop.

****Canonical Residence** - Clergy serving under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authority of a diocese are canonically resident in that diocese. Clergy may move from jurisdiction to jurisdiction pursuant to canonical procedures.

Church – The one holy catholic apostolic church in every time and in every place. Depending on context, may also refer corporately to an ecclesial communion/denomination, e.g. The Episcopal Church, The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Churches – Fellowship of ecclesial communions/denominations, e.g. Churches Uniting in Christ, World Council of Churches.

church (lowercase “c”) – The local expression of an ecclesial communion/denomination, i.e. congregation, parish.

Churches Uniting in Christ – A covenant relationship among eleven Christian Communions--mainline American denominations (including both predominantly white and predominantly black

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churches), and was inaugurated on January 20, 2002 in Memphis, Tennessee on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel. It is the successor organization to the Consultation on Church Union⁹.

****Commission on Ministry (COM)** - Pursuant to Title III, Canon 1, each diocese is required to establish a COM to assist the bishop in determining the present and future needs for ministry in the diocese.

Consultation on Church Union (COCU) - Was an effort on the part of several ecclesial bodies towards church unity in the United States, that began in 1962 and in 2002, it became Churches Uniting in Christ (CUIC).

Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church - The Constitution and Canons is the official set of governing rules for The Episcopal Church's bodies (*General Convention: House of Bishops and House of Deputies*). *The Book of Common Prayer (BCP)* is a part of the *Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church*.

****Curate** - The term typically refers to an assisting priest in a parish.

****Cure** - The pastoral and geographical responsibility and charge of a member of the clergy.

****Deacon** - One of three offices to which people can be ordained in the Episcopal Church, along with priests and bishops. The deacon's vocation lies in serving – especially the weak, the poor, the sick, the lonely – and in interpreting to the church the needs and hopes of the world. The sign of the office of deacon is a stole worn over the left shoulder and fastened under the right arm. In the Eucharist, deacons read the gospel, lead the Prayers of the People, introduce the confession, prepare the altar, assist with the distribution of the bread and wine, perform the ablutions, and dismiss the people.

****Diocese** - A geographical area that serves as the primary unit of organization in the Episcopal Church. A bishop and a legislative body—a convention or council—oversee each diocese.

****Diocesan Convention** - Annual meeting of lay and clerical representatives from the congregations of a diocese to elect members of diocesan committees and deputies to General Convention, make decisions about diocesan policy, conduct other diocesan business (e.g., budget, program) and from time to time, elect a bishop for the diocese.

****Diocesan Transition Minister** - The clergy or lay member of the diocesan staff responsible for assisting the bishop, worshipping communities and individuals in transition.

Ecclesial body - A religious fellowship whose congregations are unified in their observance to its beliefs and traditions.

****Ecclesiastical Authority** – The responsible individual or body in a church institution. In a diocese, this authority rests with the diocesan bishop. Should the episcopate be vacant or the bishop be incapacitated, the responsibility falls upon the Standing Committee or other bishop

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Churches_Uniting_in_Christ

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The Episcopal Church – A Christian ecclesial body made up of 111 dioceses or convocations in the United States and 17 countries. The Episcopal Church is a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

****Episcopal Church Center** - The churchwide ministries office of the Episcopal Church housing the office of the Presiding Bishop, his or her staff, and other church-related offices. Located in New York City.

****Executive Council of the Episcopal Church** - The national body that administers the program and policies adopted by the General Convention.

Ecumenical congregations – A congregation comprising of at least two or more ecclesial bodies.

Episcopal/episcopal – Episcopal refers to being of the Episcopal Church; episcopal is a term referring to bishop, from the Greek *episkopos*, meaning ‘overseer’. As above, an "episcopal" church is a church governed by bishops, and "episcopal" services are led by bishops.

Episcopal Presbyterian Agreement of 2008 - The Agreement between the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) and ratified by presbyteries in 2009. The 76th General Convention of the Episcopal Church approved the Agreement in 2009. Both churches authorized another round of dialogue to continue to address theological and missional issues.

****General Convention** - The national legislative body of the Episcopal Church. It consists of a House of Bishops and a House of Deputies (four lay persons and four clergy persons from each diocese). Convention meets every three years.

****House of Bishops** - Part of the two-house legislature of General Convention. All diocesan, suffragan, coadjutor, assistant, and most resigned and retired bishops are members of this body, which also meets periodically between General Conventions.

****The Hymnal 1982** - The collection of hymn texts, tunes, and service music authorized for use in the Episcopal Church. Also widely used: *Lift Every Voice and Sing II (LEVAS)*; and *Wonder, Love and Praise*.

Institution – Occurring in a service of Celebration of a New Ministry, a bishop shares a letter of institution conferring the responsibilities of a priest in charge of a parish.

****Office for Transition Ministry** - A church-wide office that maintains a database of Episcopal and other clergy and lay professionals in Communion with the Episcopal Church, and the worshipping communities of the Episcopal Church. OTM has a website that allows clergy and lay leaders to search for worshipping communities that are themselves in search, using each other's gifts, skills and experiences to identify possible opportunities for ministry together in order to assist the church to live into God's mission in the world.

****Pastor** (as used in the Episcopal Church) - Term for a member of the clergy. It evokes one aspect of the priestly role, which is that of pastoral ministry: caring and protective responsibility for the sick, the grieving, the needy, and those in pain. It is a term especially appropriate for

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bishops, since they are ordained to “feed and tend the flock of Christ,” who is the Good Shepherd. (It does not normally mean a clergy person in charge of a parish as in the ELCA.) The laity shares in the pastoral role of the clergy, and a growing number of parishes have lay pastoral care teams.

+Priest or presbyter - From the Greek *presbyteros*, "elder." In the NT, "presbyter" indicates a leader of the church. The English word "priest" is derived from "presbyter," and used as a synonym for presbyter. After the Reformation, some churches began to use the term "presbyter" for the minister who preaches the word and administers the sacraments. The Anglican Church used the term "priest" for this order of ministry. The 1979 BCP, and thus the Episcopal Church, uses both terms. For example, directions for the Ordination of a Priest require that "at least two presbyters must be present". The Catechism notes that "the ministry of a priest or presbyter" is "to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as pastor to the people; to share with the bishop in the overseeing of the Church; to proclaim the gospel; to administer the sacraments; and to bless and declare pardon in the name of God."

****Priest, related terms:**

Priest-in-Charge - Practices vary widely among dioceses. In a parish without a rector, the priest-in-charge generally contracts with the vestry, in consultation with the bishop, to perform many of the functions of a rector.

Rector – Elected by the vestry of a parish in consultation with the bishop and serves as the leader of the parish with respect to its spiritual life and mission. In charge of liturgy, music, education, outreach, and pastoral care, the rector has full use of the parish property to carry out his or her office, hires and supervises lay and clerical staff, and is generally entitled to preside at all vestry and parish meetings.

Vicar – The title applies to the priest-in-charge of a mission congregation, serving at the pleasure of and representing the bishop.

****Primate** - The chief bishop in an Anglican Province is called a primate. The term relates to primacy, which in ecclesiastical terms is the status of being first, or presiding, among other bishops.

****Province**

1) An internal division of an autonomous national church of the Anglican Communion. There are nine provinces in the Episcopal Church, including overseas jurisdictions.

2) An autonomous national church member of the Anglican Communion.

Sacrament – From the Catechism of the 1979 BCP: an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace. In The Episcopal Church there are two great sacraments: Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. There are five sacramental rites: confirmation, ordination, holy matrimony, reconciliation of a penitent, and unction.

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****Standing Committee** - A body that shares the ecclesiastical authority of the diocese with the bishop in certain defined areas (e.g., clergy discipline, property of parishes, ordination). In the absence of a bishop it sometimes becomes the sole ecclesiastical authority. Its members are elected by the diocesan convention. It also serves as the bishop's council of advice.

+Vestry - The vestry is the legal representative of an Episcopal parish with regard to all matters pertaining to its corporate property. The number of vestry members and the term of office varies from parish to parish. Vestry members are usually elected at the annual parish meeting. The presiding officer of the vestry is the rector.

+Warden - Officers of a parish. Two wardens are typically selected to serve with members of the vestry. The wardens are generally ranked "senior" and "junior." The senior warden is usually the primary elected lay leader of the congregation, and serves as a principal liaison between the parish and the rector. The junior warden is often given responsibility for the upkeep of the parish buildings and grounds.

+Glossary definitions used or adapted from "An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church, A User Friendly Reference for Episcopalians," Church Publishing, New York, 2000, Don S. Armentrout and Robert Boak Slocum, editors.

****Glossary definitions used or adapted from the Episcopal Glossary of "Principles for the Orderly Exchange of Clergy between the Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church in America, Northern and Southern Provinces" from 2009/2010.**

The Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Partnerships approved Item ECU-05 by 45/0. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item ECU-05 by consensus.

For the full report on ECU-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001207>

THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON MINISTRY TEAM

(formerly Committee on Ministry)

REV. MICHAEL POULOS, CHAIR

April 29, 2025

+++++++***CORRECTED***+++++++

FIRST SECTION

- I. **RECOMMEND to Presbytery approval of recommended changes to the Sexual Misconduct Policy. (This is was presented as a first reading at the January 2025 presbytery meeting. COM Attachment 1)**
- II. **RECOMMEND to Presbytery a first reading of revisions to Policy for Transitional to Installed Pastor with anticipated debate and action at the July 2025 presbytery meeting. Revisions are to include Associate Pastors in the policy. (COM Attachment 4) ***
- III. **RECOMMEND to Presbytery approval of proposed amendment 24-E that adds a prohibition to use non-disclosure agreements at the end of temporary pastoral relationships. (See Stated Clerk Attachment 2)**
- IV. **RECOMMEND to Presbytery approval of proposed amendment 24-G that adds a prohibition to use non-disclosure agreements at the end of installed pastoral positions. (See Stated Clerk Attachment 2)**
- V. **RECOMMEND TO PRESBYTERY THE RE-VALIDATION OF MINISTRY FOR:**
 - A. **Carol Steele as Vice President for Programs at Montreat Conference Center through April 29, 2026.**
 - B. **David Bradley as Pastoral Counselor through April 29, 2026**
 - C. **Ryan Brakemyer as Pastor of Grace Reformed UCC in Newton through April 29, 2026.**

**CORRECTION Note: In the original packet with the docket (first published to the website on 4/15/2025) the wrong policy was connected to Item II. The correct policy has now been added as Attachment 4.*

SECOND SECTION

The Book of Order provides (G-3.0307) that the Commission on Ministry Team 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 Commission on Ministry Team; therefore, the following actions are hereby reported and are to be admitted to the record.

I. APPROVED FOR TEMPORARY MEMBERSHIP:

A. Chad Smith

From: Evangelical Presbyterian Church

As: Organizing Pastor for House of Mercy New Worshipping Community

Effective: April 1, 2025

(Statement of Faith and Bio – COM Attachment 3)

II. APPROVED TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS - TRANSITIONAL PASTOR:

- A. Corrected terms for: David Garnett and Trinity Presbyterian Church
Effective: February 16, 2025 through February 16, 2026
- B. Terry Hanna and Sylva Presbyterian Church
Effective: April 6, 2025 through April 5, 2026
- C. Tempe Fussell and Sylva Presbyterian Church
Effective: April 6, 2025 through April 5, 2026
- D. Curtis Fussell and Sylva Presbyterian Church
Effective: April 6, 2025 and April 5, 2026
- E. Dennis Hysom and Sylva Presbyterian Church
Effective: April 6, 2025 and April 5, 2026

III. APPROVED TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS – STATED PASTOR:

- A. Robert Abel and Hayesville Presbyterian Church
Effective: January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2026

IV. APPROVED COMMISSIONED PASTOR AGREEMENTS:

- A. Beth and John Hall and Grassy Creek Presbyterian Church (Spruce Pine)
From: January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025
- B. Beth and John Hall and Newdale Presbyterian Church (Burnsville)
From: January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025
- C. Beth and John Hall and Micaville Presbyterian Church (Burnsville)
From: January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025
- D. Robin and Lynn Honeycutt and Sweetwater Presbyterian Church (Hickory)
From: January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025
- E. Linda Abel and Hayesville Presbyterian Church
From: January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025

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V. APPROVED AS MODERATOR:

- A. Chris East (Salem Presbytery) and Brittain Presbyterian Church (Rutherfordton) - with permission to Chris to labor within the bounds of the Presbytery of WNC.
Effective: April 1, 2025

VI. APPROVED THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF BETSY STOWE ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2025, AT 3:00 PM AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (FRANKLIN).

Name	Responsibility on Commission	Min/Eld	Church
Byron Wade	Moderator and Propound Constitutional Questions	MWS	General Presbyter Presbytery of WNC
Gail Lehman	Questions to Congregation	RE	First Presbyterian, Franklin
Tom Phillips	Charge the Congregation	MWS	PWNC Associate
Keith Grogg	Charge the Minister	MWS	Montreat Presbyterian
Bruce Henderson	Lead in Worship/Affirmation of Faith	RE	First Presbyterian, Sylva
Kelley Connelly	Lead in Worship	MWS	First Presbyterian, Highlands
Delaine Nelson	Lead in Worship	RE	First Presbyterian, Highlands
Martha Rich	Lead in Worship	RE	Bryson City Presbyterian
<u>Guests:</u>			
Christine R. Yoder	Preach the Sermon	MWS	Greater Atlanta Presbytery Columbia Theological Seminary
Susan Blaydes	Lead in Worship/Scripture Reading	RE	First Presbyterian, Franklin

VII. APPROVED CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP STATUS

- A. David Lytle from Validated Ministry to Retired
Effective: December 16, 2022 (retroactive)

VIII. APPROVED THE MISSION STUDY FROM WARREN WILSON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WITH PERMISSION FOR THE PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE TO BEGIN ITS WORK WITH THE CHURCH LEADERSHIP CONNECTION (CLC).

IX. APPROVED THE MINISTRY DISCERNMENT PROFILE (MDP) OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (NEWTON)

X. RECOMMENDED TO COORDINATING MINISTRY ACTING ON BEHALF OF PRESBYTERY ON URGENT MATTERS BETWEEN MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY, THE VALIDATION OR REVALIDATION OF MINISTRY FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- A. Lynne Keel as Director of Programs at Montreat Conference Center, Montreat through January 25, 2026.
B. Nathan Sell as Chaplain at The Asheville School in Asheville through January 25, 2026.

- C. Denise Thorpe as the Coordinator in North Carolina with the Ministry Collaborative through January 25, 2026.
- D. Clay Fouse as CPE Supervisor at the VA Hospital in Asheville and as National Program Coordinator for Clinical Pastoral Education for the National Veteran Affairs Chaplain Service through January 25, 2026.

XI. APPROVED THE RELEASE FROM VALIDATED MINISTRY WITH THANKS:

- A. Daniel Tipton, as Grief Services Coordinator with Four Seasons Hospice.
- B. Tamara Puffer, as Minister of Vulnerability at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Asheville.

XII. APPROVED CHANGES TO THE FORMER PASTOR POLICY

Note from COM: Changes made were minor. It is included here for information and feedback.
(COM Attachment 2)

Former Pastor Policy and Covenant of Closure Presbytery of Western North Carolina - Commission on Ministry

Approved by COM on April 1, 2025

***Note:** For the purposes of this policy, a “former pastor” is any pastor who once served a church in any pastoral capacity. This includes pastors who retire, resign, whose contract expired or whose call is dissolved by the Presbytery. For this purpose, the term “former pastor” applies to, but is not limited to, Installed Pastors, Installed Associate Pastors, Interim Pastors, Stated Supply Pastors, Short-Term Supply Pastors, and Commissioned Pastors.*

Introduction

The life of every congregation is punctuated by transitions with the coming and going of pastoral leadership. For both the congregation and the pastor, it is important for these transitions to take place in a healthy way. When a pastor is called to serve a new congregation, the new pastor should be afforded every opportunity to build and nourish a vital pastoral relationship with their new faith community. When a former pastor remains involved in the life of the congregation, they can hinder (whether intentionally or not) the growth and success of the new pastorate. This policy exists to assist both pastors and congregations with pastoral changes.

The fundamental principle underlying this policy is that the long-term needs of a congregation transcend the needs of the departing pastor or the congregation's grief over the pastoral transition. The burden of responsibility for ensuring a healthy transition lies primarily with the pastor who is leaving, although such a transition demands empathy and maturity from all parties—the former pastor, the new pastor, the session, and the members of the congregation.

This policy does not require that the former pastor move from the area or cast aside friendships within the previous congregation. The former pastor is simply no longer the pastor of the congregation and may not provide pastoral services to the congregation or its members. This is an important distinction which needs to be carefully discussed and completely understood by both departing pastor and congregation.

In Presbyterian polity, the congregation is not alone as it works through the transition from one pastor to another. The presbytery's Commission on Ministry (COM) shall offer support and guidance to the congregation and provide resources during this transition of pastoral leadership.

A Covenant Among the Parties

1. It is crucial that all parties to this Former Pastor Policy/Covenant of Closure understand its provisions and pledge to adhere to them. The following steps are to take place:
 - a. A representative of COM shall review this policy with the departing pastor and with the session prior to the pastor leaving. A copy of the policy will be included in the session minutes prior to the pastor leaving.
 - b. The COM representative and the session shall ensure that the Former Pastor Policy/Covenant of Closure is interpreted to the congregation prior to the pastor leaving and included in the minutes of the congregational meeting when an installed pastoral relationship is dissolved.

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- c. The session shall ensure that the Former Pastor Policy and Covenant of Closure is distributed to the congregation.
 - d. The departing pastor will also explain and affirm this policy to the congregation both in writing and from the pulpit.
 - e. The representative of COM, the departing pastor, and the Clerk of Session shall affirm their agreement by signing the Former Pastor Policy/Covenant of Closure.
2. There shall be an exit interview between the Presbytery and the departing pastor. In the case of a pastor's retirement, the COM shall demonstrate support and care of the retiring former pastor by maintaining contact, offering opportunities for continuing service through the presbytery, and encouraging the supportive fellowship with other clergy.
3. The dissolution of the former pastor's relationship with the congregation initiates a fundamental change in the relationship between the former pastor and the congregation. After that dissolution, the former pastor shall not:
 - a. worship with the former congregation without an invitation of the moderator of the session, in consultation with the session if needed;
 - b. be involved in any leadership or advisory role, public or private, including teaching, in the former congregation;
 - c. be involved in conversations involving church business at the former congregation, but shall educate, remind, and encourage anyone who expresses a concern to talk directly to the pastor, take the issue to Session, and/or approach the COM if things still can't be resolved;
 - d. officiate in any special events within the life of their former congregation including weddings, funerals, baptisms, worship leadership, church anniversaries or reunions, unless expressly invited by the moderator of the session. When a former pastor receives requests for pastoral services by former parishioners, the parishioners shall refer such requests to the current pastor.
4. The former pastor is expected to abide by ethical conduct in these ways:
 - a. Outstanding loans and equity sharing arrangements are to be settled in accordance with the loan or equity sharing agreement. Such loans are part of the terms of call of the pastor, and any forgiveness of such loans, unless provided for in the loan documentation, constitutes a change in call that must be approved by the congregation and the presbytery. The COM will be consulted prior to negotiating any such agreement.
 - b. Definite plans should be made by the former pastor for the disposition of pastoral counseling notes, personal records, etc.
 - c. The former pastor is also responsible for establishing and maintaining new boundaries in the use of social networking and other online communication. Online communication should be limited to maintaining friendships and should exclude any interaction that might be interpreted as pastoral or involving church business.

5. Any request to engage a former pastor in the ministry of the former congregation remains entirely within the authority of the new pastor. The new pastor may ask for the insight and services of the former pastor, but the congregation may not. The new pastor shall determine if and when to request the services of the former pastor. We recommend a review of the relationship between the pastor, the congregation and the former pastor after the first year, or as needed by the COM.

6. If the COM, the Stated Clerk, or the General Presbyter determines that the former pastor has violated this policy, the following steps will be taken:

- a. The former pastor will be contacted in person by representatives of COM and reminded of this covenant of closure.
- b. If the violation continues, the former pastor will receive a written notice that will be placed in the pastor's permanent file and will be required to meet with COM.
- c. A third violation will result in formal disciplinary charges being filed which may result in censure or other alternatives listed in D-12.0100.

The Former Pastor's Family

When a former pastor remains in the community—especially upon retirement—a concern arises for the needs of other family members, particularly the pastor's spouse. Quite often family members have joined the church their spouse/parent was serving, have become very involved in congregational programs, invested great interest and energy in the church's life, and established deep personal relationships with other church members. It is strongly recommended, however, that the former pastor and the former pastor's family seek to become active in the work and worship of another congregation. It is acknowledged that the Presbytery has no direct jurisdiction over the non-clergy members of pastors' families and that there may be circumstances which call for exceptions. In this case, the Presbytery urges the former pastor's spouse and family not to do anything that would undermine the transition necessary for the church and the development of the relationship between the congregation, an interim pastor, and a new called pastor. As it is appropriate, the pastor's family will be included in retirement planning, discussions, workshops and seminars.

Affirmations for this Covenant of Closure

This policy describes the on-going relationship between a congregation and a former pastor. The policy does not expire after the passage of time. It is expected that this policy, except as noted, will be monitored by the Commission on Ministry.

I, the Pastor of _____ Church, agree to abide by this policy and Covenant of Closure.

Signature, Pastor

Date

The Session of Church agrees:

- a. to incorporate this Covenant of Closure in the Session minutes;
- b. to interpret the terms of the Covenant to the congregation; and
- c. to respect the terms of the Covenant.

Signature, Clerk of Session

Date

Signature, COM Representative

Date

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SEXUAL MISCONDUCT RESPONSE POLICY

Presbytery of Western North Carolina Presbyterian Church (USA)

Revised - [Approved by Presbytery of Western North Carolina – January 25, 2014](#)

I. Policy Statement

This policy regarding sexual misconduct is written out of awareness that the Presbyterian Church (USA) has been given a public and spiritual trust. It is the policy of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina ("PWNC") that all presbytery professionals ~~and all presbytery volunteers (as such terms are defined herein)~~, are to maintain at all times the integrity of ministerial, employment, professional and ecclesiastical relationships. Sexual misconduct is a violation of Scripture and human dignity, and is never permissible.

This policy has two purposes: to prevent sexual misconduct and to provide for an appropriate response when misconduct is alleged. This policy offers guidelines to ensure appropriate intervention in any alleged incidence of sexual misconduct, offers care to all parties involved, and provides information to help prevent further instances of abuse. The Church is also aware of the needs of survivors, alleged offenders, congregations, and those in ecclesiastical employment. The Church's concern is for a policy that will assist in healing, and work for justice and restoration for all persons.

Because work in the name of the Church implies a covenant relationship, a privilege and a trust, it is the responsibility of all persons covered by this policy to observe appropriate boundaries in all Church relationships.

II. Definitions

- A. **Accused:** The person against whom an accusation of sexual misconduct is being made.
- B. **Accuser:** The person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not be the victim of alleged sexual misconduct.
- C. **Presbytery Professional:** Any member of presbytery (ordained minister), commissioned ~~lay~~ pastor, commissioned church worker, Certified Christian Educator, Certified Associate Christian Educator, inquirer or candidate, and any employee of Presbytery, whether or not ordained, or others who are determined to be under presbytery authority.
- ~~D. **Presbytery Volunteer:** Anyone who is not a presbytery professional but who serves or functions on behalf of the presbytery as an officer, a member of the Coordinating Council, a commissioner, actually supervising or participating in a function approved by the Committee on Ministry or the presbytery, as appropriate, or as a member of any other committee or subcommittee set forth in the Standing Rules for the Presbytery of Western North Carolina then in effect.~~
- E. D. **Sexual misconduct:** Any of the following activities that occur within the scope of Church activities, or that arise from the alleged perpetrator having a position of authority or power through the Church.
 - 1. Sexual Abuse: Any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to:
 - (a) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent.
 - (b) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position (D-10.0401c).
 - 2. Breach of Professional Responsibility occurs when a person in a position of trust with any person to whom he or she owes a professional responsibility. A breach of professional responsibility includes, without limitation, consensual sexual

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relationships between ministers and laity with whom they have a professional relationship.

3. Sexual Harassment is defined in the Policy by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
4. Production, distribution or use of pornography is defined by the General Assembly (1988) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as follows: Pornography includes any sexually explicit materials (books, magazines, movies, videos, musical lyrics, TV shows, telephone services, internet sites, live sex acts) produced for the purpose of sexual arousal by eroticizing violence, power, humiliation, abuse, dominance, degradation, or mistreatment of any person, male or female, and usually produced for monetary profit. Any sexually explicit material that depicts children is pornography.

III. Prevention

- A. All presbytery professionals ~~and presbytery volunteers~~ shall receive a copy of this policy and sign a written acknowledgment of receipt to be kept on file in the presbytery office. (Exhibit A)
- B. All ordained ministers seeking membership within the PWNC shall make available to the Committee on Ministry the "Sexual Misconduct Self Certification." (Exhibit B)
- C. Referencing
 1. Presbytery staff and Committee on Ministry, as directed by the General Presbyter, will conduct ~~two reference checks~~ a reference check from a candidate's ~~two previous presbyteries, if reasonable~~ current presbytery, on all final candidates for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament positions in PCUSA churches within the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. ~~If the person has not been in two previous presbyteries, two reference checks shall be done from other sources. If there is a lack of clarity after such a reference check, at least one additional reference check will be made.~~
 2. For candidates being considered for commissioned ~~lay~~ pastors, Certified Christian Educators, and Certified Associate Christian Educators in churches in this presbytery, ~~two reference checks~~ a reference check shall be conducted. If there is a lack of clarity after such a reference check, at least one additional reference check will be made.
 3. In addition, for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, commissioned ~~lay~~ pastors, Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators, criminal background checks, driver license checks, and credit reports shall be secured. Each Pastor Nominating Committee of a church seeking to call Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Certified Christian Educators, Certified Associate Christian Educators, and/or commissioned ~~lay~~ pastors will be instructed to do complete referencing on candidates for final consideration.
- D. Presbytery professionals, received by this presbytery, ~~and new presbytery volunteers~~ are required within one year of reception to attend a workshop on the issues of sexual misconduct offered by PWNC or another source satisfactory to the Stated Clerk. With respect to presbytery professionals who are ordained ministers, commissioned ~~lay~~

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pastors, commissioned church workers, Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators, each such individual shall report his or her attendance at the required workshop to the chair of the Committee on Ministry. With respect to employees of the PWNC, each such individual shall report his or her attendance at the required workshop to the chair of the Personnel Committee. ~~With respect to Presbytery Volunteers, each such individual shall report his or her attendance at the required workshop to the chair of the committee or council on which such individual serves.~~

- E. Beginning January 1, 2014, all persons designated below are required to have an approved three-hour workshop of sexual misconduct sponsored by the WNC Presbytery or equivalent training approved by the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Team.
1. All Presbytery professionals ~~and Presbytery volunteers~~ are required to have the three-hour training every ~~four~~ three years with the following exceptions.
 - ~~1.2.~~ Retired ministers who have reached their eightieth birthday and are not serving in regular pastoral leadership are no longer required to undertake boundary training regardless of their service on presbytery committees, sub-committees and task forces.
 - ~~2.3.~~ Exempted from training are other fully retired Presbytery professionals who ~~do not meet criteria for required training as detailed in the ARequest for Exemption Form.~~ Who have not "opted in" regarding sexual misconduct training. This means that these These retired individuals who have not "opted in" may not serve on Presbytery committees, may not have appointments in local churches, may not preach or lead workshops and retreats, or otherwise ~~do not meet the criteria~~carry out the functions of ministry except on a "single event exception" basis by requesting permission of the Stated Clerk of General Presbyter or Chair of COM prior to the event. To be exempt, the retired Presbytery professional must apply for exemption, and that request must be approved by the Committee on Ministry. However, a retired presbytery professional may "op in" at any time by participating in sexual misconduct training as specified in this policy and thus avoid the need for seeking "single even exceptions."
 3. ~~Members on the following committees, their sub-committees, and Task Forces are ineligible for exemption during the term of their membership:~~

Administrative Board	Youth
Committee on Ministry	Christian Education
Examinations	Joint Outdoor Ministry
Small Membership Church	Campus Mission
Permanent Judicial Commission	

~~Members of all other existing committees are exempt, though changes to committee structures may require review of eligibility.~~
 4. Interims who are working within the bounds of the Presbytery who receive comparable hours of training in their judicatory, at least as frequently as required in our Presbytery, may be exempt.
- F. If a presbytery professional is not able to attend a workshop prescribed by Item III of

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this policy, such professional must obtain written permission from either the chair of the Committee on Ministry (with respect to ordained ministers, commissioned ~~lay~~ pastors, commissioned church workers, Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators) or the chair of the Personnel Committee (with respect to employees of PWNC) excusing the attendance requirement. If written permission is not obtained, and if failure of attendance at required workshops continues to occur, the COM may place the presbytery professional on unpaid administrative leave and exclude him or her from the exercise of ministry until such time as the workshop is attended, and may be subject to other presbytery action.

- G. Whereas this policy addresses sexual misconduct by presbytery professionals, each governing body council is responsible for developing a policy for its own church professionals, officers, members, non-member employees, and volunteers which is consistent with this document. It is incumbent on each council to ensure compliance with its policy.

IV. Reporting

- A. Any presbytery professional or presbytery volunteer who has a reasonable belief that an incident of sexual misconduct has occurred shall make a written report to the Stated Clerk in a timely manner. The written report shall consist of the names of the accused and accuser, together with a brief description of the alleged sexual misconduct along with any available supporting information. Such reporting individual shall not undertake an inquiry or question the persons involved. This is to reduce the possibility of contaminating evidence and to avoid the circulation of rumors. If the Stated Clerk is a party to the incident, such written report shall be rendered to the Moderator of the PWNC. If the Moderator is also a party to the incident, such written report shall be rendered to the following in order of succession: Vice Moderator, Assistant Stated Clerk, Chair of the Coordinating Council, or Chair of the Committee on Ministry.
- B. When child sexual abuse is alleged, the secular authorities must, by law, immediately be contacted to take control of the investigation and disposition of charges against the accused. All persons shall cooperate with the secular authorities in any secular investigation of sexual misconduct.
- C. Within five (5) days of receipt of a written report, the Stated Clerk (or the designated successor actually receiving the written report as provided in section IV. A., above), shall contact the chair of the Coordinating ~~Team~~ and the chair of the Committee on Ministry. After conferring with these authorities to verify that the report includes sufficient information to warrant further action, the chair of the Sexual Misconduct Response Team (SMRT) will be notified in writing.
- D. At such time as the SMRT is notified, the Stated Clerk (or the designated successor actually receiving the written report as provided in section IV. A., above) shall also ~~notify the chair of the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission, which commission shall determine whether additional action is required under the Rules of~~ follow all applicable procedures outlined in Church Discipline of the Book of Order. ~~The Stated Clerk (or designated successor) shall also provide brief, periodic reports to the chair of the~~

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~~Permanent Judicial Commission on the proceedings-~~

- E. Even if there is no report, but rumors are so rampant as to adversely affect the peace, purity and unity of the Church, the SMRT will be notified by one of these authorities to begin its work.
- F. The chair of the Coordinating ~~Council Team~~, the chair of the Committee on Ministry, and the Stated Clerk shall have no further contact with the accuser, the victim or the accused. But if the procedures in the ~~Rules of Church~~ Discipline, Book of Order are invoked, the Stated Clerk shall carry out the duties of that office.

V. Response Procedures

- A. The Sexual Misconduct Response Team (SMRT) shall be composed of qualified persons, geographically dispersed throughout the Presbytery. They shall be appointed by the Committee on Ministry with ~~approval of~~ notice of their appointment made to the Presbytery. The chair of the Committee on Ministry shall appoint the chair and co-chair of the SMRT. The SMRT is not a disciplinary or investigating committee, but rather it is a provider of pastoral care and education regarding this policy.
- B. In the pastoral care provided by the SMRT, there shall be no effort to determine the guilt or innocence of any parties.
- C. The SMRT Chair must immediately, upon notification, designate and notify an assigned Response Team, which must include at least two members, and after conferring with the co-chair, at least half of whom must be of the same sex as the alleged victim.
- D. The assigned Response Team shall offer and arrange for a face-to-face meeting with the alleged victim or accuser within seven days after the notification. At the first meeting with the victim or accuser, the assigned Response Team must inform the victim or accuser of the following:
 - 1. The presbytery's investigative and disciplinary process, and information as to how and where to make a formal complaint if one has not already been made;
 - 2. The assigned Response Team's role, duties and limits;
 - 3. The fact that the assigned Response Team cannot be the representative or advocate for the accuser or victim within the investigative and disciplinary process;
 - 4. The right of the accuser or victim to obtain his or her own legal counsel; and
 - 5. The confidentiality of communications with the assigned Response Team, and the legal limits of such confidentiality.
- E. The assigned Response Team shall provide pastoral care, including but not limited to the making of referrals, seeking of aid and care if needed, and providing comfort. Nonexclusive examples of such pastoral care may include addressing the Committee on Ministry to request funds to pay for counseling; driving the victim to the site of the Investigating Committee meeting; and giving lists of appropriate professionals whose assistance might be available.
- F. In addition, the Stated Clerk, in consultation with the chair of the SMRT, may designate

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and notify additional assigned Response Teams to work with any of (i) the accused, (ii) a spouse or partner of the victim or accuser, (iii) a spouse or partner of the accused, or (iv) the affected congregation. Each assigned Response Team shall consist of at least two members who shall not be members of any other assigned Response Team involved in the same incident. If the Stated Clerk is a party to the incident, such decision shall be made by the Moderator, Vice Moderator, or Assistant Stated Clerk, as appropriate, in consultation with the chair of the SMRT.

- G. As with the assigned Response Team working with the victim or the accuser, any additional assigned Response Team shall provide pastoral care to the individual or congregation to whom assigned, including, but not limited to, the making of referrals, seeking of aid and care if needed, and providing comfort.
- H. When the parties involved in the alleged misconduct decline the services of SMRT, documentation of contact and response is recorded and filed by the chair of the SMRT.
- I. Whenever confidentiality is required under these rules and procedures, it is expressly understood that members of the SMRT are nonetheless subject to any requirements of the secular law, including particularly any requirements that sexual or physical abuse of children or incapacitated adults be reported to appropriate authorities.

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EXHIBIT A to SEXUAL MISCONDUCT RESPONSE POLICY Presbytery of Western North Carolina Presbyterian Church (USA)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

TO: All Presbytery Professionals and All Presbytery Volunteers

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina has adopted a "Sexual Misconduct Response Policy" ("Policy") which explicitly prohibits misconduct of a sexual nature by presbytery professionals ~~or presbytery volunteers~~, as such terms are defined in the policy. This policy of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina applies to all presbytery professionals and presbytery volunteers, as such terms are defined in the policy. It is essential that all who are subject to the policy and its procedures read and understand the policy, acknowledge that they have done so, and formally consent to being bound by the presbytery's discipline in the matter. Please complete the form below and return to the office of the Committee on Ministry.

_____ Detach and Return _____

Please initial as appropriate:

_____ I have received a copy of the "Sexual Misconduct Response Policy, " as adopted by the Presbytery of Western North Carolina in April of 2011. I have read it, and I understand it. I acknowledge that the policy and procedures apply to me and that I agree to conduct myself in accordance with them.

_____ I certify that no civil, criminal or ecclesiastical complaint has been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct; and I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

_____ I am unable to make the above certification. I offer instead a description of the complaint, termination, or the outcome of the situation with explanatory comments. (Attached)

Signature

Date

Printed Name

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EXHIBIT B to SEXUAL MISCONDUCT RESPONSE POLICY Presbytery of Western North Carolina Presbyterian Church (USA)

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT SELF-CERTIFICATION

Please initial as appropriate:

_____ I certify that no civil, criminal or ecclesiastical complaint has been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct; and I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct, nor disciplines for reasons related to sexual misconduct on my part.

If you are unable to make the above certification, you may instead provide a description of the complaint, termination, reason for the discipline or the outcome of the situation with explanatory comments in the space below.

Signature

Date

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EXHIBIT C to SEXUAL MISCONDUCT RESPONSE POLICY Presbytery of Western North Carolina Presbyterian Church (USA)

RELEASE

The information set forth by me in documents similar in form to Exhibits A and B of this policy are accurate to the best of my knowledge and may be verified by the employing entity. I hereby authorize the Presbytery of Western North Carolina to make any and all contacts necessary to verify my prior employment history, and to inquire concerning any criminal records or any judicial proceedings involving me as a defendant. By means of this release, I also authorize any previous employer and any law enforcement agencies or judicial authorities to release all requested relevant information to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

I have read this release and understand fully that the information obtained from the employing entity may be used to deny me employment or any other type of position. I also agree that I will hold harmless the employing entity or judicial authority from any and all claims, liabilities, and cause of action for the legitimate release or use of any information

Signature

Date

COM ATTACHMENT 4

ORIGINALLY APPROVED OCTOBER 27, 2012 BY PWNC IN STATED MEETING

Proposed Revision of POLICY re ASSOCIATE PASTOR or TRANSITIONAL PASTOR (Minister of Word and Sacrament/TEACHING ELDER) TO INSTALLED PASTOR
Presbytery of Western North Carolina

**APPROVED AT APRIL 30, 2019 MEETING OF PWNC
and FURTHER REVISED (at IV.A.) AT JULY 30, 2022 MEETING OF PWNC**

Proposed revisions are in underlined italic.

Preamble

The function of this policy is to provide procedural guidance for allowing a congregation's Associate Pastor to be installed as its Pastor or Co-Pastor, and to allow installing a Transitional Pastor as Pastor, Co-Pastor, or Associate Pastor. Relevant Book of Order (2023-2025) guidance for this policy is:

"a. Installed Pastoral Relationships

... The relationship of an associate pastor to a congregation is not dependent upon that of a pastor. An associate pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation. (G-2.0504a)

b. Temporary Pastoral Relationships

Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. When a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery, may obtain the services of a minister of Word and Sacrament, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place.

Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. A minister of Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. (G-2.0504b)

c. Exceptions

A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a minister of Word and Sacrament currently called as an Associate Pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co-pastor, or a minister of the Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. Presbyteries that permit this eligibility shall establish such relationships only by a three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present and voting. (G-2.0505c)

MISSION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

SEE, We Are The Body Of Christ

We Covenant to...

Strengthen Congregations

Equip Disciples

Engage in Mission

Guiding Principles to achieve the mission of our Presbytery:

Coordinate, guide, encourage, support, and resource the work of the congregations for the most effective witness to the broader community and partner with a particular congregation in carrying out its Mission in accordance with the Book of Order (2023-2025).

Oversee the transition during a time of pastoral change in the life of the congregation by serving as pastor, counselor, and advisor to teaching elders and congregations. G-2.0504b-c

Based on these Presbytery guiding principles the Presbytery will work in partnership with congregations to ensure that procedures are followed which will provide appropriate pastoral relationships for a particular church at a particular time.

I. Procedure at the beginning of a pastoral vacancy:

A. Congregations which normally have an installed Pastor, Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor are strongly encouraged to be led by a trained transitional pastor who intends to devote him/herself to the interim task through the interim period between installed pastors.

1. The work of such a transitional pastor is important to any congregation which has experienced a pastoral vacancy, regardless of the cause, as all such vacancies generate some level of grief and anxiety. Moreover, the work of a transitional pastor becomes increasingly valuable where there has been a long-term pastorate or where the conclusion of the prior pastorate has been sudden and/or accompanied by conflict.

2. Interim ministry requires particular personal skills and specialized training which equip the transitional pastor to lead the congregation through the specific tasks of the interim period as well as provide for the normal pastoral functions that are a part of any pastoral ministry. If the transitional pastor has not previously received specific interim training, he or she must do so within six months after beginning this pastorate or otherwise satisfy the Presbytery of his/her fitness for the role. Such transitional pastors are not merely place-holders or caretakers, but rather are agents of stability and change and preparation for the church's future under new pastoral leadership.

3. To be effective and to accomplish the tasks that should be completed during a pastoral transition, a transitional pastor must be objective and maintain his/her independence from influences that would compromise his/her judgments and autonomy, including but not limited to the possibility and perceived benefits of the interim relationship being converted to an installed pastoral position. Therefore, it is

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important that the person serving as a transitional pastor or a transitional associate pastor ordinarily is not eligible to be called to as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor in that congregation.

4. Normally, Associate Pastors fulfill a specified, limited role in a congregation's mission, life, and witness. As such, congregations and Associate Pastors acknowledge—at least implicitly—that their relationship is mutually beneficial and would not necessarily be enhanced if the Associate Pastor were to be called as installed Pastor or Co-Pastor. Exceptions may be considered, however, only under clearly-defined circumstances, as described below.

B. In compliance with the Book of Order (2023-2025) the Presbytery affirms that a Minister of Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder who is installed as an Associate Pastor or employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed Pastor, Co-Pastor, or Associate Pastor. Only when the Presbytery determines such action is appropriate will the Presbytery consider allowing an Associate Pastor or a transitional pastor to become the next installed pastor.

II. Procedure for ordinary replacement of Pastor, Co-Pastor, or Associate Pastor

A. Interim Period

To ensure that the interim period will be effective and the interim tasks will be accomplished the Committee on Ministry (COM) will partner with the Session and congregation from the time the departing pastor announces his/her intention to end his/her pastorate. A member of the COM will speak to the entire congregation about the nature of the transition time. A COM member will counsel with the Session about the options for ministry during the vacancy period and will be a resource during their journey, whatever decision is made.

B. Transitional Pastor Search Committee

If there is a Session search committee for a transitional pastor they will consult with the COM with regard to possible candidates. After a candidate is chosen by the search committee the COM will meet with the candidate to assess his/her fit with the mission and needs of the congregation. After the approval of the COM, the Presbytery will approve the candidate being accepted into the Presbytery as a transitional pastor for the congregation.

C. COM Relationship with Transition Pastor

The COM will build a relationship with the transitional pastor and stay apprised of the status of the congregation through regular meetings with him/her and also through written reports from the transitional pastor.

D. Installed Pastor Nominating Committee

The COM will meet with the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) as they begin their work to discuss the Presbytery's guidance for the calling of a new pastor and to build relationships with the committee members. The COM will meet with the PNC at others times at the request of the committee or to assess their progress. As soon as a PNC is aware that the congregation's Associate Pastor will seek to be considered as the next installed Pastor, the PNC will notify and confer with the COM.

III. Procedure for allowing an exception.

A. The congregation will have completed several transition steps:

- (1) It will have done a Mission Study
- (2) The Associate Pastor or the transitional pastor and the PNC each both will have been in close contact with the COM to keep Presbytery informed of the situation at the particular church.
- (3) The skills and interests of the Associate Pastor or transitional pastor will match the skills and interests indicated by the PNC in the relevant part of the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP).

B. The Session and the Presbytery will have determined that there are conditions which justify an exception. Therefore, Presbytery can conclude that its mission strategy will be served by permitting the Associate Pastor or transitional pastor to be called as the installed pastor. Some examples of such circumstances are a congregation recovering from the untimely death of a pastor, an unfortunate situation such as pastoral sexual harassment, an out of control environmental issue such as a changing neighborhood or declining population, a split in the church involving some members leaving to join with another denomination, a general attitude of contentiousness, and/or a history of conflict.

C. When a Minister of Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder who serves the congregation as an Associate Pastor or is employed in a transitional relationship becomes an installed Pastor, Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor it shall be for a designated term of two years. The rationale for this approach is that the two-year period will give the Session, the congregation, the teaching elder and the Presbytery an appropriate time frame to optimize resolution of **any named, specific** issues and to assess the match of pastor to congregation and to the achievement of Presbytery and congregation mission strategies.

IV. Options for concluding a designated term.

As the end of the designated term approaches:

- A. The pastor with a designated term can be installed for an indefinite term as pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. In this case, with the approval of Presbytery through COM a congregational meeting shall be held to call the pastor for an indefinite term which, if favorable, will be followed by COM recording a transition to installed for an indefinite term in its minutes.
- B. The designated period shall be extended by one or two years if recommended by the congregation and Presbytery
- C. The pastoral relationship can be terminated by the pastor's resignation, the non-renewal of the call by the congregation, or by action of the Presbytery.

Youth Leaders

Save These Dates!

May 3rd

Adventure Day
6th-12th graders
Camp Grier

TRIENNIUM

National Youth
Conference
July 28-31st
Louisville, KY
REGISTER NOW!

**YOUTH
COUNCIL**

High School Youth
are invited to join
the leadership
team! Email Beth
for more info

Sept 27

PATHWAYS
Youth Gathering for
Middle & High School
SAVE THE DATE
MONTREAT, NC

Nov 8-9

YOUTH RETREAT
Overnight Retreat
Middle & High School
CAMP GRIER

Need more info? Email Beth @ beth.gunn@gmail.com



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\$600 SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR CAMP GRIER!

FOLLOW THE BELOW STEPS TO APPLY:

- Follow this link to fill out the Scholarship Application:
<https://form.jotform.com/233056598984170>
- For more information about Camp Grier, their mission, camp programming and offerings, click here: www.campgrier.org

CAMPERS CAN ENJOY:

- HIKING
- CAMPING
- WORSHIP
- ART
- CANOEING
- SWIMMING

AND SO MUCH MORE!



LIMITED SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE SO APPLY TODAY!*

*If you have already registered your child for camp, it isn't too late to apply for this scholarship.

PWNC YOUTH COUNCIL

BE A PART OF THE TEAM

-YOUTH COUNCIL NEEDS
9TH-12TH GRADERS!

-YOUTH PARTICIPANTS WILL
GROW IN LEADERSHIP AND FAITH
-THE INVITATION TO JOIN OUR
TEAM IS OPEN FOR 2025-2026!



CHURCHES!! YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!
INVITE YOUR YOUTH TO JOIN!



QUESTIONS?

CONTACT BETH GUNN AT
BETH.GUNN@GMAIL.COM



Are You Dreaming about the summer?
Join the PWNC Youth delegation at
Presbyterian Youth Triennium!

Youth Spaces Still Available



What is Triennium?



Click here!

Please encourage your current 8th-12th graders to
consider participating in this life changing event.

Registration available online at presbyterywnc.org

Questions?

Contact Beth.Gunn@gmail.com

WHAT CAN **CLS** DO FOR YOU?

The **PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA'S CHURCH LEADERSHIP SCHOOL** provides quality training to church members wanting to strengthen their faith, their church and their skills.

We've been doing this since 1999, producing positive results for churches in our Presbytery as well as other Presbyteries.



STRENGTHENING FAITH

Participants come to CLS with a wide range of Biblical knowledge, but all come away with a deeper understanding of scripture and Reformed theology. Courses include exploration of worship services, the Directory of Worship and the Sacraments.



STRENGTHENING CHURCHES

Graduates of the program often take on leadership roles in the church and the Presbytery. Many go on to teach Sunday School classes, while some take on Commissioned Pastor roles in smaller churches. Polity is also a part of the curriculum.



STRENGTHENING SKILLS

Pastoral care is not the exclusive domain of a pastor. Our school provides training in the basics. Students also find out more about what goes into preaching and planning worship services. History of the Church provides valuable background on our faith journey.

WHAT IS CLS?

The Church Leadership School is a course designed to help participants learn and grow in discipleship.

WHO ATTENDS?

Our students have diverse life experiences – some retired, some already leaders in their congregation, some simply seeking enrichment.

WHEN?

Every other Saturday September through May. Two sessions each day 9 a.m. to noon and 1-3 p.m.



TWO WAYS TO PARTICIPATE: Classes are held every other Saturday at **First Presbyterian of Morganton**. While in-person is encouraged, students can also attend via Zoom when necessary.

WHERE CAN CLS TAKE YOU?

For some participants, the Church Leadership School is the first step in becoming a Commissioned Pastor (also known as a Commissioned Ruling Elder), providing 170 hours of instruction.

For others CLS provides valuable insight into the practices of the church and tools to develop deeper ties to God and Scripture. Many to attend seek to be better teachers, elders and deacons.

WHO ARE THE TEACHERS?

With Montreat, Black Mountain and the lure of the Blue Ridge in the boundaries of our Presbytery, we are blessed with a large number retired ministers and seminary professors. In addition to this resource, we have highly qualified pastors currently serving churches. All faculty members are volunteers, dedicated to making CLS top notch.



Dean Kerry Border (left) with the Class of 2023.

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Complete the accompanying enrollment form with basic information and briefly describe why you are applying and what your expectations are.

Obtain a letter of recommendation from your home church.

The CLS committee will review your application and answer any questions you may have.



WATCH a sample class on YouTube at https://youtu.be/4H46WOvf_ZE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Kerry Border, Dean of CLS

■ Email: kerryborder@charter.net

■ Phone & Text: (586) 243-9362

Also check out our website <http://presbyterywnc.org>

COURSE SCHEDULE

FALL TERM 2024

6 Saturdays

Preaching (2nd-year students)

New Testament Survey (1st-years)

Pastoral Care

WINTER TERM 2025

6 Saturdays

Worship Structure and Reference Application

Presbyterian Polity

Getting Started in Ministry

Music and Proclamation

SPRING TERM 2025

5 Saturdays

Glory to God Hymnal Application

Stewardship

Christian Education

Sacraments and Weddings

CLP Panel Discussion

Church Administration

Funerals

Statement of Faith Development

Worship workshop

IMPORTANT DATES

AUG. 15 Enrollment deadline

SEPT. 7 Orientation session

SEPT. 21 Fall term begins

WHAT DOES IT COST?

Tuition for each term (3 terms per year) is **\$75**.

Tuition pays for books and other supplies needed for the coursework. Check with your church as many will cover tuition.

No charge for graduates of the program wishing to join us for refresher courses.





Presbytery of Western
North Carolina's
Guatemala Partnership

CELEBRATING
30 YEARS

JOIN US IN PARTNERSHIP

Help change the world

This is a ministry that transforms lives by building relationships of faith, service, and mutual support.



WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

- ✓ Build a one-on-one relationship with a sister church in Guatemala
- ✓ Travel to Guatemala with us
- ✓ Support our scholarship program monetarily
- ✓ Many other opportunities exist to use your gifts

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

Contact Sarah Robinson Bryan
PWNC Guatemala Partnership Coordinator

Phone:
1-803-528-6747



Email :
pwncguatemala@gmail.com



April 2025 Disaster Recovery Report for PWNC:

Six Months After Hurricane Helene

Three PDA Host Sites to Welcome Volunteers in May

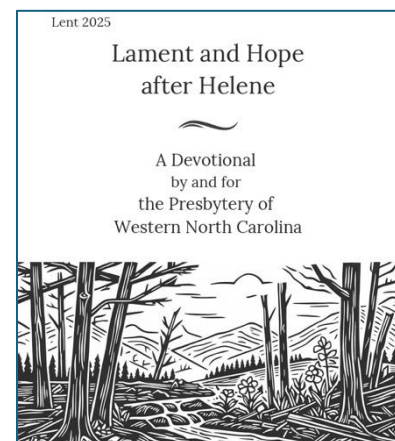
New Hope PC Asheville, First Presbyterian Spruce Pine, and Canton PC have all received approval from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to be official PDA volunteer host sites for the next two years (at least) of disaster recovery. Ordinarily, PDA approves and helps fund/support only one host site per presbytery per disaster. It is a testament to the great teams of these three locations and to the scale of our disaster and recovery needs, that we have three host sites. Thank you to all three host sites for all your work!

We have had dozens and dozens of teams wanting to come to the region to help support rebuilding, and the schedule is almost full for the summer, but slots are still open for the fall: Email awaple@presbyterywnc.org to schedule.

Lenten Devotional Included Many Reflections from the Presbytery

Rev. Rachel Matthews and Rev. Julie Hester (both part of the core disaster coordination team) solicited and assembled a beautiful devotional for Lent this year around the themes of lament and hope. Even though Lent has come and gone, this is still available for download if you'd like to read some of the reflections from around the presbytery. Go to the news section of the PWNC recovery website.

<https://www.pwnc-recovery.org/news>



Funding Available and Flowing to the Those in Need

The Presbytery of WNC is blessed to have received almost \$600,000 (to date) of funding for our Helene Relief Fund. In total, over \$102,000 has been distributed so far. In addition, PDA will have at least several hundred thousand dollars available for our presbytery per year for the next several years. We hosted the first round of organized grant requests in March and distributed over \$75,000 to churches to meet a variety of needs. Some funding went directly to help our neighbors, some to church repairs, some to rent assistance programs

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and more. We're looking forward to the next round of applications, due July 1.

<https://www.pwnc-recovery.org/grants>

PDA funding has already supported host site set-up and will support further case management and construction support as our volunteers engage in rebuilding efforts. There are also several long-term projects under consideration that would strengthen our communities in this recovery and in the face of ongoing stresses.

Website and Newsletter Available for PWNC Disaster Recovery Information:



Our PWNC disaster recovery website is up and running and a newsletter has been put together just to share recovery and related news about once a month. If you have not yet received a newsletter, head to the website to the 'news' section and there will be a QR code to scan and get on the mailing list.

<https://www.pwnc-recovery.org/news>

PWNC Disaster Advisory Network (PWNC-DAN) Up and Running for Presbytery

The PWNC-DAN met on zoom for the first time this month. This is a group of around 20 or so individuals from around the presbytery who have connections to county-based Long-Term Recovery Groups, key partner organizations, or who are working on disaster recovery in a variety of ways.

The goals of this group are:

- 1) to make sure we're identifying gaps in recovery efforts and finding ways to meet those needs,
- 2) to consider preparedness for future events, including as we saw this spring, for wildfire, and
- 3) to share resources and knowledge about the recovery work happening across many of our 23 Presbytery counties, so that we might apply that knowledge in making recovery more effective.

Once a quarter, we will also invite neighboring presbyteries to share their recovery experiences and expertise as well.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER APRIL 1, 2025

“The Lord is a Waymaker!”

- Anonymous

Dear PWNC,

When I was a child growing up at Community United Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles, CA, I was mentored by older people. These people were teachers, laborers, and blue-collar workers during the week. However, on Sundays at church they were considered giants in the faith. They spent time teaching us younger people stories about how God brought them through difficult times. Listening to them in church while our pastor was preaching one could hear phrases such as “Amen!”, “Alright now”, and “Preach!” My favorite was “The Lord is a Waymaker!” This particular phrase always stayed with me when I was going through difficult times and did not know how things would work out. It was an affirmation that God makes a way out of no way.

I don’t need to tell you the world is facing difficult situations – even if you took away the social, economic, and political challenges that are present. Many people do not see a way out of their particular situations and feel hopeless about the future, including those in the church. Yet, I continue to witness the ways in which the Lord is a Waymaker.

In recent times, this saying has been truly evident as our region recovers from the effects of Hurricane Helene. Our Disaster Recovery Coordinator, Anne Waple, and her team of volunteer coordinators (Julie Hester, Rachel Matthews, and Lance Perry) continue their committed service to the Presbytery. Not only have they been instrumental in helping in many ways but our continuing partnership with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has been a real asset. Currently we have three worksites in the Presbytery and they are open for groups to sign up and work. In addition, the team is working with Long Term Recovery Groups (LTRG) to develop partnerships and we are in process of forming our own Presbytery’s Disaster Task Force. Our churches that suffered major damage from Helene are slowly but surely making strides to recover and rebuild. We know it will be a long road ahead, but we are in it for the long haul!!

The Implementation Task Force is finally rolling out the Presbytery’s approved new ministry design. They hosted a training session for ministry leadership teams, team leaders, and other Presbytery leaders at Greenway Presbyterian Church in Lenoir. I am truly grateful for their dedication and commitment to see this design through. We know it will take a while to get used to the new structure and nomenclature – I’m still having trouble keeping up with the name changes! – but I am certain we will get there. I am excited for how we will engage in ministry in new ways.

I am beginning to spend more time envisioning new ministry opportunities for the Presbytery. An example of this is the partnership between Mid-Councils (presbyteries and synods) with Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, GA. I am excited to share that we will host the Preaching for Renewal seminar led by Anna Carter Florence and Jake Myers, two members of the faculty at Columbia. They recently were awarded a sizeable grant from the Lilly Foundation to travel to different parts of the U.S.

Appendix R

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to host these events. We are in the preliminary stages of planning for this to occur in November at First Presbyterian, Asheville. More information will be forthcoming soon. I hope you will be on the lookout for this event!

Whether it is in visiting our congregations, having group discussions, spending one-to-one time with pastors and leaders, or while working at the office, I continue to give witness to the Lord as a Waymaker in the midst of difficult times. My hope and prayer are that you will, too!

Peace,

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

Byron A. Wade
General Presbyter

APPENDIX S

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MALAWI MISSION REPORT – APRIL 2025

Nine team mission members are leaving for Nkhoma, Malawi on May 12. Please pray for us. We are particularly excited about several things on our trip this year.

Men in Mirror is a program for men to look at modeling their life after Jesus and is transforming family relations and church's opportunities for women. It is beginning its third year, and its success is impressive. This program was being used in Guatemala and now has been adopted by the Nkhoma Synod with its million and a half Presbyterians and more than 300 pastors.

Kevin and the Malawian coordinator will be teaching four groups: church pastors, seminary graduates, police chaplains, and also couples, who will be using devotions together to build more positive relationships. Then these pastors plus about one hundred others will be teaching men in their churches.

Throughout the Presbytery churches have been making reusable washable hygiene pads to give to girls to help keep them in school. Each girl will be given a packet with six pads, underwear, and soap. A majority of girls in Malawi miss school during their period because they don't have any needed products. We give out these packets to the girls at school. A nurse gives a hygiene talk and encourages girls to continue to stay in school. The teachers are also adamant that they also get packets.



Agness Nyanda, the principal Hospital Administrator told the story of giving six women working in the hospital one pad each from her sample packet. The next morning, she had a line at her house of women wanting a pad. This year we will have enough pads to give some to the women at the hospital.

There is a possibility that several of us may be there during the seminary graduation. Each year we present the graduates with clerical shirts and bicycle to help them travel



to their different churches and prayer houses. We give the spouses a special dress for the graduation celebration.



We also give Study Bibles to the incoming students at the seminary.

APPENDIX S

P-2

Our Presbytery, through the Building Hope Funds, has been supporting the Nkhoma Hospital's eleven health centers. We first concentrated on getting basic water and electricity or solar to all the health centers. This past year, we funded getting potable water to Malingunde, the largest health center, serving a population of about 100,000 people. This included getting water to the staff housing. We are going to inspect and celebrate that accomplishment and plan this year to upgrade the facility including electrical, termite damage, building maintenance, etc.

We will be excited to meet with and begin work with the new principal of Ebenezer School. Ebenezer is a unique school designed for the children of the hospital staff but also includes village students. It is taught in English with small class sizes in an environment with books and resources. It has about 450 students from pre-K to 8th grade and has grown significantly in the last 15 years. We wished Chrissie a warm goodbye as she retired. We are anticipating taking about the future plans for Ebenezer in the coming years. We still need scholarship support.

Malawi is about the third poorest country in the world. **One concern is the impact of the loss of USAID funds and vaccines.** Our Presbytery funded and now supports a mobile health unit which goes out to the rural area, where it is too far to walk to the Hospital.

Mothers with babies on their backs walk for an hour or more to



reach the mobile health unit. Their under-five clinic provides vaccines for the children, well baby checks, malaria medicine, family planning, pregnancy support, and health care to children under five. Funding for AIDS medicine is also very important. Loss of some of that funding will have an extremely negative impact on children's lives. Children will die that would have lived.





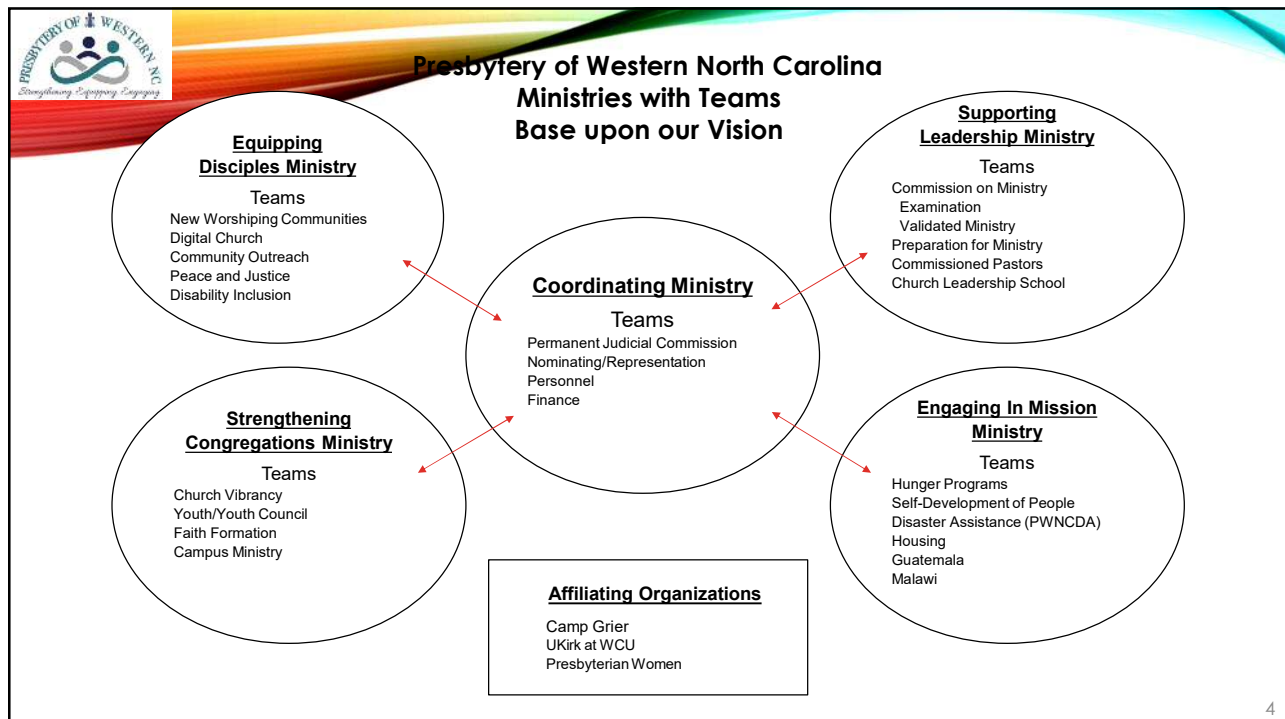
This slide contains the mission statement for the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. It features the same colorful wavy background and logo as the first slide. The text is organized as follows: The title 'Mission Statement' is centered at the top. Below it, 'THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA' and 'PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA' are centered. The main body of text begins with 'SEE, WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST' in bold, followed by 'By God's Spirit, The Churches, Pastors, Elders, Deacons and Congregation Members of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina Are The Body of Christ. We Covenant to ...'. This is followed by three distinct sections, each starting with a phrase in quotes: 'See Thee more clearly' leads to 'Strengthen Congregations' in bold, followed by the quote '“You are Christ's body—that's who you are!” 1 Cor. 12:27 (The Message Bible)'; 'Love Thee more dearly' leads to 'Equip Disciples' in bold, followed by the quote '“For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.” Ephesians 2:10 (NRSV)'; and 'Follow Thee more nearly' leads to 'Engage in Mission' in bold, followed by the quote '“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” Matthew 28:19 (NRSV)'. A small number '2' is in the bottom right corner.




A NEW DESIGN FOR THE PRESBYTERY

- The Presbytery at its July 2024 meeting approved a new design for the Presbytery of Western NC . Why?
- To align more closely with the Mission Statement of the Presbytery
- To move to a design that focused on encouraging and supporting ministries that the Congregations of the Presbytery have a passion for pursuing.
- To strengthen relationships among the churches within their neighborhood
- To shift from a “committee” structure to a “team” structure, in order:
 - To remove barriers to participation in ministries. Open to every member of a congregation, not just pastors and elders.
 - To increase flexibility in ministry project involvement, duration, timing and conclusion.
 - To encourage churches to share and join together in ministry to have a greater impact.

3






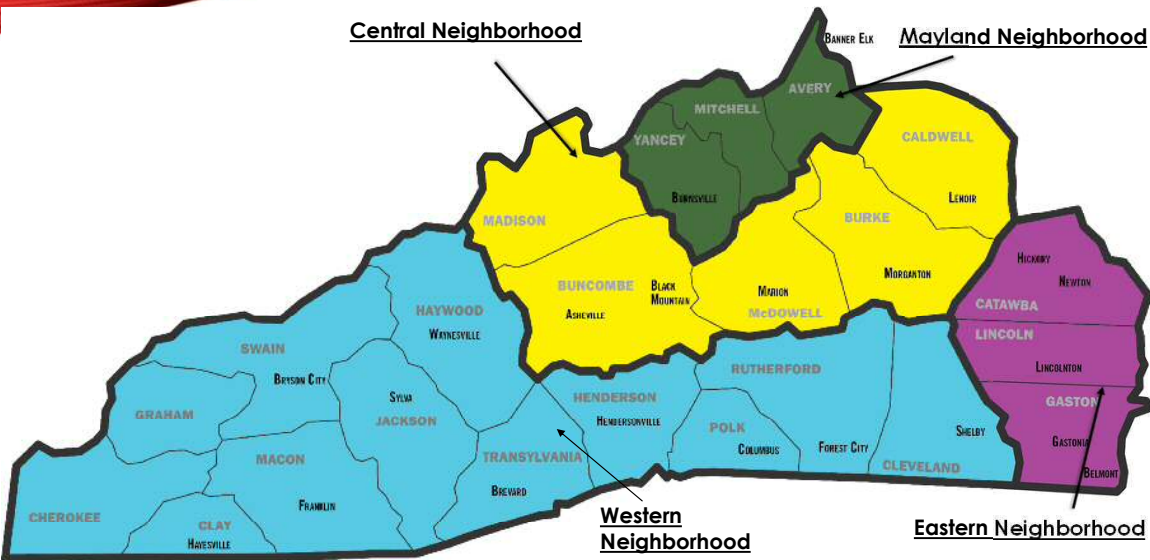
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COMMITTEE AND A TEAM?

- A Committee is:
 - A fixed number of members
 - Each serving a 3 year term
 - Recommend to Presbytery for vote by the Nominating/Representation Committee
- A Team is:
 - A variable number of members with particular passions, skills and gifts
 - Either volunteers or recruited as needed for the Team
 - No fixed term

5



“Clusters” Transition to Neighborhoods



Central Neighborhood (Yellow): Madison, Buncombe, Haywood, Wayneville, Swain, Graham, Bryson City, Macon, Jackson, Sylva, Cherokee, Clay, Haystack, Franklin, Transylvania, Henderson, Hendersonville, Polk, Columbus, Forest City, Cleveland, Shelby, Gaston, Belmont, Lincoln, Catawba, Hickory, Newton.

Mayland Neighborhood (Orange): Banner Elk, Avery, Mitchell, Yancey, Burke, Caldwell, Lenoir, Morganston, Madison, McDowell, Black Mountain.

Western Neighborhood (Light Blue): Cherokee, Clay, Haystack, Franklin, Transylvania, Henderson, Hendersonville, Polk, Columbus, Forest City, Cleveland, Shelby, Gaston, Belmont, Lincoln, Catawba, Hickory, Newton.

Eastern Neighborhood (Purple): Hickory, Newton, Catawba, Lincoln, Lincolnton, Gaston, Belmont.

Base Map Copyright © Free Vector Maps.com

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APPENDIX T

Presbytery Associates:

- Central Neighborhood (yellow): Schaap Freeman
- Eastern Neighborhood (purple): George and Beverly Thompson
- Mayland Neighborhood (green): Bob Ayala
- Western Neighborhood (blue): Tom Phillips

“CLUSTERS” TRANSITION TO “NEIGHBORHOODS”			
CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD	EASTERN NEIGHBORHOOD	MAYLAND NEIGHBORHOOD	WESTERN NEIGHBORHOOD
<u>BURKE COUNTY</u> Bridgewater Green Street Morganton, First Quaker Meadows Waldensian	<u>CATAWBA COUNTY</u> Hickory, First Newton, First Northminster Sherrill’s Ford Sweetwater	<u>AVERY COUNTY</u> Arbor Dale Banner Elk Crossnore Fletcher Newland Pineola Wee Kirk (Seasonal)	<u>CLAY COUNTY</u> Hayesville <u>HAYWOOD COUNTY</u> Canton Waynesville, First <u>SWAIN COUNTY</u> Bryson City
<u>BUNCOMBE COUNTY</u> Asheville, First Black Mountain Brittain’s Cove Calvary Grace Covenant Kenilworth Montreat New Hope, Asheville Reems Creek-Beech Warren Wilson	<u>GASTON COUNTY</u> Belmont, First Cherryville, First Dallas, First Gastonia, First Long Creek Love’s Chapel Lowell Mt. Holly, First New Hope, Gastonia Olney Robinson Memorial Southminster Third Street Union	<u>MITCHELL COUNTY</u> Buladean Grassy Creek Green Mountain Ridgeview Spruce Pine, First Vians Valley	<u>JACKSON COUNTY</u> Sylva, First <u>MACON COUNTY</u> Franklin, First Highlands, First Morrison <u>TRANSYLVANIA</u> Brevard-Davidson River <u>HENDERSON COUNTY</u> Etowah Hendersonville, First Mills River Trinity
<u>CALDWELL COUNTY</u> Dulatown Greenway Lenoir, First Oakwood	<u>LINCOLN COUNTY</u> Artisan Church – New Worshipping Ironton Pine Street Unity	<u>YANCEY COUNTY</u> Burnsville, First Jacks Creek Micaville Newdale	<u>POLK COUNTY</u> Columbus Tryon
<u>MADISON COUNTY</u> Dorland Memorial Marshall Walnut			<u>CLEVELAND COUNTY</u> Dixon Good Hope Ryburn Memorial Shelby Shiloh
<u>MCDOWELL COUNTY</u> Marion, First Old Fort Siloam			<u>RUTHERFORD COUNTY</u> Brittain Forest City, First Rutherfordton Union Mills



WHO'S WHO IN THE NEW DESIGN

- The 9 Ministry Leaders
 - 3 Strengthening Congregations Ministry leaders
 - 3 Equipping Disciples Ministry leaders
 - 3 Engaging in Mission Ministry leaders
- The 15 Ministry Team Leaders
 - 4 Strengthening Congregations Ministry Team leaders
 - 5 Equipping Disciples Ministry Team leaders
 - 6 Engaging in Mission Ministry Team leaders

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WHO'S WHO IN THE NEW DESIGN MINISTRY LEADERS

- **Strengthening Congregations Ministry**
 - Sarah Grace Montgomery (2025)
 - Becky Stanley (2026)
 - Betty Davenport (2027)
- **Equipping Disciples Ministry**
 - Will Upchurch (2025)
 - Allan Purtill (2026)
 - Helen Hall (2027)
- **Engaging In Mission Ministry**
 - Martha Campbell (2025)
 - Sue Johnson (2026)
 - Esta Jarrett (2027)


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WHO'S WHO IN THE NEW DESIGN MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS

- **Strengthening Congregations Ministry**
 - Church Vibrancy Team: Janet DeWater
 - Youth Team / Council: David Germer
 - Faith Formation Team: Vivian Hare
 - Campus Ministry Team: Richard Boyce
- **Equipping Disciples Ministry**
 - New Worshiping Communities Team: David Bonnema
 - Digital Church Team: Bill Neely
 - Community Outreach Team: Vernon Yount
 - Peace and Justice Team: tbd
 - Disability Inclusion Team: Beth Ann Miller
- **Engaging In Mission Ministry**
 - Hunger Programs Team: tbd
 - Self-Development of People Team: tbd
 - Disaster Assistance Team: Bob Abel
 - Housing Team: Stephen Aschmann
 - Guatemala Team: Valerie Holcombe / Doug Michael / Linda Abel
 - Malawi Team: Terri Forsyth

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THE ROLE OF THE 9 MINISTRY LEADERS

- The major responsibility is to be a source of inspiration, an encourager for your ministry
- Each Ministry has 3 leaders
 - 1 for the class of 2025, 1 for the class of 2026 & 1 for the class of 2027
 - This is a position that will be filled annually by the Nominating/Representation Team, with 1 new class member that will serve for 3 years
- The leader in the current year of each ministry will serve on the Coordinating Ministry, which meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month
 - You will serve as a liaison between the Coordinating Ministry and the Ministry Team Leaders under your ministry
 - Report to the Coordinating Ministry the activities and needs of the teams under your ministry (i.e. upcoming projects, important dates, requests for funding, input to the annual budgeting process, etc...)
 - Communicating relevant information from the Coordinating Ministry to your ministry teams (i.e. funding approvals, suggestions on potential projects, etc...)
 - Prepare the next Ministry Leader for their role on the Coordinating Ministry
 - Make recommendations for the next class to the Nominating/Representation Team

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THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS

- Build a team with a passion for this ministry,
 - The size of team should be based on the needs of the projects
 - The size of the team will change (grow and decline) based on project timing and duration
- Be creative in project selection
- Projects can be initiated in any Neighborhood as opportunities arise
- Select individual project leaders and help them as needed
 - Assist with project planning, organization, timeframe & budgeting
- Stay informed on the status of all projects within your ministry team
- Communicate your projects to the Ministry Leaders
 - Seek Coordinating Ministry's concurrence when relevant
 - This should include timely written reports (i.e. needs for the project, budget, start/stop dates, churches engaged, etc...)


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THE ROLE OF THE PRESBYTERY ASSOCIATES

- Be a champion of the new Presbytery design to the congregations
- Identify potential team members and share them with Ministry Team Leaders and Ministry Leaders
- Share opportunities with the congregations to participate in Presbytery ministry events
- Share opportunities to collaborate and partner with other congregations
- Share local congregation ministries that may have a broader Presbytery potential to the Ministry Team Leaders and Ministry Leaders
- Attend Ministry Leaders meetings whenever possible
- Be a sounding board to the Ministry Leaders and Ministry Team Leaders as they implement the new ministry design


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WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? MINISTRY LEADERS

- The Ministry Leaders should organize a meeting with:
 - All of their Ministry Team Leaders (all together at one time if possible)
 - Where there is no current Ministry Team Leader, seek suggestions and recruit leaders
 - A member of the Revisioning Task Force (use this resource to prepare for this meeting)
- Overview the new organization design (in total)
- Focus, in detail, on your specific ministry organization
- Discuss projects for 2025 and 2026
- Develop plans that are consistent with the new organizational design
- Allocate the budget among the Ministry Teams
- Complete this task early in the second quarter 2025

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WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS

- The Ministry Team Leaders should organize a meeting with all of their Ministry Team
 - Include one of your Ministry Leaders
- Focus, in detail, on your specific ministry
- Review, clarify and update the team's description as needed
- Discuss projects for 2025 and 2026 in detail
- Develop project plans and schedules
- Identify and recruit additional team members as needed, for whatever duration is appropriate
- Review the available funding
 - Where appropriate seek additional funding through written request to the Ministry Leader (who will take the request to the Coordinating Ministry)
- Complete this task by the end of second quarter 2025

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WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE, TODAY? YOU THE MEMBERS OF PRESBYTERY

- As you head to lunch today, after you get your food:
 - Gather at tables identified with your Neighborhood color
 - The Presbytery Associates for your Neighborhood will be there
 - Spend time getting to know your neighbors and your Presbytery Associate
- Neighborhoods (color): Presbytery Associate
 - Central Neighborhood (yellow): Schaap Freeman
 - Eastern Neighborhood (purple): George and Beverly Thompson
 - Mayland Neighborhood (green): Bob Ayala
 - Western Neighborhood (blue): Tom Phillips

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THANK YOU!

as we implement this new TEAM design
for the Presbytery of Western NC.

It can only happen and be implemented with:
Your leadership
Your passion and
Your commitment

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