

146th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina
Tuesday, April 28, 2026
Montreat Conference Center, Montreat, NC

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GUIDE TO WORSHIP AND WORK

ONE-HUNDRED FORTY-SIXTH STATED MEETING

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

**Montreat Conference Center
Montreat, NC**

**146th STATED MEETING
 PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
 April 28, 2026
 DOCKET**

9:00	Call to Order	Wanda Neely, Moderator	
	Convene with Prayer of Invocation	Wanda Neely, Moderator	
	Land Acknowledgment	Wanda Neely, Moderator	
	Welcome	Keith Grogg and Richard DuBose	
	Appointment of Standing Committees	Wanda Neely, 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
	<i>(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.)</i>		
	Stated Clerk's Report	Ann Philbrick	B
	<i>(Work of the Clerk, Presbytery Meeting Dates, Administrative Commission Reports)</i>		
	Reports Submitted for Information and/or Included in the Consent Agenda		
	Nominating/ Representation Team		I
	Finance Team		FF
	Building Hope		BH
	Summary of the 256th Stated Assembly Synod of the Mid-Atlantic		II
	Report of the General Presbyter		GP
9:40	Service of Worship		
	<i>Worship leaders: Amy Cantrell, Keith Grogg et.al.</i>		
	<i>Offering to go to Beloved Asheville</i>		
10:30	Speak Out (10 minutes)		
10:40	Guatemala Partnership (5 minutes)	Sarah Robinson and Doug Michael	
	<i>(Work of the Team)</i>		
10:45	Youth Ministry Team (10 minutes)	David Germer	Y
	<i>(Work of the Team)</i>		

10:55 Coordinating Ministry (30 minutes) **Ken Murchison** **C**
(Work of the Ministry)

- Action to empower neighborhood meetings
- Election of one time moderators and clerks for neighborhood meetings
- Report from Camp Grier Executive Director

Jason McDougald

11:25 Commission on Ministry (45 minutes) **Keith Grogg** **D**
(Introduce new ministers and recommendations for Presbytery approval.)

- Motion to withdraw Harassment and Anti-Racism Policies for further work and rescheduling of discussion and action
- Presentation of Craig Sumey
- Presentation of Anne Apple
- Examination of Sarah Dianne Jones for Ordination

25 Years Service

Richard Floyd
 Steven Runholt
 Ann Apple
 Susan Verbrugge

50 Years Service

William Lowrey
 Stephen Aschmann
 Daniel Stitt

60 Years Service

Jay Rabuck

Retired

Holly Davis
 John McCall
 Mark Stanley
 Brad Simpson

12:10 LUNCH

1:00 Reconvene

Presbyterian Association of Musicians **Elizabeth Deibert**

Malawi Mission Leadership Team **Terri Forsyth/ Reed Conley P**

- Recommended overture concurrences:
 - OVT - 004 - On prohibiting non-disclosures covenants in employee relations
 - OVT- 005 - Call to review the restructuring of the PC(USA) World Mission
 - OVT - 006 - Call for a new missiological statement for the PC(USA)

Preparation for Ministry Team **Kelley Connelly** **K**

Follow Up Report on Igniting Imagination (5 minutes) **David Bonnema**

Report of Disaster Recovery Coordinator (5 minutes) **Anne Waple** **X**

Report of Bills and Overtures (if needed)

Prayers of Intercession **Sue Johnson**

Benediction and Adjournment

Attendance and Voting. Each teaching elder shall attend each meeting of Presbytery, and each congregation shall be represented by at least one ruling elder at each meeting. Congregations are entitled to ruling elder commissioners based on the following active membership (BO: G-1.0402), as shown on the most recent statistical report (*For the 2026 year, churches G through N are entitled to an additional elder. Please note that commissioner representation is based on active membership figures taken from the 2024 Statistical Report as figures are not available for 2025.*):

- 0 - 250 members - 1
- 251 - 750 members - 2
- 751 - 1250 members - 3
- 1251 - 1750 members - 4

Retired teaching elders shall be welcome at all meetings, but their necessary non-attendance shall be excused. To ensure approximate parity in numbers between ruling elder and teaching elder commissioners:

1. All members of the Coordinating Ministry, and Commission on Ministry shall have voice and vote (if ruling elders).
2. All division, team and sub-team chairs shall have voice and vote (if ruling elders).
3. All Commissioned Pastors shall have voice and vote.
4. All Certified Christian Educators, Certified Associate Christian Educators, and, in addition, other Christian Educators who have
 - earned at least a bachelor's degree (or its equivalent)
 - served in one or more educational ministries under the jurisdiction of a Presbytery (or one of its Sessions) for a minimum of two (2) years, and
 - been examined and recommended to Presbytery by the Faith Formation Team shall have voice and (if ruling elders) vote, provided that these privileges shall end, pursuant to BO: G-2.1103, when such persons are no longer serving in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery (or one of its Sessions).
5. All ruling elder commissioners to the Synod Assembly and to the General Assembly shall have voice and vote as long as their terms last.
6. All exempt staff of Presbytery shall have voice.
7. All racial/ethnic congregations and other congregations designated by the Coordinating Ministry shall elect an additional ruling elder commissioner.
8. Only teaching elders who are active members (including retired teaching elders) or members-at-large of Presbytery, as defined by the *Book of Order*, shall have voice and vote.

DATE	LOCATION	PACKET DEADLINE	POWERPOINT DEADLINE	OVERTURE DEADLINE
2026 Presbytery Meeting Dates				
Tuesday, April 28	Montreat Conference Center	April 2, 2026	April 9, 2026	March 31, 2026
Saturday, July 25	Neighborhood Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artisan – Eastern • Greenway – Central • Mills River – Western • Crossnore- Mayland 	July 2, 2026	July 9, 2026	June 30, 2026
Tuesday, October 27	First Presbyterian Church, Gastonia	October 1, 2026	October 8, 2026	September 29, 2026
2027 Presbytery Meeting Dates				
Saturday, January 30	Virtual - ZOOM	January 4, 2027	January 11, 2027	December 29, 2026
Tuesday, April 27	Montreat Conference Center	April 1, 2027	April 8, 2027	March 30, 2027
Saturday, July 31	Neighborhoods (TBD)	July 1, 2027	July 8, 2027	June 29, 2027
Tuesday, October 26	TBD	October 1, 2027	October 7, 2027	September 28, 2027

Calendar of Events

MEETINGS HELD BY ZOOM UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

APRIL

- 23 Youth Team
Faith Formation
- 25 Church Leadership School
- 28 **146th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, Montreat Conf. Ctr.**

MAY

- 2 PWNC Youth Adventure Day at Camp Grier
- 4 Examinations Team
- 5 Commission on Ministry
- 12 Welcome Team Luncheon
- 13 Coordinating Ministry
- 16 Nominating and Representation
- 20 Preparation for Ministry
- 25 **Memorial Day Holiday, PWNC Offices Closed**
- 28 Youth Team
Faith Formation

JUNE

- 1 Examinations Team
- 2 Commission on Ministry
- 9 Validated Ministry
- 10 Coordinating Ministry
- 19 **Juneteenth, PWNC Offices Closed**
Personnel
- 25 Youth Team
- 29 Examinations Team
- 30 Overture Deadline for July Presbytery Meeting

JULY

- 2 Presbytery Packet Deadline
- 3 **Independence Day Holiday, PWNC Offices Closed**
- 7 Commission on Ministry
Peace and Justice
- 8 Coordinating Ministry
- 9 Power Point Deadline for Presbytery Meeting
- 25 **147th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, Neighborhoods**
Central- Greenway Eastern- Artisan
Western- Mills River Mayland- Crossnore
- 31 Hurricane Helene Relief Grant Deadline



To: Members of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina
From: Ann Philbrick, Stated Clerk
Date: April 15, 2026
Re: One-Hundred Forty Sixth Stated Meeting of Presbytery

The quarterly stated meeting of Presbytery is quickly approaching! This meeting will be held Tuesday, April 28th, in Anderson Auditorium at Montreat Conference Center. Please dress casually and remember to wear comfortable shoes.

This meeting has several important features and will necessarily continue after lunch. Lunch will be held in the Upper Anderson and will reconvene in Anderson Auditorium afterwards.

REGISTRATION Lunch this year will be catered by Countryside BBQ. Plates will be \$14 with the entree options of a chicken bacon wrap, countryside club, or veggie wrap (vegetarian), or a garden salad (gluten free). All entrees will include a bag of chips, chocolate chip cookie, and beverage. Please contact the presbytery office by telephone at 828-438-4217 or email at kquinn@presbyterywnc.org to register and place your order by April 22, 2026.

OFFERING The offering taken will be designated for BeLoved Asheville.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER All requests should be placed on the Stated Clerk’s table before 11:00 a.m.

ELDER REPRESENTATION For the 2026 year, the following churches (G through N) are entitled to an additional elder. Please note that commissioner representation is based on active membership figures taken from the **2024** Annual Statistical Report.

0 - 250 members – 1	751 - 1250 members - 3
251 - 750 members – 2	1251 - 1750 members – 4

Gastonia, First	Good Hope	Grace Covenant	Grassy Creek
Green Mountain	Green Street	Greenway	Hayesville
Hendersonville, First	Hickory, First	Highlands, First	Ironton
Jacks Creek	Kenilworth	Lenoir, First	Long Creek
Love’s Chapel	Lowell	Marion, First	Marshall
Micaville	Mills River	Montreat	Morganton, First
Morrison	Mount Holly, First	New Hope, Asheville	New Hope, Gastonia
Newdale	Newland	Newton, First	Northminster

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 Wanda Neely, Ann Philbrick, and Katie Quinn be requested to prepare the minutes of this Presbytery meeting for approval at the July 25, 2026 Presbytery meetings.**
- CA 2. THAT the minutes of the January 31, 2026 Stated Meeting of Presbytery be approved as submitted.**
- CA 3. THAT the April 2026 report of the following Administrative Commission be received and entered into the permanent record of Presbytery: (Stated Clerk Attachment 1)**

Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding Ministry

- CA 4. THAT the following people be appointed to the Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding Their Ministry for 2026: Milt Morgan, chair; David Hosick, Don Scofield, Becky Stanley, Bobbi White**

**RECOMMENDATION 1 and 2 FROM THE
NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION REPORT**

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

- CA 1. **Property Team**
 - Rev. Dr. Cam Murchison (Retired)
 - Mr. Steve Brittain (Gastonia First)
 - Ms. Susie Lewis (Cherryville First)
 - Ms. Kayla Wall
 - Mr. Mike Begley (Black Mountain)

- CA 2. **Welcome Team**
 - Rev. Dr. Laurey Harrell (Retired)
 - Rev. Robert Evans (Retired)
 - Rev. Pat Reid (Retired)
 - Rev. Dr. Allen Smith (Kenilworth)
 - Rev. Kelley Connelly (Highlands 1st)
 - Rev. Matt Matthews (Waldensian)

**THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
STATED CLERK'S REPORT
Ann Philbrick, Stated Clerk
April 28, 2026**

The Stated Clerk presents the following:

- CA 1. **THAT Wanda Neely, Ann Philbrick, and Katie Quinn be requested to prepare the minutes of this Presbytery meeting for approval at the July 25, 2026 Presbytery meetings.**
- CA 2. **THAT the minutes of the January 31, 2026 Stated Meeting of Presbytery be approved as submitted.**
- CA 3. **THAT the April 2026 report of the following Administrative Commission be received and entered into the permanent record of Presbytery: (Stated Clerk Attachment 1)**
- Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding Ministry
- CA 4. **THAT the following people be appointed to the Administrative Commission for Churches Concluding Their Ministry for 2026: Milt Morgan, chair; David Hosick, Don Scofield, Becky Stanley, Bobbi White**

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

6. **THAT the 147th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina will be held in the four neighborhoods concurrently on Saturday, July 25, 2026. (Eastern: Artisan; Central: Greenway; Western: Mills River; Mayland: Crossnore) THAT the deadline for written reports for those meetings is Thursday, July 2, 2026. Anything deemed controversial by the Coordinating Ministry will be saved for the October Presbytery meeting.**
7. **THAT the following procedure for reviewing session records for 2025 in the year 2026, is as follows:**
- A. Each clerk of session will gather the 2025 Session minutes for her/his congregation.
 - B. By the end of February 2026, the Clerk's office distributed an updated checklist to each clerk.
 - C. During early April, the Stated Clerk ran training events on Zoom.
 - D. No later than September 1, 2026, Churches will use the updated checklist to review their records and return to the Presbytery office.
8. **THAT a renunciation of jurisdiction was received by the clerk from Tee Gatewood on March 30, 2026.**
- Note: Rev. Gatewood expressed his regret and gratitude. He left in order to serve as an ordained minister in the Anglican Church of North America.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION REPORT

April 2026

Churches Concluding their Ministry:

The AC happily reports that properties of Saluda Presbyterian Church and FPC Bessemer City have been successfully transferred to their new owners as follows: the Saluda Fellowship Hall to the Saluda Pop-Up Pantry and the Church Sanctuary to the Saluda Historical Committee as well as the FPC Bessemer City property to the Bessemer City History and Art Society. Thus, our work in regards to these two churches is now complete.

The AC accepted the resignations of Steve Brittain and John Pea. Milt Morgan agreed to take over as chair. A few more members are being recruited.

Respectfully submitted,
Milt Morgan, Chair

COORDINATING MINISTRY
Ken Murchison, Chair
April 28, 2026

SECTION ONE

The Coordinating Ministry RECOMMENDS to Presbytery:

1. That the Presbytery approve the following motion regarding the meetings of Presbytery Neighborhoods in July 2026:
 - a. The Presbytery of Western North Carolina hereby commissions each geographical neighborhood (Central, Eastern, Western, Mayland) for one-time authority to be exercised at its July 25, 2026 neighborhoods meeting to:
 - Celebrate the Lord's Supper
 - Receive reports of teams and ministries.
 - Act on any COM recommendations that pertain to their neighborhood churches.
 - Welcome ministers (teaching elders) to ministry in its congregations after action by the Commission on Ministry.
 - Act on any Coordinating Ministry recommendations that pertain to their neighborhood churches.
 - Examine candidates for ordination upon recommendation of the Preparation for Ministry Team.
 - b. Eligibility to vote will be determined by the Standing Rules of the Presbytery.
 - c. Quorum for each neighborhood gathering will be at least 15 commissioners, including 6 Ministers of Word and Sacrament and ruling elders commissioned by at least 6 congregations.
 - d. Any new business brought to one of the meetings will be handled at the next stated presbytery meeting.
2. That the Presbytery elect the following individuals to serve as moderators and clerks at the Neighborhood meetings in July 25, 2026:
 - a. Central Neighborhood Meeting (Burke, Buncombe, Caldwell, Madison, McDowell Counties) at Greenway Presbyterian Church in Lenoir NC
 Moderator: Becky Stevens (Ruling Elder, Lenoir First)
 Clerk: Helen Hall (Ruling Elder, Dulatown)
 - b. Eastern Neighborhood Meeting (Catawba, Gaston, Lincoln Counties) at Artisan Church in Lincolnton NC
 Moderator: Laurey Harrell (Teaching Elder, Retired)
 Clerk: Julia Rush (Ruling Elder, Lowell)
 - c. Mayland Neighborhood Meeting (Avery, Mitchell and Yancey Counties) at Crossnore Church in Crossnore NC
 Moderator: Karl Campbell (Ruling Elder, Crossnore)

Clerk: Dennis Howell (Ruling Elder, Newdale)
Clerk Alternate: Marie Cook (Ruling Elder, Crossnore)
d. Western Neighborhood Meeting (Clay, Haywood Swain, Jackson, Macon
Transylvania, Henderson, Polk, Cleveland, and Rutherford Counties) at Mills River
Presbyterian Church in Mills River, NC
Moderator: Emily Wilmarth (Teaching Elder, Highlands First)
Clerk: Ron Tingle (Ruling Elder, Waynesville First)

SECTION TWO

The Coordinating Ministry informs Presbytery regarding the following matters:

1. **The Presbytery docket includes a list of upcoming events.**
2. **The Coordinating Ministry approved the transfer of Old Shiloh Presbyterian Church Cemetery to Old Shiloh Cemetery, Inc. with the nonprofit bearing the legal costs of the conveyance.**
3. **The Coordinating Ministry amended the guidelines for undesignated contributions to Building Hope to eliminate Camp Grier from future allocations because all funds previously allocated to Camp Grier have been paid. [Note: The total paid to Camp Grier was \$354,022.31.]**
4. **That the Coordinating Ministry allocated \$100,000 in 2026 to be used to fund grants up to \$5,000 to churches in the Presbytery to improve how their church can be more welcoming in their first impressions to visitors. Finance Team to determine where the funds would be distributed from.**
5. **That the Coordinating Ministry authorized \$50,000 in grants to the Guatemala and Malawi Leadership Teams (\$25,000 each) with the funds to come from the donation made by the Asheville Korean Presbyterian Church at the time of its dissolution.**
6. **The Finance Team has established a policy to provide oversight and to ensure proper practices regarding gifts for mission work in Taiwan with the Engaging in Ministry Team to provide oversight for use of these gifts.**
7. **The Coordinating Ministry approved a request from the Saluda Presbyterian Church that the net funds remaining after its dissolution be transferred to the Guatemala Microloan program.**
8. **The Coordinating Ministry approved the Stated Clerk's appointment of Bob Forsythe as Assistant Stated Clerk.**

9. **The Coordinating Ministry approved for the offering taken at the April 2026 Presbytery meeting to be designated for BeLoved Asheville.**

**THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
COMMISSION ON MINISTRY
REV. DR. KEITH GROGG, CHAIR
April 28, 2026**

FIRST SECTION

1. That Presbytery approve the withdrawal of the new Harassment Policy presented to Presbytery as a first reading on July 16, 2025.
2. That Presbytery approve the withdrawal of the new Anti-Racism Policy presented to Presbytery as a first reading on October 14, 2025.
3. **RECOMMEND TO PRESBYTERY FOR EXAMINATION AND ORDINATION:**
 - A. **Sarah Dianne Jones**
From: Candidate, Presbytery of Charlotte
As: Pastor, First Presbyterian Church - Hendersonville
Effective: Upon Ordination
(See COM Attachments for Biography and Statement of Faith.)

SECOND SECTION

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

CA 1. APPROVED INSTALLATION COMMISSION FOR REV. JIM EWING
on March 22, 2026 at First Presbyterian Church, Newton

Name	Min/ Eld	Church/ Presbytery
George Thompson	MWS	PWNC
Beverly Thompson	MWS	PWNC
Byron Wade	MWS	PWNC
Jim Payne	RE	Newton First
Ann Sperry	RE	Newton First
John Pritchard	RE	Newton First
Guests:		
Rod Stone	MWS	Coastal Carolina Presbytery
Marry Martain	RE	Avondale Presbyterian Church

2. APPROVED FOR TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP:**A. Cindy Benz**

To: Presbytery of Olympia
Effective: 6-25-25

B. Toby Mueller

To: Presbytery of Charlotte
Effective: 5-1-26

3. APPROVED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP AND TERMS OF CALL**A. Sarah Dianne Jones and First Presbyterian Church – Hendersonville****APPROVED TERMS OF CALL:**

Salary:	\$31,016
Housing allowance:	\$31,000
Deferred compensation:	\$930.48
Social Security:	\$4,815.41
Professional expenses:	\$3,625
Professional development:	\$1,275
Pension:	As required by PC(USA)
Moving costs:	Up to \$3,000
Annual vacation:	Four weeks
Annual study leave:	Two weeks
Paid family medical leave for specified purposes:	12 weeks
Seventh year sabbatical leave	
Total Annual Compensation:	\$72,661.89

4. APPROVED TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS - TRANSITIONAL PASTOR:**A. David Garnett and Trinity Presbyterian Church, Hendersonville**

Extended: 2-16-26 to 2-15-27

B. Lance Perry and First Presbyterian Church, Morganton

Extended: 3-1-26 to 3-1-27

C. Merri Alexander and Marshall Presbyterian Church, Marshall

Extended: 1-1-26 to 12-31-26

D. Jody Welker and First Presbyterian Church, Waynesville

Effective: 4-12-26 to 7-5-26

5. APPROVED TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS – STATED PASTOR:**A. Patricia Parker Reid and Third Street Presbyterian Church, Gastonia**

Extended: 1-1-26 to 4-1-26

B. Garland Honeycutt and Green Mountain Presbyterian Church, Green Mountain

Extended: 1-1-26 to 12-31-26

C. Andrew Parkey and Quaker Meadows Presbyterian Church, Morganton

Extended: 1-1-26 to 12-31-27

D. Robert Abel and Hayesville Presbyterian Church, Hayesville

Extended: 1-1-26 to 12-31-26

- 6. APPROVED TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS - ORGANIZING PASTOR**
- A. **Chad Smith** and House of Mercy, Asheville
Effective: 3-1-26 to 2-28-29
- 7. APPROVED COMMISSIONED PASTOR AGREEMENTS:**
- A. **Robin/Lynn Honeycutt** and Sweetwater Presbyterian Church, Hickory
Extended: 1-1-26 to 12-31-26
- B. **Rick Leissner** and Quaker Meadows Presbyterian Church, Morganton
Extended: 1-1-26 to 12-31-27
- C. **Linda Abel** and Hayesville Presbyterian Church, Hayesville
Extended: 1-1-26 to 12-31-26
- D. **Marla F. Patchel** and Green Street Presbyterian Church, Marshall
Extended: 5-1-26 to 4-30-29
- E. **Leslie Peterson** and Walnut Presbyterian Church, Marshall
Extended: 5-1-26 to 5-1-27
- 8. APPROVED FOR COMMISSIONING BY THE PRESBYTERY:**
- A. **Jim Taylor**
From: Ruling Elder, Crossnore Presbyterian Church
As: Commissioned Pastor, Presbytery Associate to pastoral service within the Mayland Neighborhood of the Presbytery, with authority to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, provide pastoral services and moderate a session when invited by a session and under the oversight of the Commission on Ministry, in accordance with G-2.1001. The service of commissioning to take place at the Mayland Neighborhood Meeting of Presbytery in July 2026.
Effective: 4-7-26
- 9. APPROVED AS MODERATOR:**
- A. **Bob Edmunds** and First Presbyterian Church, Hendersonville
Effective: For Congregational Meeting 4-5-26
- 10. APPROVED CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP STATUS:**
- A. **John McCall** from Active to Retired
Effective: 3-31-26
- 11. APPROVED DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP:**
- A. **Jill Isola** and Northminster Presbyterian Church - Hickory
Effective: 4-13-26
- 12. APPROVED MISSION DISCERNMENT PROFILES:**
- A. First Presbyterian Church, Gastonia
- B. Marshall Presbyterian Church, Marshall
- 13. RECEIVED FORMER PASTOR AGREEMENT AND COVENANT OF CLOSURE:**
- A. **Laurie Furr-Vancini** and Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church - Swannanoa
Effective: 3-12-26

Rev. Craig M. Sumey - Faith Journey

My story of faith begins with my parents, who were committed to raising my brother, sister, and me within the fellowship and nurturing of a church family. My home congregation was Village Church, a large Presbyterian church in suburban Kansas City, Kansas, where I was baptized, confirmed, and disciplined. My parents each served on the Session, and we were encouraged to both attend and volunteer in the life of the church throughout our growing-up years.

When I was in college, a job as a summer youth intern at Village gave me my first experiences in ministry. Through an inward call of the Holy Spirit, confirmed by the encouragement of mentors, God gave me a vision of a life of service within the church. I was excited to get started and enrolled in Princeton Seminary right after graduation. During my time there, my understanding of the depths of theology, my passion for the Scriptures, and my respect for the Church's complex history deepened. My field internship experiences during seminary broadened my pastoral imagination beyond youth ministry.

In my first few years as a pastor, serving both in associate and solo roles, I became increasingly aware that changes in the North American Church's cultural context were having significant impacts, bringing it to a historic tipping point. New models were needed to present the Gospel afresh in a changing world; so as time went by, I looked for ways to explore and experiment. I served as a new church development pastor and then, at another church, spearheaded the creation of a new worshiping community. I led two 'turnaround' congregations as they moved from stagnation to vitality. I developed coaching relationships with emerging church leaders, both for ordination and as lay pastors. Several years ago, I used a Louisville Institute grant to explore ways existing congregations can better use their resources to support church planting and community engagements.

Almost four years ago, my passion for new expressions of church and leadership development led me into a conversation with ministry colleagues in Scotland, from which emerged a vision for a new way of training next-generation, global church leaders. This idea quickly became a program called Launch, and I was invited to join Scottish colleagues on the leadership team to work together on its development and rollout with our first cohort last year. My wife, Lynn, brought her gifts to the team, and it wasn't long before a call to a new chapter of ministry emerged as one we would share: using our combined experiences to come alongside a new generation of church leaders as mentors, trainers, and coaches. In addition, I look forward to continuing my membership with the Presbyterian Church USA and being used by God to bring helpful insights on leadership and church growth from what we learn in post-religious Europe.

Threads that weave through my ministry are both inward and outward: contemplative prayer practices for personal spiritual vitality and local engagement to come alongside and actively associate myself with the laments, hurts and hopes of my neighbors.

My wife, Lynn and I have been married for 32 years this September and have two grown children living in Orlando and Chicago. We are big sports fans (though not always for the same teams), we love to explore our surroundings, and we can often be found on a mountain trail.

Rev. Craig M. Sumey - Statement of Faith

My faith is rooted in the great theme of God's revelation story: God's special love and passion for God's children and overwhelming desire to welcome them home.¹

I believe in the one God that is a Trinity, personifying and sharing perfect love and truth.² God created all things, both visible and not, with goodness and mercy, and gave life as a gift to be obediently and gratefully enjoyed. Humanity received God's image to bear and God's creation to steward. But humanity, instead, walked the path of prideful self-love and fearful domination.³ The wide chasm that resulted between God and humanity, humanity with itself, and humanity and creation has grieved God beyond imagination. However, the magnitude of God's love could not allow sin and evil to have the last word.

Jesus Christ is God's true Son, the incarnate second person of the Trinity, and God's greatest gift to creation.⁴ Jesus' way of life, miracles, and teaching are a faithful embodiment of full humanity. Jesus' death on the cross and triumphant resurrection reveal God's glorious victory over sin and death, and the triumph of God's will over evil. It is through the rescuing faith and knowledge of Christ, revealed and inspired by the Spirit, and lived out in maturing discipleship,⁵ that humanity can once again be reconciled to God, walk in freedom, and claim the promise of eternal life.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, and my guide and companion for faithfulness and fullness of life in Christ.⁶ Each passing moment, as the Spirit grows the fruits of faith within me, I experience an intimate relationship with God through Spirit-motivated prayer, servanthood, and worship. As the Spirit gives me every gift⁷ I need to follow and serve Christ, I am filled with power so I can freely and joyously seek a life of obedience governed by God's love. My greatest desire is to know God more intimately, be connected in a reconciled relationship with others, and make joining God's great mission within creation my calling.

The Bible is the living Word of God and the true, trustworthy source of knowledge about God, God's perfect love in Jesus Christ, and God's desire for my life in the Spirit.⁸ Interpreted by the Holy Spirit through prayerful study and the teaching and preaching of the Church, the Bible is useful in every way and is meant to be a source of power, life and hope both individually and collectively.

God ordained and established the church so that the reign of God's love established in Christ might be announced and demonstrated by God's people in the world, and so that disciples of Jesus might experience fellowship, encouragement, and nurturing in the faith. God has made the church to be diverse in gifts, but united in the Spirit under Jesus' lordship. The church experiences unity through prayerful proclamation of the scriptures, the shared observance of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the grace-filled discipline of its mutual polity.⁹ The church is one, catholic and universal,¹⁰ and in its creative diversity finds its voice and power in the testimony of God's Word and by embedding itself in a neighborhood to incarnate God's great love to those around it. The church is inwardly strong to be outwardly focused, revealing the Kingdom of Christ through its call to prophetically proclaim God's justice and mercy for all people, and in its gracious opposition to powers that perpetuate the diminishment of God's children and destruction of God's creation.

Finally, God's redeeming work has an ultimate destination and completion: a promise to dwell eternally in God's presence, free of the struggles, temptations, and griefs of life on this side of the veil.¹¹ This is not only a future to hope for but a present reality to inhabit, overshadowed by God's love, grafted as a branch into Jesus the True Vine, and filled with God's enduring presence in the Spirit.

¹ BOC, 4.001

² BOC, 6.011-.013

³ BOC, 9.11

⁴ BOC, 1.2

⁵ BOC, 4.086

⁶ BOC, 6.051-.054

⁷ BOC, 11.4

⁸ BOC, 7.002

⁹ BOC, 3.18

¹⁰ BOC, 1.3

¹¹ BOC, 4.058

Anne HK Apple - Call to Ministry and Pastoral Experience

Formation and Early Faith

As the youngest child and only daughter of lifelong educators Do and Bob Kaiser, my faith journey began with baptism at Pleasant Hills Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. When our family moved to Memphis in the late 1960s for my father's faculty position at Memphis State University, we became founding members of Balmoral Presbyterian Church under Reverend Vernon Hunter's pastoral leadership. This new church development proved formative through its courageous witness in Civil Rights work on Memphis streets and in member homes and with its innovative Christian education program led by Rosemary Banta and Fran Addicott, who encouraged exploration of scripture and faith practices across multiple learning styles.

Professional Life and Growing Church Involvement

After graduating from Rhodes College, where I met my husband Jim Apple, I began my career as a product manager for the Ilizarov trauma product at Richards Medical Company. Jim's career took us from Marietta, Georgia, where I served with the choir and Club 360 afterschool ministry at First Presbyterian Church, to Mobile, Alabama. There we joined Spring Hill Presbyterian Church—reuniting with Reverend Hunter—and became deeply engaged in congregational life and ministry as a deacon.

The Call to Pastoral Ministry

When Vernon retired, interim pastor Frank Beall encouraged me to attend a "Come See Columbia" seminary weekend. While I had always known I would serve Christ in the church, I had not imagined pastoral ministry as a possible pathway. That weekend experience crystallized a clear call to ministry of Word and Sacrament. With our two young children, Betsy and James (ages 5 and 3), and through prayerful discernment as a family, I attended Columbia Theological Seminary while Jim maintained his work in Mobile. I completed summer internships at Government Street Presbyterian Church.

Pastoral Ministry Experience

Following graduation, I began PhD studies in Instructional Design and Educational Counseling at the University of South Alabama while pastoring **Grace Presbyterian Church**, a small country congregation in Mobile. This congregation taught me *how* to be a pastor. During this season, we welcomed our third child, Abigail. Seeking to be closer to family, we returned to Memphis for Jim's work. Jim joined **Idlewild Presbyterian Church**, where I served in progressively responsible roles over many years: Parish Associate, Interim Associate Pastor, Associate Pastor, Executive Associate Pastor, and Acting Head of Staff following Senior Pastor Steve Montgomery's retirement, through the COVID-19 pandemic. This congregation shaped my pastoral identity and ministry philosophy through seasons of growth, adaptive change, challenges, and profound loss. After David Powers was called as Head of Staff at Idlewild, I left Idlewild and took a discernment year and served as Interim Pastor at **First Presbyterian Church in Tallahassee, Florida**. Most recently, I completed a four-month temporary pastorate at **Government Street Presbyterian Church in Mobile**, providing pastoral leadership during the pastor's Lilly Endowment Sabbatical. Throughout ministry, I am sustained by a commitment to innovative Christian education, diverse community engagement, and faithful pastoral presence during times of both celebration and grief. My call continues to unfold as I seek to serve in that spirit nurtured at Balmoral in courage and creativity.

Anne HK Apple Statement of Faith

I believe in one Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (10.1) YHWH, the God of Israel, whom Jesus called Father. Ancient and New, Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End, First and Last. Sovereign and Provident. In the marvelous light of living and in the darkness and despair of dying, I trust that I belong to God, (4.001) I am precious in God's sight, and God calls God's people into a covenant community. I am called to proclaim the mighty acts of God, to glorify God, and to serve God. In God's own image, I have been mercifully created to live responsibly in God's good creation. Although created in God's image, I am a sinner, daily. (4.005) The roaring lion, Satan, prowls around, seeking me. (3.16) I have been grown in God's grace and covered in forgiveness from the love of God, the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I have been given this gift that I might live, search, discern, serve, and testify. (9.40) I am called to share God's love in Christ's light through the power of the Spirit. I believe that Jesus Christ was fully human yet fully divine, God with us. I believe that Jesus Christ is my personal Lord and Savior and calls me to be a faithful disciple. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God in his teaching, preaching and healing. Jesus suffered and was crucified for the sinful, turned away nature of humanity. Jesus died and was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven. Jesus promises he will come again and I trust in these mysteries I cannot fully know. In Christ's incarnation, I have inherited a blessing that binds me in community and individually that keeps my tongue from speaking evil and my lips from speaking deceit; stretches my heart to be expansive with loving kindness and encourages life with righteous action - the work of God's justice. I am to live my life to live honorably, with a unity of Spirit, sympathy, love, and hope for all.(5.055)

I believe that God's power is present with us through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit binds us to Jesus Christ and illuminates our hearts so we hear the Word. Scripture, given by inspiration, is to be the rule of faith and life. (6.002). The Holy Spirit advocates for the least of these and calls us together as Christ's body and equips our sacramental life in Baptism and the Lord's Supper. I believe that the Spirit empowers the church in joyful worship (3.14) as the community of faith working together to continue Christ's work in the world as faithful evangelists; a people set apart by God to witness to the reconciling, good news of Jesus Christ. (9.55) I pray, "Lord, ready me to make my defense to anyone who demands from me an accounting of the hope that is within me." "Lord, make this defense gentle and reverent." "Lord, clothe me with humility under the mighty hand of God." "Lord, make me a witness to Jesus who calls me, not always softly and tenderly, but in risky and venturesome ways." "Lord, help us to recognize, acknowledge and change the places where we are complicit and contribute to the work of evil in the world." (9.43) I understand these prayers are only possible and perfected in Christ and the Spirit. I believe that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. (11.5) All glory, praise and honor belong to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit as witnessed in the Bible and in the life and work of the mission of the church. So I believe, so I pray. So I pray, so I believe. Amen and amen.

Sarah Dianne Jones
Bio/Faith Journey

A child of the Presbyterian Church (USA), my home has always been in the church. Whether it was crawling up and down the aisles of Spring Hill Presbyterian Church in Mobile, AL, singing in the children's choir and then attending youth group at Grace Presbyterian Church in Trussville, AL, or serving as a youth ministry intern at various churches during my time at Maryville College, the most consistent piece of my life has been church.

A preacher's kid, I long desired to be separate from ministry but the Spirit would never let me wander too far away. Any time I felt that ministry might be too overwhelming, or too hard, or too much to imagine, I was met with God's love through relationship: confirmation mentors, Sunday School teachers, in campus ministry, in seminary, and most especially through the people I was lucky enough to call chosen family thanks to countless hours sitting in pews older than my grandmother at Montreat Youth Conferences.

It was while I was sitting in one of those pews that I first felt a nudge towards the thing I said I would never do. Looking up onto the stage in Anderson Auditorium, I watched a young woman preach the Gospel in a way that felt true to her, completely authentic. In her authenticity I saw myself, and in that moment I heard a voice in my head saying "I think I might like to do that one day."

As a religion major at Maryville College, my sense of call deepened as I struggled through countless readings and assignments. Through late night conversations on the floor of the Center for Campus Ministry, I found a place where questions could sit unanswered, knowing that speaking them aloud was sometimes as important as finding an answer.

As a seminary student at Union Presbyterian Seminary on the Charlotte campus, I partnered my full time studies with a full time call at Sardis Presbyterian Church where I served the youngest disciples at the Director of Children's Ministry and then all of the church as Director of Faith Formation. Doing ministry alongside this congregation during the Covid-19 pandemic while engaging in a full load of classes helped me to see the tension that one must carry in ministry: holding the what was in partnership with what is, while also imagining what is to come. A heavy and holy call.

Ending my time at Sardis Presbyterian led to several years of liminality, jumping from one thing to the other before finding my way to seeking a full time ordained call. It was in this liminal space that I began preaching and leading worship regularly for churches throughout the Charlotte Presbytery, and when I fell in love with pastoring. Showing up to worship each week knowing that we are all carrying our stories and hoping for a word that adds some light. Seeking community because it's the only way we'll make it. Finding one another because that's the kind of thing that the Spirit does.

Sarah Dianne Jones
Statement of Faith

I believe in the one triune God: God, the Creator and Parent of us all; Jesus Christ, God's only son, fully human and fully God; and the Holy Spirit, who binds all of God's children together in community.

God is sovereign, and this sovereignty allows all to accept the mysteries of faith. I believe that God does not make mistakes, loves beyond all understanding, and is the first to grieve over injustice, war, trauma, and oppression.¹ God calls every person by name, knowing them as God's own, and there is nothing that can separate anyone from God's love.²

It is through Jesus, the resurrected son of God, God with us, that I recognize most fully God's work in the world. In Jesus' divinity we see his love for humanity, and in his humanity we see his understanding of suffering, pain, and joy. Jesus lived a human life so that nothing we live is beyond his understanding. Jesus calls us to live our lives as he did: spreading love, working for justice, and embracing those who are so often ignored.³

I believe in the Holy Spirit who weaves all of creation together as one community, tying us together with love and fellowship. The Spirit is ever present and active in our lives, constantly nudging us towards God's call in our lives.

I believe that scripture is God's word revealed to us with the help of the Spirit and the prophets, a source of both comfort and challenge.⁴ Scripture is God's living word, constantly challenging us to grow and experience it in new ways as we grow in maturity and understanding.⁵ Scripture is a constant home to return to while wrestling with questions of faith, life, or understanding, and provides language to address God's greatness when it seems impossible to find.

It is in baptism that we are offered an outward symbol of Jesus' invisible grace. Through baptism our lives are transformed as God calls us by name and marks us as Christ's own. We are engrafted into the body of Christ, the Church, as we are sealed with the ordinary waters that remind us of Christ's extraordinary grace. Baptism reminds us that we belong to God and there is nothing that can ever change that.⁶

In celebrating the Lord's Supper, we are offered tangible reminders of Jesus Christ's incredible sacrifice, unearned and yet still given. As we gather as a community of faith around the Lord's table, we are shown Christ's hospitality for all. Through the Lord's Supper we are offered extraordinary spiritual nourishment in the ordinary elements of bread and wine.⁷

Christ's church is Christ's hands and feet in the world. It is not perfect because it is made up of imperfect people, and yet those same people seek to love God, neighbor, and selves through worship, mission, evangelism, and study.⁸ The church is a symbol of God's hospitality and community, a sign of God's work of reconciliation in the world.⁹

It is in the Presbyterian Church (USA), a church Reformed and always reforming, that I find my home. Through our polity, our confessions, and our understanding of the priesthood of all believers I recognize the Spirit's movement and see truth that we have not seen the end of God's great story.

¹ 9.16

² 11.3, lines 49-51

³ 11.2, lines 7-18

⁴ 5.003

⁵ 7.003

⁶ 9.51; 7.094

⁷ 9.52; 7.096

⁸ 9.37-38

⁹ 10.5

NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION TEAM April 28, 2026

Dwight Christenbury, Chair

The Nominating/Representation Team presents the following nominations to fill vacancies within the Class of 2028 and other open positions. The next team meeting will take place on May 16, 2026.

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

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

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

CA 1. Property Team

Rev. Dr. Cam Murchison (Retired)
Mr. Steve Brittain (Gastonia First)
Ms. Susie Lewis (Cherryville First)
Ms. Kayla Wall
Mr. Mike Begley (Black Mountain)

CA 2. Welcome Team

Rev. Dr. Laurey Harrell (Retired)
Rev. Robert Evans (Retired)
Rev. Pat Reid (Retired)
Re. Dr. Allen Smith (Kenilworth)
Rev. Kelley Connelly (Highlands 1st)
Rev. Matt Matthews (Waldensian)

THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
Kelley Connelly, Chair
April 28, 2026

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

RECOMMENDATION:

- I. THAT Mary Taneti, a member of First Presbyterian Church, Gastonia, and a Candidate under the care of PWNC, be exempted from Presbytery's requirement for one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). (3/4 vote of presbytery required.)

Background Information:

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina has a number of special requirements that are in addition to those outlined in the Book of Order (G-2.06). Among these is the requirement for one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). CPE consists of 400 hours of supervised education, generally in a hospital or hospice environment. Many presbyteries like PWNC require this and most seminaries include it as an option in their program.

Mary is in a position that has made it virtually impossible for her to arrange a unit of CPE compatible with her full-time work schedule without financial hardship. After due consultation with the Preparation for Ministry Team (PMT), PMT believes that in the light of Mary's current and past ministry experiences, a waiver would be appropriate. Mary completed her M.A.C.E. in 2010, and will graduate with her M.Div. this June. Mary has been a Christian educator throughout her career then discerned a call to ordained ministry.

Given Mary's past internships coupled with the pastoral care she provides through her present position, this has afforded Mary the ability to connect in several clinical settings. Along with Mary's significant family responsibilities, a full-time job, and the financial challenges an unpaid internship could cause, it is fitting for PWNC to waive this requirement. If the motion passes, the PMT feels it would be appropriate for Mary to participate in an alternative exercise to fulfill some of the CPE objectives. The alternative exercise would include both written portions and an additional conversation between Mary, her liaison, and at least one PMT committee member. The questions asked of Mary would be self-reflective and similar to the experiences that she would encounter in a CPE program. A sample attachment of the proposed alternative can be found in your packet.

Thursday, April 2, 2026

Re: Request that the Presbytery grant a waiver for the Clinical Pastoral Education requirement

Dear Rev. Kelley Connelly,

I respectfully request a waiver from the Presbytery of the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) course requirement based on 14 years of ministry experience with self-reflection and peer reviews, academic coursework, and the impracticality of completing CPE while ministering full-time.

I have worked as the Director of Faith Formation since September 2012, after completing a Master of Arts in Christian Education degree. I will graduate with a Master of Divinity this June. Though my job description involves planning and coordinating educational programs for the congregation, I have been engaged in building community and providing care to young and old for the last 14 years. While providing pastoral care, I had opportunities to reflect on my practice of ministry, receive feedback, and learn from the experiences. I continue to learn from congregation members and immediate supervisors.

My current academic experience includes courses in Chaplaincy in Context, Introduction to Pastoral Care, Death and Dying, Church in the World Internship, and Supervised Ministry I & II. As part of these courses, I have read relevant materials, practiced verbatim, written reflections and self-evaluations, and gained practical experience in providing pastoral care. During my Church in the World internship in Spring 2025, I provided pastoral care to elderly congregation members in a clinical setting under the supervision of church elders and pastors. I also provide bereavement care. I will complete Supervised Ministry I & II this semester, which will provide me with structured, supervised clinical experiences in pastoral care and self-reflection within a group setting that fulfill the objectives of CPE. I will again focus on pastoral care at Covenant Village's health care center, planning visits, providing bereavement care, writing reports, reflecting on care, and assisting with funeral services under my senior pastor's supervision.

Furthermore, it is important to consider the practical constraints I face. Completing a CPE program while working full-time (40 hours a week) would create significant scheduling conflicts and strain my ability to meet commitments to my current ministry and family, potentially endangering my effectiveness in both settings and financial stability.

Based on G-2.0610 *Accommodations to Particular Circumstances*, I request you to kindly consider my request for a waiver from the requirement of the CPE course. Given my comprehensive, supervised pastoral care training and direct clinical pastoral experience through Supervised Ministry I & II, which will include structured reflection, supervision, and care in clinical settings similar to CPE, I respectfully request that the Presbytery recognize these experiences as an equivalent fulfillment of the CPE requirement for ordination. I am confident that this demonstrates my preparation for pastoral care responsibilities.

Sincerely,

Mary Taneti
Candidate for Ministry under the care of PWNC

PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY ATTACHMENT 2

April 1, 2026

Presbytery of Western North Carolina
Preparation for Ministry Team
114 Silver Creek Rd
Morganton, NC 28655

RE: Mary Taneti CPE Waiver

I am writing to you about Mary Taneti's request to waive her Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) requirement for ordination. In what follows I would like to highlight Mary's pastoral and academic competencies. As an Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Union Presbyterian Seminary, I have had the honor of having Mary in multiple classes, including: Introduction to Pastoral Care, Introduction to Preaching and Public Proclamation, and Chaplaincy in Contexts. It was immediately evident that Mary was a stellar student. In Pastoral Care, I was instantly impressed by her ability to combine theory and practice, advocate for those on the margins, and demonstrate a self-reflexivity that cultivated a similar habit in others.

Mary's boldness to advocate for all of God's creation is a thread of her work that impacted my classes. In my Chaplaincy course, which I have my assessment activities mirror professional chaplaincy board certification competencies, Mary worked closely with a hospital chaplain to advocate for care for the entire family. Mary's case reflections and verbatims are astute, clinically competent, and theologically reflexive. As a chaplain myself, I have no reservations about Mary's work and ministerial preparation.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Joshua T. Morris, Ph.D., B.C.C.
Assistant Professor, Practical Theology
Union Presbyterian Seminary
JMorris@upsem.edu
816-585-5112



CPE Exemption Reflective Exercise

Purpose: This exercise invites you to engage in structured theological reflection on your ministry practice in a way that parallels the goals of Clinical Pastoral Education:

- Deepening self-awareness and pastoral identity
- Demonstrating pastoral competence in real situations
- Practicing intentional reflection and integration for growth

Instructions: Please draft a written response to each question (at least a paragraph; can be as lengthy as you wish) and submit these to your liaison. Your liaison will then review and schedule a follow up conversation with you and one other committee member to reflect together.

1. Pastoral Formation (Identity & Self-Awareness)

- What key life experiences, relationships, and contexts have shaped you as a pastor?
- How do your cultural background, social location, and theological commitments shape your ministry?
- Where do you experience alignment—or tension—between your identity and your pastoral role?
- What sustains you?
- How do you recognize burnout?

2. Theology in Practice

- What are the core theological convictions that guide your pastoral care?
- How do these convictions show up in real pastoral encounters?
- Describe a time when your theology was challenged or deepened.

3. Pastoral Competence (Practice & Skills)

- What are your greatest strengths in pastoral care?
- Where do you notice recurring limitations or blind spots?
- How do you respond to feedback?
- Provide a detailed reflection on one recent pastoral care encounter, include the following details:
 - Context of the situation
 - What you said/did

PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY ATTACHMENT 3

- What the care recipient expressed
- Your internal thoughts/feelings
- Reflect on this situation:
 - What went well?
 - What would you do differently?
 - Where did you notice God's presence?

4. Relational Dynamics

- How do you establish and maintain pastoral relationships?
- Describe a boundary challenge.
- How do power and difference affect your relationships?
- Describe an encounter with someone different from you.
 - What biases did you notice?
- How do you practice intercultural humility?

MALAWI MISSION TEAM REPORT

Pray for the Presbytery's Mission Team going to Nkhoma, Malawi April 19 – May 5.

We will be excited to see our friends, learn more about our work together, worship and pray together, and see God's work. However, please also pray for Malawi, the third poorest country in the world, because this is an exceedingly difficult economic time for them as the cost of fuel, fertilizer, and almost everything has almost doubled and there is fuel shortage.



We promised we would come back to the local school to give out more hygiene kits. Last year we gave out 180 hygiene kits to two grades of girls at the main local school. The next day as we walked, girls came up to us begging for the hygiene kits. Dr. Barbara Nagy said they would have to wait until next year. We had already committed to other schools in other villages. Our churches are keeping girls in school and supporting women.

Vaccines, well baby checks, and family planning; malaria medicine and pregnancy checkups – all in an open field with a half building that is a long walk from the hospital. Many have walked one to two hours to this “under five mobile health clinic.” You have funded the vehicle and support the staffing. You have help make babies and women safer and healthier.



More than a million Presbyterians and less than 350 pastors, not enough. The Josaphat Mwale Theological Institute (JMTI) tries to help fill the need. You provide excellent study Bibles for all the students, giving graduates bikes to ride to their churches and prayer house, clerical shirts, and dresses for the spouse for graduation. The cost for one student a year is \$1,300. Consider having your church sponsoring a student.



We will celebrate Ebenezer School, a quality school from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. More than 15 years ago, Nkhoma hospital's staff needed a school for their children that had small classes, was taught in English, where teachers and students had books, classrooms had desks, etc.

With this Presbytery's support, Ebenezer Institute of Learning (School) was started. You built the first building. You provide scholarship support (\$300 per student), improvement projects, and maintenance. With a donor connected to the Presbytery, the school just got a computer lab. We celebrate the school and its students, including those from the hospital, the town, and the villages.

Imagine at Malingunde Health Center, which serves 94,000 people, rebuilding the maternity/ante-natal building where 120 babies are born each month and more than 800 prenatal visits take place **and then also helping Malingunde to gain potable water** for the Center and staff housing. You helped make this happen though the Building Hope Campaign.

Ride out with us in an ambulance/mobile health unit to a red dirt open field with a half a building, where people, particularly mothers with children have walked one or two hours to get there. Children get vaccinations, mothers get family planning shots, babies are given well baby checks, pregnant women get medical attention, people get Malaria and other medicines. You bought the ambulance, pay for its staffing, and have recently done major maintenance, with Building Hope Funds plus other dominations.

A new Program “YOUTH IN THE MIRROR” was requested by Nkhoma Synod, with its about 500,000 Presbyterian youth. They asked Rev. Kevin Frederick to develop a program similar to “Men the Mirror” for youth, who in Malawi are up to about age 30. Rev. Richard Kapanda, Malawi coordinator and Rev. Chatha M’Msangambe, head of the JMTI Seminary, worked with Kevin. We will attend the first “Youth in the Mirror” program.



Seminary students and their wives

The Biblical “Men in the Mirror” and “Youth in the Mirror” programs use Jesus as the model for men to improve relationships with women and families and deter family abuse. It is having amazing results. The Synod wants all its pastors and seminary students to take the “Men in the Mirror” Program. Couples are involved in “Couples in the Mirror.”

We will support the Nkhoma Hospital, with its 260 beds, family planning and surgery program, and the only Christian hospital with a four star out of five rating. (One private hospital has a five and two have four stars. Nkhoma is exceptional. This year we have helped particular with food for patients and care giver because of significant drought and extreme shortage of food. We have also provide help with medicine.

We will see the new dormitory for women students studying theology and education, thanks to a Presbytery donor. and talk with them about their experiences, We will meet with people at the university, the nursing college, and other institutions.

Other great benefits are building friendships, sharing our faith, and seeing together how God is at work and sharing God surprises.



Malawi Leadership Team

Terri Forsyth, Chair

April 28, 2026

The Malawi Leadership Team presents the following recommendations to Presbytery to support Concurrence with these specific Overtures regarding Global Missions:

1. **Concurrence on Overture # 005** which reads as follows: Call to Review the Restructuring of the PC(USA) World Mission

Recommendations: To direct the Moderator or Co-Moderators to form a commission tasked with review of decision-making processes employed and actions taken that resulted in the elimination of the PC(USA) World Mission and the termination of all appointed Mission Co-Worker positions of those who were serving in March 2025, and the formation of a new model of global engagement. To report back to the 228th General Assembly the findings of the commission, and to recommend appropriate actions

Rationale: For almost 200 years, Presbyterian World Mission provided the denomination, local congregations, and mid councils opportunities to connect with the global church, participate in God's mission around the world, learn from the faith and experiences of our siblings abroad, receive leaders and thus live out the church's calling to be connectional and apostolic. This overture calls for the processes by which these decisions were made to be investigated, to determine how the decisions conform with or violate PC(USA) GA actions, to review the years of global consultations and study results, and to report to the 228th General Assembly with appropriate recommendations.

2. **Concurrence on Overture # 006** which reads as follows: Call for a New Missiological Statement for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Recommendations: To direct staff, accompanied by an advisory group to be named by the Moderator or Co-Moderators, to develop a new missiological statement on which the global engagement of the PC(USA) will be founded, to answer specific questions defining global missions. What is the missiology of the PC(USA), and how does this guide the church to serve God and neighbor and inform the global engagement of the church? To report back to the 228th General Assembly.

Rationale: The termination of Presbyterian World Mission (PWM) by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 2025 exposes a profound lack of understanding by the denomination's leadership concerning a Reformed missiological framework. Since its inception, the Reformed theological tradition has distinguished itself as an ecumenical and transnational church, developing and funding partnerships at home and abroad as part of its evangelical mission. Not only is the closure of PWM a betrayal of the global scope of Presbyterian ministries, but it comes at the expense of our most foundational ecclesiological commitments. The kind of unilateral decision-making that led to the closure of PWM without adequate dialogue and consultation reflects a careless disregard for our most foundational Reformed theological commitments

3. **Concurrence on Overture # 004** which reads as follows: On Prohibiting Non-Disclosure Covenants in Employee Relations

Recommendations: To direct staff to rewrite employee policies prohibiting the use of non-disclosure covenants with all employees. To report on revisions in employee policies to the 228th General Assembly (2028).

Rationale: Mission co-workers employed by PC(USA) World Mission found themselves, in a position, in March 2025, like those who have served under non-disclosure agreements in and with the councils of the denomination. Mission co-workers who chose to share their sense of what was happening when their ministries were abruptly terminated, received threats and warnings from supervisory IUA staff, who reminded them of the covenant under which they served, and raised the possibility of losing severance if mission co-workers continued sharing about their experiences. This overture seeks to employ and build upon the wisdom of the 226th General Assembly in prohibiting non-disclosure agreements and covenants , and to expand this prohibition in hiring, termination, and employee relations with all IUA staff (and the staff of any future agency leading the denomination), wherever they may serve in the world.

INTRODUCING

Welcome and Hospitality

Grants Program

From the Presbytery
of Western North Carolina



Showing welcome and hospitality to visitors is not just a “nice extra” for a church – it is central to the health of the congregation and a biblical mandate. A warm greeting, clear signage, friendly conversation, and genuine interest can help someone relax enough to receive worship, Scripture, and prayer.

We’ve all had the experience where no one has greeted us in a church beyond a smile or quick handshake. Before a visitor hears a sermon or sings a hymn, they are already asking:

- ➔ Do I belong here?
- ➔ Is this church safe?
- ➔ Will I be seen or ignored?

At its heart, Christian hospitality flows from gratitude for the welcome God has given us.

*Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you,
for the glory of God. – Romans 15:7*

**The Church Vibrancy
Team introduces
its new grant
program to help
make your church
a more welcoming
environment**

Congregations can receive a **maximum grant of \$5,000** to focus on welcome and hospitality. Applications are considered on a first-come, first-served basis and will remain available until funds run out.

Grants may be used to enhance first impressions and front door experiences. This may include improvements to physical spaces, signage, website design, communication tools, volunteer training, or other initiatives that help visitors connect more deeply.

THE PROCESS

1 Register your pastor or an elder and at least one other member of the congregation for a **mandatory two-hour hospitality training** via zoom. Two training dates are offered (you only need to attend one). Training #1: May 21 from 10 am to noon. Training #2: October 8 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Register for the training by emailing David Bonnema at david@unitypres.org.

2 After the training, meet with your session to **create your welcome/hospitality plan**. (You’ll learn how to create one during the training)

3 Turn in the **grant request form** with the welcome/hospitality plan.

Engaging Ministry Report

Sue Johnson, Ministry Team Leader

Items of information and interest concerning Presbytery involvement with global missions:

1. This coming August, our Presbytery will be privileged to welcome mission groups representing ministries in several countries. Church representatives from around the US will share ways they are involved in Malawi and Congo missions. If VISAs become available, persons from Malawi and Congo will join them. Groups meeting in Montreat include:

August 18-21: Malawi Mission Network

August 26-28: Congo Mission Network

August 29: Congo Mission Luncheon

Information for congregational involvement with the Malawi and Congo groups will be shared as it becomes available.

2. The Taiwan Mission Fund

The Taiwan Mission Fund supports mission in Taiwan and supports the partnership between the Presbyterian churches in the US, including PWNC, and the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. It includes encouraging and equipping Taiwanese pastors, church leaders, and youth, as well as spiritual formation work with leaders of other churches.

August 24 - September 3: A group of Taiwanese pastors will be in Montreat for a Taiwan Pastor Spiritual Renewal Retreat.

JOIN THE YOUTH
MINISTRY TEAM FOR

LUNCH TODAY!!



COME DOWNSTAIRS FOR A
TIME OF CONVERSATION AND
FELLOWSHIP
ALL WHO HAVE A HEART FOR
YOUTH MINISTRY ARE
WELCOME!

Calling all PWNC Youth: ^{Y-2}

Wondering what you should do this summer?

Join us at Montreat Youth Conference!
July 26 - August 1

Who

Open to all youth rising 9th grade to graduated 12th in the presbytery.

What

The Presbytery of WNC is going to Montreat Youth Conference. The theme is *wonder & wander*. Lodging is already secured at a house in Montreat.

Leaders

Emma Maney, Rev. Sarah Grace Montgomery, and Rev. Michael Poulos can't wait to spend the week with the incredible youth!

Cost

Approximately \$300*. This includes registration for the conference, food (except on free afternoon) and housing. *Anyone who wants to go should be able to so please reach out if the cost is a barrier to attending.

Deadline

April 30th. Please contact Beth Gunn, beth.gunn@gmail.com, to register.

Ways to support:

Financial contributions to ease the cost burdens on families are greatly appreciated! Please reach out to Beth Gunn, beth.gunn@gmail.com, to support.



Churches—Please Pass the Word!

Encourage your 9th-12th graders to plug in and make a difference.



Be part of the team pwnc youth council

Why You'll Love It

• Develop Leadership Skills

Plan events, lead missions, and serve alongside peers.

• Deepen Your Faith

Engage in Bible studies, discipleship groups, and one-on-one mentoring.

• Build Lifelong Friendships

Connect with other Christ-centered teens from across the PWNC.

Who: 9th-12th Graders (Entering Fall 2026)

What: PWNC PYC Youth Council - where faith and leadership grow together!

When: 2026-2027 school year

"PYC is a wonderful experience to connect with other youth and strengthen your relationship with God. On the team, I have learned new leadership skills and developed lifelong friendships. The team provides a positive environment and I am always excited to spend time with the group and feel God's presence."

Lauren Monnat -Bryson City Presbyterian Church



For more information about PYC scan the QR code

Camp Grier Scholarships

for Presbytery of Western North Carolina Students



**Deadline to
apply is
March 31,
2026***

***details in application**

“I’ve been going to Camp Grier for 5 summers. My favorite part about camp is meeting new friends, reuniting with my former counselors and singing camp songs. I can’t wait until I’m old enough to be a counselor, too!”

- Maggie, age 13

\$600 Scholarships Available

Apply here:
Scholarship Application Form

For more information about
Camp Grier
- their mission, programming and offerings, click here:
www.campgrier.org

Once your application is received and reviewed, you will be sent a **COUPON CODE** to use online for Camp Grier’s Registration. If you’ve already registered for a Summer 2026 camp, you can still apply for scholarship funds!



Youth Council Description and Expectations Presbytery of Western North Carolina

Youth participants in PYC will spend the program year learning and growing as leaders in worship, recreation and music ministries with their peers in the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. This includes planning, leading and implementing several events throughout the year. Worship leadership includes planning the order of worship, writing prayers and other liturgy and leading/facilitating these parts of worship at various events. Recreation leadership includes planning both large and small group activities that enhance the events with group building, playful exploration of scripture and more. Both worship and recreation leadership includes being prepared, finding your voice in front of a large group, and working together as a team, all of which will be part of the Youth Participants training throughout the year. Additionally, youth participants are asked to lead small groups of Middle School and High School youth in Bible Study, Recreation and creative exploration of the Biblical theme for the year. Throughout their time on PYC, Youth will have an opportunity to learn, grow and practice these vital leadership skills at the same time as growing in their own faith and relationship with God.

Please carefully look over the calendar of dates/fees and the time commitment that is a part of being on PYC. It is important that all participants are present for MOST of the meetings and events, though we understand that young people have a lot of commitments. We ask that you commit to missing no more than THREE meetings or events for the year. If this is not a time commitment you think you are able to make at this time, we encourage you to join PYC when you are able to make a full commitment to the Covenant of Participation.

Finance Team
Don Scofield – Chair
April 28, 2026

For information only the Finance Team presents:

- ◆ The ‘Operating Budget Summary’ of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as of March 31, 2026, BB-2.
- ◆ The ‘Balance Sheet’ of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as of March 31, 2026 compared to December 31, 2025, BB-3.
- ◆ The ‘Hurricane Helene Fund Financial Statement’ of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina as of March 31, 2026, BB-4.

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

**PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY
AS OF MARCH 31, 2026**

ACCOUNT	2026 ANNUAL BUDGET	2026 YTD BUDGET	2026 YTD ACTUAL	% OF ANNUAL BUDGET	2025 YTD ACTUAL
INCOME:					
Unified Giving from Churches	\$ 694,190	\$ 173,547	\$ 149,942	21.6%	\$ 157,127
Other Income	23,500	\$ 5,875	5,082	21.6%	5,607
Anticipated Grants/Income	6,000	\$ 1,500	6,000	100.0%	6,500
Transfer From Existing Funds-NWC	30,000	\$ 7,500	7,500	25.0%	8,750
Transfer From Existing Funds-Disaster Recovery	100,000	\$ 25,000	15,990	16.0%	15,600
Transfer From Existing Funds-Legal Work	10,000	\$ 2,500	17,316	173.2%	3,215
Income From Investment	257,854	\$ -	-	0.0%	-
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 1,121,544</u>	\$ 215,922	\$ 201,829	18.0%	\$ 196,798
EXPENSES:					
General Assembly Per Capita/Unified Giving	\$ 165,000	\$ 41,250	\$ 35,639	21.6%	\$ 38,455
Synod Per Capita	18,731	\$ 4,683	4,046	21.6%	3,394
Institutions & Agencies	4,000	\$ 1,000	864	21.6%	932
Strengthening Congregations Ministry					
Church Vibrancy Team	11,946	\$ 2,987	2,986	25.0%	2,986
Youth Ministry Team / Council	20,450	\$ 5,113	1,340	6.6%	2,051
Faith Formation Team	4,700	\$ 1,175	100	2.1%	-
Campus Ministry Team	9,000	\$ 2,250	2,250	25.0%	2,250
Equipping Disciples Ministry					
New Worship Community Team	30,000	\$ 7,500	7,500	25.0%	8,750
Digital Church Team	-	\$ -	-	0.0%	-
Community Outreach Team	-	\$ -	-	0.0%	-
Peace and Justice Team	2,200	\$ 550	1,000	45.5%	126
Disability Inclusion Team	200	\$ 50	-	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	15,870	15.4%	15,600
Housing Team	3,000	\$ 750	-	0.0%	-
Guatemala Leadership Team	27,000	\$ 6,750	55	0.2%	1,394
Malawi Leadership Team	4,000	\$ 1,000	-	0.0%	-
Supporting Leadership Ministry					
Commission on Ministry	2,925	\$ 731	148	5.1%	130
Examinations Team	-	\$ -	-	0.0%	-
Validated Ministry Team	-	\$ -	-	0.0%	-
Preparation for Ministry Team	5,400	\$ 1,350	648	12.0%	59
Commissioned Pastors Team	-	\$ -	-	0.0%	-
Church Leadership School Team	1,000	\$ 250	(600)	-60.0%	(1,575)
Coordinating Ministry					
Coordinating Ministry	20,434	\$ 5,109	750	3.7%	750
Permanent Judicial Commission	500	\$ 125	-	0.0%	-
Nominating / Representation Team	500	\$ 125	-	0.0%	-
Personnel Team	579,818	\$ 144,955	127,946	22.1%	121,291
Finance Team	82,040	\$ 20,510	23,428	28.6%	20,846
Stated Clerk Expenses					
Stated Clerk	25,700	\$ 6,425	18,353	71.4%	8,122
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 1,121,544</u>	\$ 280,386	\$ 242,323	21.6%	\$ 225,561
NET INCOME/(LOSS)		<u>(64,464)</u>	<u>(40,494)</u>		<u>(28,762)</u>

Presbytery of Western North Carolina
Balance Sheet
As of Mar 31, 2026

	Mar-26	Dec-25
ASSETS		
Cash (checking and on hand)	\$ 569,683	\$ 950,719
Money Market	\$ 257,249	\$ 257,217
Certificates of Deposit	\$ 216,293	\$ 216,293
Investments (Presbyterian Foundation) ¹		
Presbytery of WNC	\$ 5,513,258	\$ 5,615,999
Building HOPE ³	\$ 1,636,450	\$ 1,731,822
Malawi-GAP Ebenezer School Scholarships ³	\$ 194,134	\$ 199,514
Treasury Fund	\$ 485,873	\$ 100,218
Receivables (Sales tax refunds due)	\$ 60	\$ 443
Notes Receivables - Property ²	\$ 1,420,504	\$ 1,439,714
TOTAL FINANCIAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 10,293,504</u>	<u>\$ 10,511,939</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES		
Payables (within the next twelve months)(FICA/State W/H)	\$ -	\$ 1,505
Payables (beyond next twelve months)	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,505</u>
NET ASSETS (Defined as assets less liabilities)		
Undesignated Funds		
Funds available for general purposes	\$ 2,947,246	\$ 3,140,481
Sale of Church Property	\$ 2,273,816	\$ 2,243,884
Subtotal	<u>\$ 5,221,062</u>	<u>\$ 5,384,366</u>
Designated by Coordinating Ministry		
Sale of Church Property (Notes Receivable) ²	\$ 1,420,504	\$ 1,439,714
New Church Development	\$ 190,513	\$ 198,013
Physical Plant Needs	\$ 53,748	\$ 53,652
Community Outreach Grant Fund	\$ -	\$ 8,670
Korean Church Mission Gift	\$ 100,090	\$ 100,000
Subtotal	<u>\$ 1,764,855</u>	<u>\$ 1,800,049</u>
Donor Restricted		
General Assembly/Synod/ Mission Co-Workers/Crisis Relief/Special Offerings	\$ 89,380	\$ 58,698
Building HOPE ³	\$ 1,516,601	\$ 1,621,652
Hurricane Helene Relief Fund	\$ 285,344	\$ 280,558
Daily Change	\$ 77,479	\$ 55,707
Men in the Mirror	\$ 24,319	\$ 28,453
Malawi-Nkhoma Hospital	\$ 120,832	\$ 115,357
Malawi-Ebenezer School	\$ 101,356	\$ 100,486
Malawi-GAP Ebenezer School Scholarships ³	\$ 194,134	\$ 199,514
Malawi-Mission Trips	\$ 10,588	\$ 30,019
Guatemala Scholarship/Partnership Needs/Projects/Jubilee Fund	\$ 189,416	\$ 166,727
Guatemala Health/Nutrition	\$ 27,755	\$ 32,317
Guatemala Microloans	\$ 25,783	\$ 8,954
Guatemala Mission Trips	\$ 15,576	\$ 17,194
Taiwan Mission Support	\$ 63,511	\$ 43,924
Disaster Relief Coordinator Fund	\$ 108,160	\$ 124,150
Passthru Funds and Other Activities	\$ 457,354	\$ 442,310
Subtotal	<u>\$ 3,307,587</u>	<u>\$ 3,326,019</u>
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 10,293,504</u>	<u>\$ 10,510,434</u>
TOTAL LIABILITES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 10,293,504</u>	<u>\$ 10,511,939</u>

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 difference is due to some of the asset residing in Cash, Checking or Money Market accounts

Hurricane Helene Fund Financial Statement
As of 3/31/26

Donations

2024	478,994.43
2025	170,539.14
2026	6,988.80

Passthru Funds (not included in Donations) PC(USA)PDA Host Site Grant New Hope Presbyterian Church, Asheville \$5,000 received by PWNC Apr 2025/remitted May 2025 PC(USA)PDA Host Site Grant Spruce Pine Presbyterian Church \$5,000 received by PWNC July 2025/remitted Aug 2025

Designated Funds \$1,460 designated to purchase Tools for Tool Trailer \$2,000 designated to be used for needs in the Asheville area

Total Donations \$ 656,522.37

Expensed

Nov-24	(1,500.00)	\$500 Pmts to Micaville PC, Marshall PC & 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
Jun-25	(125.30)	Reimbursement for supplies-PWNC PDA Team - 25 trip-Canton, NC
Jun-25	(10,000.00)	Host Site Expense Fund - New Hope Presbyterian Church
Jun-25	(10,000.00)	Host Site Expense Fund - FPC Spruce Pine
Jun-25	(1,050.00)	Funds to Cover Per Diem Shortfall from 2 Volunteer Groups-FPC Spruce Pine
Aug-25	(3,999.00)	Gilreath Auto Sales LLC (Purchase of Tool Trailer)
Oct-25	(200.28)	Brotherhood Mutual (Insurance Policy for Tool Trailer)
Nov-25	(25,000.00)	Grant to Camp Grier (grant for damages)
Nov-25	(25,000.00)	Grant to Green Mountain PC (grant for damages)
Nov-25	(25,000.00)	Grant to Marshall PC (grant for damages)
Nov-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to Marshall PC (grant for direct relief to neighbors)
Nov-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to Camp Grier (Old Fort Strong_Edwards House) (direct relief to neighbors)
Nov-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to Reems Creek-Beech PC (grant for direct relief to neighbors)
Nov-25	(10,000.00)	Grant to Waldensian PC (grant for direct relief to neighbors)
Nov-25	(2,500.00)	Grant to Warren Wilson PC (grant for damages)
Dec-25	(30,000.00)	Grant to WNC Conf of United Methodist Church (Direct Relief to Neighbors)
Dec-25	(6,000.00)	Grant to Camp Grier (Old Fort Strong_Edwards House) (direct relief to neighbors)
Dec-25	(25,000.00)	Grant to Camp Grier (grant for damages)
Dec-25	(2,000.00)	Grant to Green Street PC (grant for damages)
Dec-25	(13,459.00)	Grant to Jack's Creek PC (grant for damages)
Dec-25	(25,000.00)	Grant to Marshall PC (grant for damages)
Dec-25	(22,141.84)	Grant to Newdale PC (grant for damages)
Mar-26	(2,203.20)	Payment to Divine Disaster Relief for month's hotel costs for displaced homeowner

Total Expensed \$ (371,178.62)

Current Balance \$ 285,343.75

Hurricane Helene Relief Grants Application Deadline Dates March 31, 2026 July 31, 2026 October 31, 2026

Building H.O.P.E. Financial Statement

As of 3/31/26

Campaign Totals	Ministry details				
	Malawi	Camp Grier	Vital Churches	Guatemala	
Collected	\$1,983,731.42	\$906,316.30	\$374,234.94	\$384,986.44	\$318,193.74
Gain/Loss (subject to market fluctuations)	\$987,909.92	\$491,432.89	\$29.60	\$255,455.35	\$240,992.08
Campaign Expenses	\$107,280.01	\$49,013.51	\$20,242.23	\$20,816.38	\$17,207.89
Utilized	\$1,136,245.44	\$527,809.32	\$354,022.31	\$82,970.81	\$171,443.00
Available for Requests	\$1,728,115.89	\$820,926.36	\$0.00	\$536,654.60	\$370,534.93

Malawi (Health Care & Education)

Projects	Utilized
Rural Health Clinics*	\$64,587.54
Rural Health Clinic Housing*	\$149,019.78
Research Accountability	\$6,600.00
Mobile Health Unit	\$91,786.00
Medicines Fund	\$164,200.00
Ebenezer Institute Endowment Fund	\$51,616.00

* 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	\$190,522.31

* 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	\$12,000.00
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	\$8,400.00

Guatemala (Education)

Projects	Utilized
Higher Education Endowment	\$68,800.00
Fund for Theological Education of Pastors	\$70,500.00
Libraries/Teacher/Parent Formation Programs	\$27,193.00
Dream Goals	\$4,950.00

Building HOPE Campaign website:

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

PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA
REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER
APRIL 2, 2026

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NRSV)

Dear PWNC,

I hope this finds you well and still living as people of the Resurrection!

As you may know, our theme this year is “Building and Sustaining Relationships.” Relationships are important because I believe we were not created to be alone (although I admit that would be my preferred choice sometimes!). An important facet of being in relationship with others is encouragement. Having someone giving you support and inspiration is life-giving, especially in good and unfortunate times. Jesus is the model of encouragement for us as we seek to serve God’s people here in PWNC.

I am encouraged by this year’s theme of “Building and Sustaining Relationships.” One of the related foci of this year’s theme is forming a Welcoming Team to meet and orient new ministers to the Presbytery, as well as getting to know one another. I am glad to say we have formed a team of people to do just that! We have met a few times and have set our first lunch meeting with new (and long time!) ministers for Tuesday, May 12 at 11:30 a.m. at First Presbyterian, Morganton. We are excited to inform others about what we do here and for the opportunity for fellowship. In addition, there is a small group of people who are in the process of working on the second foci, the formation of a Hospitality Team. This will be a group of people who will serve as Presbytery ambassadors. They will meet with churches and other church groups to inform them of the purpose and mission of the PWNC and encourage (there is that word again!) them to be involved in the life of our Presbytery. More information will come forth soon. I am excited about these developments!

I am also encouraged by the faithfulness of our congregations. Since our January meeting, I have worshipped with First Presbyterian, Belmont, and Canton Presbyterian churches. I also attended a wonderful joint Ash Wednesday service of House of Mercy and Grace Covenant Presbyterian at the latter’s sanctuary. It was preceded by a meal and I had the opportunity to meet great people from both churches. In addition, I served as the Moderator of the Presbytery Commission to install Rev. Jim Ewing at Newton Presbyterian Church on Sunday, March 22. I have also re-established having lunch dates with ministers recently. I had lunch with Marcia Mount Shoop (Grace Covenant), Allan Purtil (Tryon), and Jim Ewing (Newton). These have been great opportunities to get to know each other and the different contexts for ministry. I plan to bump up my visitations in the near future.



One exciting event I participated in was the opening of the Fairview Community Forest. This came about in part through a partnership between the Presbytery, Camp Grier and Conserving Carolina, an environmental conservation agency. Many of you may remember Camp Woodson/Little Pisgah, the land we previously owned. We sold our portion to Conserving

Carolina and in combination with other agencies, the Fairview Community Forest came into being. It was a wonderful opening celebration and the three-mile trail is a beauty! The PWNC played a large part in this development and I am so glad that people from all over will be able to enjoy nature!



As you are meeting now, I am in Malawi as a part of our Presbytery's delegation visit to our partners in the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Nkhoma Synod. During this two-week visit, we will visit Nkhoma hospital, Ebenezer Institute (primary school for children), Josophat Mwale Theological Institute (Seminary), and various health centers in the countryside. All of these missions and projects are supported by our mission funds. In addition, the Synod elected a new General Secretary, Brian Kamwendo. He succeeded Rev. Vasco Kachipapa, who completed his six-year term. Please keep him, the Nkhoma Synod, and our delegation in your prayers.

There is lots to be encouraged about in the PWNC. As we continue to be an Easter people, I hope and pray we will continue to "encourage one another and build up each other" in our lives and ministries. May God bless!

Peace,

Byron



Dear Siblings in Christ,

Grace and peace to you! I am thrilled to share with you the highlights from our recent 257th Synod Assembly, a gathering that truly reflected the vibrant faith and dedication of our community. Together, we worshipped, discerned, and celebrated the ways God is calling us to live out our mission in this time and place.

This year's March Assembly was marked by moments of deep connection and inspiration. From powerful worship services that united us in prayer and song, to thoughtful discussions on key issues facing our congregations, the Spirit was undeniably present. We also celebrated milestones, including my installation.

As you review these highlights, I invite you to reflect on how these moments resonate with your own congregation's journey. Together, we are part of a larger story—one of hope, service, and transformation. Thank you for your continued partnership in this sacred work.

Enjoy the highlights from the 257th Synod Assembly:

[Highlights Link](#)

In Christ's service,

Dr. Flo

Synod Executive and Stated Clerk



SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC (PCUSA)

257th Stated Meeting – Assembly Highlights

March 9–10, 2026 | Richmond, Virginia

Theme: “Dismantling Barriers, Cultivating Opportunities”



A Gathering Rooted in Faith, Purpose, and Possibility

The 257th Stated Meeting of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic brought together commissioners, corresponding members, guests, and leaders from across the Synod for two meaningful days of worship, reflection, learning, and action in Richmond, Virginia.

From the very beginning, the tone was clear: this would be more than a business meeting. It would be a time to gather in faith, confront hard truths, celebrate important milestones, and consider together what faithful leadership looks like in this season of the church’s life. The Assembly was convened by Moderator **Leah Epps**, with a Land Acknowledgement offered by Vice Moderator **Debbie Reese**, grounding the gathering in respect and remembrance.



Morning worship, led by **Rev. Bill Davis** of the Presbyterian Foundation, opened the Assembly with prayer, Communion, and a thoughtful message that helped center the room for the work ahead. Music was provided by Dr. Tony McNeil



A recorded message from Co-Moderator **Cece Armstrong**, who was unable to attend in person, reminded the Assembly of the larger work and witness of the church beyond this gathering. With a quorum declared and 12 presbyteries represented, the Synod officially moved into its work, balancing inspiration with the practical responsibilities of governance. The Assembly was structured in two parts:

plenary sessions open to all participants, and business sessions focused on the formal work of the Synod. That format created space both for big-picture vision and for the careful work of decision-making.

A Powerful Start: Plenary Sessions That Challenged and Inspired

One of the strongest threads throughout the Assembly was the depth and power of the plenary sessions.



Rev. Dr. **Frances Taylor Gench** opened the plenary experience with a memorable Bible study on *Matthew 15:21–28*, focusing on the story of the Canaanite woman. Her teaching invited participants into a deeper reading of the text and challenged the Assembly to think about courage, advocacy, and what it means to push past barriers in pursuit of justice and healing. It was the kind of teaching that stayed in the room long after the session ended.

Pastor **David Black** of First Presbyterian Church of Chicago followed with a compelling plenary on the church’s public witness in times of social and political upheaval. Drawing on both history and lived experience, he reflected on the responsibility of the church to speak and act faithfully in the face of injustice. His message connected the church’s historic role in resisting oppression with the present-day call to moral courage and public engagement.



This Assembly was more than a meeting—it was a reminder that faithful leadership requires both courage and community.

Looking Honestly at the Present, Imagining Faithfully Toward the Future



Rev. **Larissa Kwong Abazia** of NEXT Church led another standout plenary session, guiding the Assembly through a thoughtful and challenging conversation about how the church engages its neighbors and responds to a changing world. Her presentation encouraged participants to consider the Synod’s place in the broader community and to reflect honestly on the systems that shape church life.

The session included discussion of the many ways racism can show up in personal, institutional, and structural forms, along with an invitation to move beyond awareness into faithful response. Participants were encouraged to speak up, examine themselves and their systems, ask hard questions, and show up in solidarity. It was a session that aligned deeply with the Assembly’s theme and offered practical spiritual direction for the work ahead.

A Season of Leadership and Forward Movement

The Assembly also marked an important chapter in the Synod’s leadership story.

In her first Assembly report as **Synod Executive and Stated Clerk**, **Rev. Dr. Flo Barbee-Watkins** offered a hopeful and practical overview of her first six months in the role. Since beginning in September 2025, her work has focused on building stronger relationships across the Synod’s fourteen presbyteries, improving internal systems, supporting collaboration, and



helping the Synod become an even more resourceful, connected, and mission-minded body. Her report reflected both strong administrative leadership and a clear commitment to presence, partnership, and long-term sustainability.

Highlights from the report included:

- Visits with multiple presbyteries and leadership teams
- Redesigned commissioner orientation and training materials
- Continued leadership transition work and administrative process review
- Increased Synod presence in denominational leadership spaces
- Ongoing conversations around financial sustainability and future planning

The Assembly also received important updates that reflect thoughtful stewardship and strategic progress. The Synod office has been relocated to **Union Presbyterian Theological Seminary**, creating secure office space while reducing annual expenses. Administrative and financial protocols continue to be reviewed and strengthened, and commissioner preparation remains a high priority heading into the year ahead.

Those assembled had the opportunity to enjoy Dr. Flo's "[Out and About in the Synod](#)" Video. Click on it to enjoy as well.

A Well-Deserved Recognition

The Assembly also took time to honor **Rev. Jan Edmiston**, former Executive Presbyter for Charlotte Presbytery, in recognition of her service and retirement. It was a meaningful moment of gratitude and celebration—one that reminded everyone in the room of the lasting impact faithful leaders have on the church across generations.



The Synod's work is not only about managing today—it is also about preparing faithfully for tomorrow.

Investing in Ministry, Innovation, and the Future of the Church

The business of the Assembly made one thing clear: the Synod continues to invest in ministry, leadership, and new possibilities.

One of the most encouraging highlights was the approval of **\$56,460 in grants and scholarships** through the Grants Committee. Even though the committee was unable to meet with a quorum between Assemblies, the Synod still moved forward to support students, congregations, and presbyteries through scholarships, small church grants, and presbytery initiatives. The Assembly approved support for scholarship recipients, congregational ministries, and mission-focused local efforts—demonstrating a strong commitment to nurturing both present ministry and future leadership.

The **Jubilee Fund Committee** also awarded **\$10,000 in grants**, including support for **Freedom East PC** in Coastal Carolina and leadership development in Western North Carolina. Together, these actions reflect a Synod that is intentionally directing resources toward vitality, service, and community impact.



Innovation and Emerging Work

The **Emerging Ideas Committee** shared its continued passion for supporting innovation, healthy risk-taking, and new possibilities across the Synod. The committee described itself as a group committed to exploring beyond traditional structures and encouraging dreamers throughout the church. Its current partnership with **NEXT Church** is one example of that commitment in action.

The **Next Generation Initiative (NGI)** also reported meaningful progress in its work to support historically Black congregations and ministries within the PC(USA). The committee highlighted its ongoing focus on congregational vitality, leadership, communication, and strategic planning, along with a significant restructuring of its work into two major areas:

- **African American Church Ministry Revitalization**
- **Healing, Repair, and Reparations for Historical Harm**

These reports underscored that the Synod is not only responding to current needs, but also building frameworks for deeper healing and long-term transformation.

Important Business Actions and Helpful Updates

The Assembly also completed important business, including:

- Approval of the **Omnibus Motion** with amendments
- Approval of updated language in **Personnel Policies** and **Standing Rules**
- Approval of a **\$6,500 increase to the 2026 travel expense line item**
- Approval of nominations for several Synod committees and designated roles

Participants also received encouraging updates from **Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center** and the **Presbyterian Board of Pensions**, including upcoming accessibility improvements, new support for dependent child coverage, and a developing childcare assistance grant program for lower-paid pastors.

A Powerful Closing and a New Chapter

The Assembly concluded with closing worship and the **installation of Rev. Dr. Flo Barbee-Watkins as Synod Executive and Stated Clerk**, marking a significant and celebratory moment in the life of the Synod.



The closing message, delivered by **Rev. Tawnya Denise Anderson**, was described as “fiery, powerful, and moving,” drawing once again from the story of the Canaanite woman and bringing the Assembly full circle. It was a fitting conclusion to an Assembly that consistently invited the Synod to lead with courage, honesty, and faith.



Closing Reflection

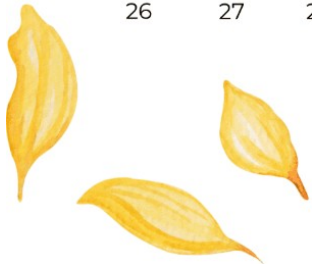
The 257th Stated Meeting of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic was not simply a gathering to conduct business. It was a time of worship, challenge, celebration, discernment, and recommitment.

It reminded all who attended that the church is still being called to do brave work: to dismantle barriers, cultivate opportunity, invest in ministry, and show up faithfully for the communities God has called us to serve.



JULY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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**JULY PRESBYTERY PACKET DEADLINE:
JULY 2nd**