

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley  
Synod of Living Waters  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Stated Meeting  
May 9, 2024

**GOD CALLS US TOGETHER**

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley of the Synod of Living Waters of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met in the Stated Meeting on May 9, 2024, hosted by Oakmont Chapel Presbyterian Church in Hoover, AL.

Throughout these minutes, Ministers of the Word and Sacrament are indicated by an asterisk (\*).

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Moderator Deborah Thomas, who opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Organization**

On advice of the Stated Clerk, a quorum was declared by the Moderator.

**Adoption of the Docket Appendix B-1**  
The docket was adopted by unanimous vote.

**Recognition of First Time Commissioners and Visitors**

**OMNIBUS MOTION**

- 1. Approve the minutes of the February 15, 2024, meeting.**
- 2. To approve absences for today's meeting.**
- 3. To adopt an "Electronic Meetings Rule" for this meeting so that virtual attendees seeking recognition from the Chair be allowed to unmute themselves and call for the attention of the Moderator for recognition and obtaining the floor.**
- 4. To receive and record the minutes of the Commission to install Rev. Caroline Kelly as Pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa on March 3, 2024.**

**Approved**

**Ministers of the Word and Sacrament**

Ministers Present ( ) Excused ( ) Absent ( )

Adams, Nan	A	Brady Becker, Lindsay	A
Atkerson, Rick	P	Bell, Jerome	A
Bae, In Chan	P	Bird, Shelaine	A
Bailey, Michael	P	Brock, John	E
Bang, Yoo Chang	A	Broyles, Vernon, HR	E
Bankson, John	E	Bryson, Tom	P
Barnett, Caroline	A	Bruchey, Wayne, HR	E

Burgess, Sid, HR	E	Kim, Sung Woong	A
Butler, Heather Jones	A	Kim, Young	P
Carleton, Rhon, HR	E	Kukal, Chuck	P
Carter, Clyde, HR	E	Laney, Susan, HR	E
Casey, Lydia	E	Long, Kevin	E
Chaney, Patsy, HR	P	McCarter, Neil, HR	P
Chang, Cecelia	A	McClendon, Bruce	A
Cheong, Tae Ho	P	McClure, John	A
Chinula, Donald	E	McCormick, Mark	P
Cho, Timothy	E	McElrath, Pete, HR	E
Choomack, Jim, HR	E	McLaughlin, Wayne, HR	E
Clark, Molly, HR	E	Mathews, Rachel	A
Clayton, Susan	P	Mylalsingh, Emerson, HR	E
Clendenin, Monty, HR	E	Newton, Nicole	P
Coker, Jeff, HR	E	Newland, Terry, HR	E
Crutchfield, Bob, HR	E	Northen, Margaret, HR	E
Davis, Becky HR	E	O'Neill, Elizabeth	P
Davis, Lant	E	Oh, Jyung, Ho	A
Dippenaer, Vic	P	Oliver, Catherine, HR	E
Durham, Charles, HR	E	Park, Daekeun	A
Durham, Erica	E	Patton, Finley, HR	E
Edwards, Robert	E	Patton, Roger, HR	E
Ephraim, James, HR	A	Pearce-Reed, Leanne	P
Feagin, Debbie, HR	P	Ponder, Luke	P
Frandsen, Emily	P	Porter, Mary, HR	P
Free, Zana	A	Price, Sandra, HR	E
Gatliff, Abby	P	Pyburn, Richard, HR	E
Gatliff, Cort	P	Reed, Kathy	P
Genau, Joe	P	Reed, Nick	P
Goodrich, Elizabeth	E	Roberts, Madison	A
Hamilton-Poore, Sam	P	Scarborough, Leeann	P
Hamilton-Poore, Terry	P	Schuler, Sharon, HR	P
Hanna, Richard	P	Scott, Katherine	E
Harmon, Dawson, HR	E	Scrivner, Joe	P
Hay, Robert, HR	E	Seamon, David	P
Hayes, Jeff	A	Seitz, Craig, HR	E
Hibbard, Norman HR	E	Sellers, Lou Ann	P
Hurley, Ed	E	Shelton, Jack, HR	E
Hurst, Clyce HR	E	Shin, Dong-ouk	A
Inman, Robert F, HR	E	Sims, Charles, HR	E
Jeong, Junmo	A	Slane, Joe, HR	E
Jo, Jae Seon	A	Son, Junqyun	A
Kelly, Caroline	P	Spalding, Andrew	E
Kim, Samuel	A	Speaker, Cary	P
Kim, Sun Jae	P	Sprik, Petra	A
Kim, Sung Eun	A	Stephens, Gerald, HR	E

Thurman, Michael	P	Wells, Jim, HR	E
Tingle, Terry, HR	E	Westfall, Sue	E
Truesdell, Jim	A	Wilkins, Jay, HR	P
Turner, Lucy, HR	E	Wills, Bill HR	E
Turpen, Sam	A	Wilson, Ron	A
Wade, Lindsey	A	Winter, Rachel	P
Waters, Dana, HR	P	Winton, Carlton, HR	E
Watson, Cody	E	Yarboro, Jonathan	P

**Commission Ruling Elders with Vote**

Present () Excused () Absent ()

Bonner, Jeff	P	Hughes, Carl	A
Dodson, Beverly	P	Kirkpatrick, deNay	E
Eich, Sharon	A	Lyons, David	P
Emerick, Robert	A	Sausser, Bill	A
Harrison, John	A	Veasey, Lin	P

**Executive Council Members/Presbytery Officers w/Vote**

Present () Excused () Absent ()

Sissy Bain	A	Jothany James	P
Jean Russell	P	Terri Jones	P
Judith Baldwin	P	Deborah Thomas	P
Linda Burrowes	P	Donna Winn	P

**Christian Educators, Presbyterian Women, Commission on Ministry and Anti-Racism Moderators w/Vote**

Jenny Thagard A      Kathy Tracey P      Carl Martin P      Debra Love P

**Elders**

Number in parenthesis by church name indicates the number of commissioners authorized. "NR" indicates that the church did not have elder representation. There are sixty (60) churches in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. () Commissioners were present.

Alexander City	First (1)	Rhonda Hodgson
Annemanie	Arlington (1)	NR
Anniston	Church of the Covenant	NR
Anniston	First (1)	NR

Anniston	First United (1)	NR
Anniston	Korean (1)	NR
Auburn	First (3)	Karen Herring Katie Forster Todd White
Bessemer	Good Hope (1)	NR
Birmingham	Bold Springs (1)	NR
Birmingham	Edgewood (2)	Richard Galbraith Don Hagan
Birmingham	Fairfield Highlands (1)	NR
Birmingham	First (2)	Carl Martin
Birmingham	First United of Forestdale (1)	NR
Birmingham	Five Mile	NR
Birmingham	Independent (4)	Caryl Privett Susan Haskell Steve Hunt NR
Birmingham	Korean (1)	NR
Birmingham	Mountain Brook (2)	Karen Ogle NR
Birmingham	Oakmont Chapel (2)	Janet Barnes John Parks
Birmingham	Riverchase (1)	Margaret Bowman
Birmingham	Second	Catherine Rodenhauser
Birmingham	South Highland (3)	Lee Cleveland Suzanne Cornett NR
Birmingham	Southminster (2)	John Liddle Laura McDonald
Birmingham	Westminster (1)	Linda Harris
Cuba	Cuba (1)	NR
Camden	New Trinity (1)	NR
Carbon Hill	First (1)	NR
Dadeville	First (1)	NR
Dadeville	Woods (1)	NR
Eufaula	First (1)	NR
Gardendale	Gardendale (1)	Cherie Fancher
Goodwater	First (1)	NR
Green Pond	Green Pond (1)	NR
Jacksonville	First (1)	NR

Lafayette	Lebanon (1)	NR
Leeds	Leeds (1)	Charles Gabert
Livingston	First (1)	NR
Magnolia	Rock Springs (1)	NR
Marion Junction	Marion Junction (1)	NR
Montevallo	Montevallo (1)	Maria Serrano
Montgomery	Calvary	NR
Montgomery	Immanuel (1)	Jon Broadway
Montgomery	Korean (1)	NR
Montgomery	Providence (1)	Kathryn Sweezey
Northport	Bethel (1)	NR
Opelika	Korean (2)	NR
Oxford	Dodson Memorial (1)	NR
Phenix City	First (1)	NR
Piedmont	First (1)	NR
Selma	Pisgah (1)	NR
Selma	Valley Creek (1)	NR
Sylacauga	First (1)	NR
Talladega	First (1)	Allen Scarbrough
Troy	Williams Memorial (1)	NR
Trussville	Cahaba Springs (1)	Lynda McLean
Tuscaloosa	Brown Memorial (1)	NR
Tuscaloosa	First (4)	John Summerford
		Leanne Spencer
		NR
		NR
Tuscaloosa	Grace (2)	April Lane
		Susan Benke
Tuscaloosa	Korean	NR
Tuskegee Institute	Westminster (1)	Judith Baldwin
Union Springs	Union Springs (1)	NR
Wetumpka	First (1)	Jerry Bush

Welcome from the Host Church

Rachel Winter

Richard Galbraith led us in the Call to Worship.

The body then sang "For the Beauty of the Earth."

Janet Barnes led us in the Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, Passing of the Peace, the Prayer of Illumination and singing "Amazing Grace."

Rev. Lukata Mjumbe read the Scripture Matthew 7:21-27 and preached the Sermon "A One Point Sermon."

We sang "Come to the Table of Grace."

Rev. Rachel Winter led us in the Affirmation of Faith.

Richard Galbraith gave the Invitation to the Offering.

The Prayer of Dedication was led by Moderator Deborah Thomas.

Rev. Rachel Winter and Rev. Lukata Mjumbe gave the Invitation to the Lord's Table, the Prayer of Thanksgiving, Communion of the People and the Prayer After Communion.

The body sang "Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples."

The Service of Commissioning to the 226<sup>th</sup> General Assembly was given by Moderator Deborah Thomas: Ruling Elder Debra Love, Teaching Elder Nick Reed and YAAD Abby Bunn. **Appendix B-2**

The Benediction was given by Rev. Lukata Mjumbe.

### **Executive Council Report      Appendix B-3**

Our Presbytery is a Mathew 25 entity and 17 churches have signed up to be a Matthew 25 church. Executive Council decided we will have a brief Matthew 25 update at each Presbytery meeting on what we are doing.

Church of the Covenant—Lin Veasey—They used the Super Bowl offering to start a can food drive and take up the Pentecost offering. They are distributing funds from the sale of housing.

Riverchase—Margaret Bowman--They are active in Outreach and began a blanket ministry.

Referral from Bills and Overtures Committee

- 1. Vote to concur with overture {OVT-013} "On removal of investments in and subsidies for fossil fuels," Montevallo Session and Susquehanna Valley Presbytery. Approved    Appendix B-4**
- 2. Vote to concur with {OVT-016} "On Amending Book of Order G-2.1002 on Use of Commissioned Pastors" from Palo Duro Presbytery. Approved    Appendix B-5**

**Good News**—At lunch share with the people at your table what your church is doing for Matthew 25.

**Commission on Ministry Appendix B-7**

Carl Martin

1. **Approve the Rev. Bruce McLendon to be declared Honorably Retired as of June 1. Approved**
2. **Approve the Rev. Richard Hanna to be declared Honorably Retired. Approved**
3. **Approve terms of call for the Rev. In Chan Bae, installed pastor of Korean Presbyterian Church of Birmingham. Approved Appendix B-8**
  - a. **Effective Salary, \$45,000.00; Board of Pensions Dues, \$17,550.**
  - b. **At its May 2023 stated meeting, this body examined and approved the Rev. Bae to serve as pastor for the Korean Presbyterian Church of Birmingham; however the COM neglected to present terms of call at that time.**
  - c. **Rev. Bae was installed on August 13, 2023.**
4. **Examine and approve the Rev. Lukata Mjumbe, Executive Director of the Alabama African American Civil Rights Heritage Sights Consortium, for Validated Ministry within Sheppards and Lapsley. Approved Appendix B-9, 10**

Sharon Schuler is requesting information from each church to assemble a brief history of the churches in the Presbytery. **Appendix B-11**

Board of Pensions—A New Benefits Plan **Appendix B-12**

**Commission on Preparation for Ministry**

Nicole Newton

1. **Approve Inquirers Teddy Vaughn and Daniel Killilea be advanced to the Candidacy stage of the ordination process. Approved Appendix B-13, 14, 15, 16**

**Mission Coordinator Report Appendix B-17**

Ralls Coston

Ask the churches to share what they are doing for the food pantries.

**Anti-Racism Committee Appendix B-18, 19**

Debra Love and Tom Bryson

At the August meeting, they will ask for the Presbytery to endorse this statement. In October they will be showing the film.

**Presbyterian Home for Children**

Cindy Fisher

The Home earned a coveted Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator, a designation achieved by only one in four charities.

They have started a backpack program. The students' backpacks will be filled with food so they will have something to eat over the weekend.

Cindy spoke about their new Caminos Program. The Home serves unaccompanied

children inside Alabama through a grant. They provide home studies to ensure the children who are placed with sponsor families are living in safe and stable home environments.

**Living River Appendix B-20**

**Presbyterian Women Appendix B-21**

Kathy Tracey

**Mission Haven Appendix B-22**

**Nominating**

Rick Atkerson

Lee Cleveland, South Highland

Commission on Ministry

Class of 2024

Robert Posey, Independent

Permanent Judicial

Class of 2029

James Tucker, FPC Tuscaloosa

Permanent Judicial

Class of 2029

**Approved**

**Stated Clerk Report Appendix B-23**

- 1. The Administrative Commission for Five Mile Presbyterian Church requests permission to accept, if the way be clear, a cash offer of \$200,000 for the remaining portion of the Five Mile property. The potential buyer is Pentecostal Temple, LLC, who plans to constitute a worshipping congregation on the site as well as a day care / pre-school. The property is perfectly suited to continue to serve families in the neighborhood. The AC requests permission to have all documents related to sale and closing reviewed by PSL Trustees and be given the authority to execute the contracted sale if the way be clear. Approved**

**Report of the Five Mile Presbyterian Administrative Commission Appendix B-24**

**Report of the First Presbyterian Church of Anniston Administrative Commission Appendix B-25**

**Statistical Report – Appendix B-26**

**General Presbyter Appendix B-27**

**Board of Pensions: Orientation On: A New Benefits Plan Appendix B-28**

**UKirk Birmingham Report Appendix B-29**

**Summary of Revenues and Expenses Appendix B-30**

**Closing Prayer**

Moderator Deborah Thomas

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Walter J. Wilkins, Stated Clerk

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Linda Burrowes, Recording Clerk



# PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY

*partner with and equip present and emerging  
PC(USA) faith communities in central Alabama  
to serve Christ and our neighbors*



**Spring Stated Meeting  
May 9, 2024**

**Oakmont Chapel Presbyterian Church  
Birmingham, AL**

THE PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY  
PROPOSED DOCKET / MAY 9, 2024  
OAKMONT CHAPEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BIRMINGHAM, AL

*Please silence all cell phones and electronic devices*

9:00 AM Registration

9:30 AM Call to Order and Opening Prayer Moderator Deborah Thomas  
Organization – Declaration of Quorum, Adoption of Docket, Seating of Corresponding Members, Welcome of First Time Commissioners, Welcome of Visitors, Requests for New Business to the Stated Clerk in writing by 11:00 AM

Omnibus Motion:

1. Approve the minutes of the February 15, 2024, meeting
2. To approve the requests for absences from today's meeting
3. To adopt an "Electronic Meetings Rule" for this meeting so that virtual attendees seeking recognition from the Chair be allowed to unmute themselves and call for the attention of the Moderator for recognition and obtaining the floor.
4. To receive and record the minutes of the Commission to install Rev. Caroline Kelly as Pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa on March 3, 2024.

9:45 AM Welcome from the Host Church Rev. Rachel Winter

**Order of Worship**

Prelude

†Call to Worship

Richard Galbraith

One: In Christ, we are made new

**All: And filled with hope.**

One: In God, we belong to a new community,

**All: Discovering we are friends, sisters and brothers in Christ,**

One: In Christ, the old ways have lost their glitter and appeal,

**All: For we have turned toward the new light.**

One: In God, we receive a new name and a new call;

**All: We are God's beloved, and we carry on the ministry of reconciliation.**

One: In Christ, we are a new creation.

**All: The old is passed away, and we live as signs on reconciliation and love.**

†Hymn #14

**"For the Beauty of the Earth"**

Call to Confession

Janet Barnes

Know that the Lord is God. The Lord made us, and we belong to God. We are God's people, the sheep of God's pasture. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

Prayer of Confession

**God our shepherd, we confess that we have not followed you faithfully. You gather up the lost and least while we scatter the poor to the margins. You claim them as beloved people while we hide from neighbors in need. You strengthen those who are weak while we neglect the most vulnerable. Forgive us, God of grace. Lead us in right paths and restore us to your flock and fold where love and justice reign; through Jesus Christ our Savior.**

## Assurance of God's Forgiveness

Friends, hear this Good News: the love of God is beyond measure, and we are included in that love. Know that we are forgiven and thus freed to love and serve. Alleluia! Amen.

## †Passing of the Peace

### Prayer for Illumination

Moderator Deborah Thomas

God of glory, enlighten our hearts. Reveal your holy Word to us by the power of your Spirit, that we may trust in your promises and share your abundant grace with all; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

### Anthem

#### **"Amazing Grace"**

arr. Walters

Jonathan Brown, piano/Louise Rose, clarinet

### Scripture

Matthew 7:21-27

Rev. Lukata Mjumbe

### Sermon

**"A One Point Sermon"**

## †Hymn #507

### **"Come to the Table of Grace"**

## †Affirmation of Faith—excerpts from the Confession of Belhar

Rev. Rachel Winter

### We believe

- **that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ; that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells.**
- **that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world;**
- **that the credibility of this message is seriously affected and its beneficial work obstructed when it is proclaimed in a land which professes to be Christian, but in which the enforced separation of people on a racial basis promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred and enmity;**
- **that any teaching which attempts to legitimate such forced separation by appeal to the gospel, and is not prepared to venture on the road of obedience and reconciliation, but rather, out of prejudice, fear, selfishness and unbelief, denies in advance the reconciling power of the gospel, must be considered ideology and false doctrine.**

### Invitation to the Offering

Richard Galbraith

We have a glorious inheritance among the saints through the generosity and grace of God. Let us share this great abundance with others, sharing our gifts with those in need and offering our lives in Christ's service.

### Prayer of Dedication

Moderator Deborah Thomas

We give you thanks, O God, that you are at work among us—lifting up those who are poor, casting down the power of evil, and raising the dead to life. Strengthen us in faith, that we may rejoice in hope and live to share your love; through Christ, who is all in all. Amen.

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Rev. Rachel Winter and Rev. Lukata Mjumbe

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Communion of the People

Prayer After Communion

†Hymn #757

**"Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples"**

Service of Commissioning to 226th General Assembly

Moderator Deborah Thomas

Ruling Elder Debra Love, Teaching Elder Nick Reed, and YAAD Abby Bunn

†Benediction

Rev. Lukata Mjumbe

### Ministry Within Our Presbytery

10:45 AM Executive Council (pages 7-14)

Referral from Bills and Overtures Committee: Linda Harris, Nick Reed, Allen Scarbrough

**a. Vote whether to concur with overture [OVT-013] "On removal of investments in and subsidies for fossil fuels"; Montevallo Session and Susquehanna Valley Presbytery; (pages 9-12)**

**b. Vote whether to concur with [OVT-016] "On Amending Book of Order G-2.1002 on Use of Commissioned Pastors" from Palo Duro Presbytery. (pages 13-14)**

11:45 AM Report from representatives to Synod of Living Waters Judith Baldwin & Sharon Schuler  
(pages 15-16)

12:00 AM Lunch & more Good News from Churches

1: 00 PM Commission on Ministry (pages 17-53) Carl Martin

#### **Action Items:**

- 1. Approve the Rev. Bruce McLendon to be declared Honorably Retired.**
- 2. Approve the Rev. Richard Hanna to be declared Honorably Retired.**
- 3. Approve terms of call for the Rev. In Chan Bae, installed pastor of Korean Presbyterian Church of Birmingham. (pages 18-19)**
  - a. Effective Salary, \$45,000.00; Board of Pensions Dues, \$17,550.**
  - b. At its May 2023 stated meeting, this body examined and approved the Rev. Bae to serve as pastor for the Korean Presbyterian Church of Birmingham; however, the COM neglected to present terms of call at that time.**
  - c. Rev. Bae was installed on August 13, 2023.**
- 4. Examine and approve the Rev. Lukata Mjumbe, Executive Director of the Alabama African American Civil Rights Heritage Sights Consortium, for Validated Ministry within Sheppards and Lapsley. (pages 50-53)**

1:35 PM Commission on Preparation for Ministry (pages 56-61) Nicole Newton

#### **For Action:**

**The CPM recommends that Inquirers Teddy Vaughn and Daniel Killilea be advanced to the Candidacy stage of the ordination process. (statements pages 57-61)**

1:50 PM	Mission Coordinator (pages 62-63)	Ralls Coston
2:00 PM	Anti Racism Committee (pages 64-65)	Tom Bryson
2:10 PM	Presbyterian Home for Children	Cindy Fisher
	Director of Communication and Mission Outreach	
2: 20 PM	Living River (pages 66-69)	Rachel VanKirk Mathews
2: 25 PM	Presbyterian Women (pages 70-72)	Kathy Tracey
2: 35 PM	Nominating (page 73)	Rick Atkerson

**The Committee nominates the following to fill terms as indicated:**

- 1. Commission on Ministry - unexpired term Class of 2024: Lee Cleveland, South Highland**
- 2. Permanent Judicial Commission - full terms (six years) Class of 2029: Robert Posey, Independent; James Tucker, FPC Tuscaloosa**

2:50 PM	Stated Clerk (pages 74-81)	Jay Wilkins
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**For action: from the AC for Five Mile Presbyterian Church:**

**The Administrative Commission for Five Mile Presbyterian Church requests permission to accept, if the way be clear, a cash offer of \$200,000 for the remaining portion of the Five Mile property. The potential buyer is Pentecostal Temple, LLC, who plans to constitute a worshipping congregation on the site as well as a day care / pre-school. The property is perfectly suited to continue to serve families in the neighborhood. The AC requests permission to have all documents related to sale and closing reviewed by PSL Trustees and be given the authority to execute the contracted sale if the way be clear. (page 75)**

New Business from Bills and Overtures

3:00 PM	Adjournment with Prayer	Moderator Deborah Thomas
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†Please stand, if able

**After the meeting, please turn in your hanging name badge.**

We wish to extend a special thank you to Rev. Rachel Winter, the staff, and the volunteers of Oakmont Chapel for hosting today's Presbytery meeting. We would also like to thank Richard Galbraith, Janet Barnes, Jonathan Brown, Louise Rose, Rev. Lukata Mjumbe, and Deborah Thomas for participating in today's worship service. As always, our Tech Team helper, Robert Newman.

**Next Stated Meeting – August 15, 2024  
Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church, Birmingham**

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley  
COMMISSIONING SERVICE  
226th General Assembly Commissioners  
Ruling Elder Debra Love  
Teaching Elder Nick Reed  
Young Adult Advisory Delegate Abby Bunn**

**SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE**

**Moderator:** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

**All:** There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

**Moderator:** Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

**All:** There is one body and one Spirit, just as we were called to the one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

**Moderator:** We are called by God to be the church of Jesus Christ, a sign in the world today of what God intends for all humankind.

**All:** The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

**Moderator:** The call of Christ is to willing, dedicated discipleship. Our discipleship is a manifestation of the new life we enter through baptism. Discipleship is both a gift and a commitment, an offering and a responsibility. The grace bestowed on you in baptism is sufficient for your calling because it is God's grace. By God's grace we are saved, and enabled to grow in the faith and to commit our lives in ways that serve Christ. God has called you to particular service. Commissioners and delegate, show your purpose by answering these questions.

**Moderator:** Who is your Lord and Savior?

**Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.**

**Moderator:** Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love?

**I will, with God's help.**

**Moderator:** Do you welcome the responsibility of this service because you are determined to follow the Lord Jesus, to love neighbors, and to work for the reconciling of the world?

**I do.**

**Moderator:** Will you serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love, relying on God's mercy and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit?

**I will, with God's help.**

**Moderator: Do we, members the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, accept these women and men as commissioners and delegates to the 226<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, chosen by God through the voice of the church, to guide us in the way of Jesus Christ?**

**We do.**

**Do we promise to support and encourage them as they seek to fulfill their responsibilities in this ministry?**

**We do.**

#### **COMMISSIONING PRAYER**

**All: Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you called disciples and, by the Holy Spirit, made them one church to serve you. Be with members of the 226<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Help them to welcome new things you are doing in the world and to respect old things you keep and use. In their deliberation, bring about what is best for us and for all people. As they meet, let your Holy Spirit guide so that the whole church may be joined in love and service to Jesus Christ, who, having gone before us, is coming to meet us in the promise of your kingdom. Amen.**

#### **CHARGE**

**Moderator: You are commissioned to service as commissioners and delegate of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley to the 226<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA).**

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

#### **BLESSING**

**Moderator: May the God of peace make you holy in every way, and keep your whole being, spirit, soul, and body, free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**All: Alleluia! Amen.**

**Executive Council Report to Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley**

**May 9, 2024**

**Class of 2024**

Tom Bryson\*  
Terri Moon Jones  
Ed Hurley\*  
Donna Winn

**Class of 2025**

Terry Hamilton-Poore\*  
Leeann Scarbrough\*  
Joe Scrivner\*  
Deborah Thomas

**Class of 2026**

Sissy Bain  
Jothany James  
Neil McCarter\*  
Jonathan Yarboro\*

**1. Matthew 25 Update & Good News from our Churches**

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley is a Matthew 25 Presbytery where:

We do hereby commit to become a Matthew 25 mid council. We pledge to encourage 20% or more of our congregations to become Matthew 25 churches and embrace these areas of focus:

- Building congregational vitality
- Dismantling structural racism
- Eradicating systemic poverty

We promise to keep track of the impact of our ministry and share our stories with the PC(USA) from time to time.

**2. Referral from Bills and Overtures Committee: Linda Harris, Nick Reed, Allen Scarbrough**

- a. Vote whether to concur with overture [OVT-013] "On removal of investments in and subsidies for fossil fuels"; Montevallo Session and Susquehanna Valley Presbytery;
- b. Vote whether to concur with [OVT-016] "On Amending Book of Order G-2.1002 on Use of Commissioned Pastors" from Palo Duro Presbytery.

**3. Anti Racism Committee is preparing a statement for the Presbytery's consideration. The statement is to be presented at the May meeting of Presbytery.**

**4. Approved expense of \$12,800 from the Selma fund to repair the roof of the Northern Heights Church.**

**5. Voted to approve the Presbytery as co-host with Stillman College and Brown Memorial Church of the 2025 Congo Mission Network Conference. Date in the fall to be determined.**

**6. The Presbyterian Home for Children will be renting the office space in the Presbytery office not being used by Presbytery staff. The PHFC has funding for a new ministry with children.**

**7. We are seeking a "tech person" for managing the hybrid meetings of the Presbytery. We give thanks for Robert Newman's service.**

**8. The May meeting of Presbytery was moved ahead to May 9 so that our votes on the overtures to the General Assembly may be recorded. Many thanks to Oakmont Chapel for your hospitality and willingness to shift the dates!**



**Executive Council Report to the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley  
May 9, 2024  
Addendum**

**1. Matthew 25 Presbytery Update**

**Jonathan Yarboro**

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley is a Matthew 25 Presbytery where:  
We do hereby commit to becoming a Matthew 25 mid-council. We pledge to encourage 20% or more of our congregations to become Matthew 25 churches and embrace these areas of focus:

- Building congregational vitality
- Dismantling structural racism
- Eradicating systemic poverty

We promise to keep track of the impact of our ministry and share our stories with the PC(USA) from time to time.

Executive Council wishes to celebrate a few endeavors fulfilling the Matthew 25 call:

- The Anti-Racism Committee continues to provide opportunity for presbytery-wide dialogue on issues of structural racism and systemic poverty. The most recent experience of hosting the February meeting of Presbytery at Northern Heights Presbyterian Church is emblematic of those efforts and ongoing work. The time spent with Rev. Mayor Perkins was an outstanding addition to the typical business of the day. Summer programs at Northern Heights are being offered this summer.
- Living River Scholarships are available to all prospective campers, especially those who do not have the financial means to attend.
- The Wilcox County Coalition and Community Garden Project is growing and gaining supporters of every variety.
- The 2025 Congo Mission Network Conference will be co-sponsored by Stillman College and the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley.
- The Presbytery continues a partnership with the Presbyterian Children's Home in Talladega, Alabama to offer ministry and services to at-risk children and youth along with their female caregivers.
- Collaborations with Habitat for Humanity (primarily in the Birmingham Area) have resulted in the construction of over 30 homes.

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley overtures the 226th General Assembly (2024) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

Overture from Montevallo Session and Susquehanna Valley Presbytery:

**Vote to concur with OVT-013 “On removal of investments in and subsidies for fossil fuels” and take it to Presbytery for their vote.**

1. DECLARE that continued support of the exploration, development, funding, and exploitation of fossil fuels through investment of PC(USA) funds, violates the equitable welfare of all life and our biblical charge as humanity to care for creation, and is irretrievably incompatible with the mission and goals of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. DECLARE that all publicly traded companies whose primary source of income is derived from the exploration, development and production of fossil fuels are to be placed on the General Assembly's list of prohibited securities.
3. STRONGLY ENCOURAGE all congregations, presbyteries, synods, the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Foundation, as well as Church-related educational institutions and individual church members, to align their investment decisions with this declaration with all due speed and diligence.
4. CALL ON all PC(USA) members and institutional investors to seek out investments in clean renewable energy companies.
5. REQUEST reports from the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Foundation and other investing entities at the next General Assembly on the steps taken to align their investment decisions with the intent of this overture.
6. CALL ON the U.S. government to end all subsidies for the development and production of fossil fuels.

**Rationale:**

**Our Values:** Past General Assemblies have repeatedly stated the vocation of earth care as an essential mark of Christian discipleship and the Church's mission and ministry. Our responsibilities as a faith institution are clear: God created the earth, and it is sacred. The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it. We are a part of and not independent of the created order and are meant to be caretakers and protectors of creation and our neighbors.

**Our Reality:** We are in the midst of a climate crisis that is primarily caused by the production and burning of fossil fuels which release greenhouse gases, such as methane and carbon dioxide that are warming the planet. The scientific consensus, established over many years and with increasing levels of certitude, is that the

warming of our atmosphere beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial temperatures will undermine the entire web of life on the planet with catastrophic consequences.

**The Solution:** In order to avoid this, the Intergovernmental (scientific) Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported in March 2023, that the nations of the world must cut our carbon emissions by 48% from 2019 levels by 2030 and reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, but last year, as in previous years, these emissions continued to climb. And while the U.S. has recently taken action to bring down its own emissions, we now produce and export more fossil fuels than ever in history. The U.S. also subsidizes the fossil fuel industry with estimates ranging from \$10-50 billion per year, while our northern neighbor, Canada and several other fossil fuel producing countries have announced that they are ending their subsidies.<sup>1</sup>

The world has to change the path it is on, but it requires two huge changes. The most critical change is a “fast, full and fair” phase out of fossil fuel production and usage. The second is the rapid expansion of sources of renewable energy. The church’s investments have power and influence which can contribute to these changes and bear witness to the world that we acknowledge the climate crisis, the suffering it is causing and its link to the burning of fossil fuels.

**The Denomination is Responding to the Climate Crisis:** The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has long recognized its obligation to take actions as faithful stewards of God’s Creation to respond to climate change. The General Assembly actions in 1981, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2022 acknowledge the realities of global warming and its effect on the “least of these” throughout our world.

The Mission Agency has raised the importance of earth care to a matter of high priority for every part of its programming and the work of our Presbyterian Hunger Program and Earth Care Congregations program are exemplary in their efforts to inform and lead the church in the fulfillment of its mission. In addition, our Office of Public Witness became a sponsor of an initiative, to be called the Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty, launched by the governments of several South Pacific island nations (among the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters). This initiative is calling for the phase-out of both new and existing sources of fossil fuels.

**The Denomination’s Response is Inconsistent:** Such educational and advocacy efforts on behalf of our denominational commitment to earth care are undermined by institutional strategies which continue to seek profit from investment in the fossil fuel industry. This practice is hypocritical at a minimum and potentially endangers our evangelistic message and leadership within the ecumenical community of church

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-12-09/us-opts-out-of-dutch-plan-to-end-fossil-fuel-subsidies-at-cop28?leadSource=uverify%20wall>

bodies. While the percentage of total investments is small, (3.4% for The Foundation as of December 2023), the dollar value is in tens of millions of dollars. MRTI has begun a company by company divestment review, but the climate crisis is getting worse faster than our actions can bring about significant change.

Further, these PCUSA directed entities not only have a fiduciary duty to conserve and protect the church's assets and return an increase through the investment process, but are also obligated to duties of loyalty and obedience to our mission and established values to the extent allowed by secular law related to such.

**Existing Policy Provides Option for Removal of Funds from an Entire Class of Firms:** The original founding document from 1984 upon which our Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) is based, "Divestment Strategy: Principles and Criteria", clearly states that divestment of holdings can be in a particular "firm or **class of firms**" and that this is both part of the normal management of funds and potentially an occasion for Christian witness to God's call for justice and renewal of society. (Paragraph 25.202) It also states that divestment is a conscious decision to dispose of any current financial stake in an enterprise or '**class of enterprise**' because of policy or practice in regard to a social issue and to prohibit future stake so long as the offending situation holds. (Paragraph 25.261) [emphasis and quotation marks added]"

**Existing Policy also Provides for Proscription of a Class of Firms:** Furthermore, that document identifies that there are some classes of investments which should not be considered because of their nature which is fundamentally and irretrievably incompatible with the nature and purpose of the church. Thus, there is a list of such classes of economic activity which are excluded or "proscribed". This list excludes from our investment portfolio, investment in companies whose primary activity is in production of tobacco products, nuclear weapons, for-profit prisons and a few others.

**The Presbyterian Foundation is Moving in the Right Direction:** The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long history of aligning our corporate investment decisions with our values and enabling our members to do so. In fact, according to our Presbyterian Church Foundation's New Covenant Trust Company's website description for their "Fossil Free Strategy" they have established an instrument specifically "[f]or investors concerned with fossil fuel emissions and climate impact" which "can be configured to exclude the entire energy sector and other firms with a high carbon footprint."

**The Path Forward for the Whole Denomination is Not Easy:** We understand that the modern world and each of our lives are deeply intertwined with the fossil fuel industry and cannot be easily divorced from it. We live on the continuum between purity of moral conviction and the pragmatic exigencies of the current patterns and practices of the modern world. Yet we must act and act quickly, acknowledging the destructive nature of our fossil fuel investments.

In doing so, we refer the reader to the actions of our last General Assembly in support of communities where the loss of fossil fuel industry jobs will present hardship.

**We Must Change:** We understand and appreciate the role of our MRTI in encouraging enterprises to alter their practices to align more nearly with our values. However, we also know that there are some enterprises which are fundamentally such that no amount of change in practice will ever bring them into alignment. We feel it is past time for us to name the fossil fuel industry as one of these and existing policy provides for this.

For the sake of the integrity of our denomination's Christian witness, our purpose within the created order, the maintenance of the web of life upon which all humanity depends and our children's children, we must act quickly to withdraw all our resources, regardless of their size, either in dollar amount or percentage of those used, from the production of fossil fuels and to identify fossil fuels as a proscribed class of investments.

Overture from Palo Duro Presbytery. Vote to concur with OVT-016 “On Amending Book of Order G-2.1002 on Use of Commissioned Pastors.”

**Motion: To concur with OVT-016 “On Amending Book of Order G-2.1002 on Use of Commission Pastors” and send it to Presbytery for their vote.**

**Overture: Regarding Clarifying the Intent of G-2.1001  
on Use of Commissioned Pastors**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Presbytery of Palo Duro overtures the 226th General Assembly (2024) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

To amend Book of Order G-2.1002 to allow commissioned pastors by amending G-2.1001, Book of Order to read:

G-2.10 Commissioning Ruling Elders To Particular Pastoral Service

G-2.1002 Training, Examination and Commissioning <sup>1</sup>

A ruling elder who seeks to serve under the terms of G-2.1001 shall receive such preparation and instruction as determined by the presbytery to be appropriate to the particular commission. Such preparation shall include a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which training courses are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements. The ruling elder shall be examined by the presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction determined by presbytery. A ruling elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry ~~may continue to be listed as available to serve but is not~~ is authorized to perform the functions specified in G-2.1001 until commissioned again to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery **subject to annual review by the presbytery. The Commissioned Pastor will carry voice and vote as Commissioned Pastor while they continue their life in the presbytery.**

## Rationale

The General Assembly amended G-2.1001 in 2022 to clarify that a ruling elder could serve as Commissioned Pastor (CP) to multiple worshipping communities or missions in the presbytery, subject to approval of the presbytery and the appropriate sessions. This is a recognition by the denomination of the growing importance of the CP. Commissioning a CP for service in multiple congregations or other ministries is a frequent practice in the PCUSA.

CPs provide faithful service to our denomination and with their gifts provide service to congregations that might otherwise go unserved. It makes sense to allow the use of the gifts in as broad a venue as possible. Through this change in the Book of Order, presbyteries, churches and CPs will benefit in many ways. Some instances of that are:

1. Some who are serving churches as lay leaders have expressed an interest in becoming a CP but have not pursued that path because they want to serve more than one church. By this change, the call to become a CP may attract a larger number of candidates.
2. CPs who are not currently commissioned to a church are ready on the quick to fill empty pulpits provide as pool of CPs ready on the quick to fill empty pulpits.
3. Because of the expanded role of a CP, congregations will more likely opt for a CP in small, chronic empty pulpits in rural areas when a teaching elder is not available. Hopefully, the congregations will see the advantage of a trained pastor who will be readily available.
4. This change is consistent with the Presbyterian call to those who are called to be proclaimers of the word.
5. This change lifts the title, the calling and the professionalism of this role from location to location.
6. CPs gain experience and wisdom that can be shared at presbytery and council meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> Strikethrough text are deletions; underline and bolded text are additions.

**SYNOD OF LIVING WATERS  
ANNUAL MEETING (VIA ZOOM)  
JANUARY 22, 2024**

The meeting was opened with worship led by the Rev. Dr. Andrew Pomerville, the new President of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Dr. Pomerville posed the questions “Is the Church today in winter?” and “Are we only trying new methods to make the Church just like it was?” His answer was an emphatic “No!” Drawing from Psalm 46, Genesis 12, and I Corinthians 7, Dr. Pomerville reminded the assembly that though the Church is not the same, we must not only *believe in* God (*God is*), but *believe* God as we wait to see what God’s promises hold for the future.

The business of the meeting commenced with the adoption of the revision of the synod’s *Manual of Administrative Operations* which is available on the website, [www.synodlw.org](http://www.synodlw.org). Changes included a reworking of the synod’s structure and expansion of the synod’s work. According to Synod Executive, Rev. Greg Goodwiller, “a new Synod Ministries Committee will, among other things, oversee and expand the synod’s work of offering grants from its various reserve accounts, and engaging in ministries opportunities in our region.”

Reports were received from a number of Covenant Partners: Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Mission Agency, Presbyterian Home for Children, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, King University, Maryville College, University of Pikeville, Rhodes College, Tusculum University. The Covenant Partner status was renewed with King University and a new covenant with Presbyterian Children’s Home in Talladega, Alabama was approved.

The report from Living Waters for the World (LFWW) highlighted the growth of the ministry from 164 partnerships in 2004 to 1110 partnerships in 2023. LFWW embodies the relevance of the PC(USA) vision of putting faith into practice and participation in the programs leads to thriving congregations. A new VBS curriculum is being offered with a mission emphasis on children in other lands, building relationships, and sustainability for this generation and beyond. LFWW has established a Legacy Fund endowment to ensure generational support of water partners throughout the world. Churches are encouraged to include this opportunity in legacy and capital campaigns.

Presbyteries, Committees on Ministry, pastors, and churches are encouraged to discuss changes from the Board of Pensions beginning in 2025. Calling this “a season of rebuilding” changes are necessary due to the lack of sustainability of the benefits plan in its current form. Details are available on the website, [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org).

Expect to see enhanced communications shared through the Synod newsletter, *The Virtual Voice*. Rev. Eugenia Gamble reminded the commissioners of the importance of listening and of picking up new life through technology and improved communication. Future plans include featuring bulletin boards and daily devotions. Anyone interested is invited to submit relevant articles for consideration.



The meeting concluded with the adoption of the budget for 2024. The 2025 Annual Synod Meeting will be held, weather permitting, in person in the Nashville area on January 27, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Sharon Schuler, HR and Judith Baldwin  
Synod Representatives for the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

**Commission on Ministry Report**  
*Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley*  
May 2024

**Information Items:**

1. Approved the Rev. Cary Speaker to serve communion in his role as Chaplain of Kirkwood by the River.
2. Approved the Rev. Jonathan Yarboro to serve as moderator of First, Alexander City.
3. Approved the Rev. Tom Tewell to labor in the bounds of Sheppard and Lapsley at Independent, Birmingham while the Rev. Kevin Long is on sabbatical.
4. Interviewed Independent, Birmingham's APNC and approved their Ministry Discernment Profile for Associate Pastor.
5. Interviewed First, Eufaula's PNC and approved their Ministry Discernment Profile for Pastor.
6. Conducted exit interview with the Rev. John Allen Bankson and prayed God's blessing on his new call to Union Presbyterian, Ft. Madison, Iowa.
7. Met with Keenan Rodgers of the Board of Pensions to review changes to health benefits beginning in 2025. *(A copy of Keenan's presentation to the COM is attached and will be reviewed in summary.)*

**Action Items:**

1. Approve the Rev. Bruce McLendon to be declared Honorably Retired.
2. Approve the Rev. Richard Hanna to be declared Honorably Retired.
3. Approve terms of call for the Rev. In Chan Bae, installed pastor of Korean Presbyterian Church of Birmingham.
  - a. Effective Salary, \$45,000.00; Board of Pensions Dues, \$17,550.
  - b. At its May 2023 stated meeting, this body examined and approved the Rev. Bae to serve as pastor for the Korean Presbyterian Church of Birmingham; however, the COM neglected to present terms of call at that time.
  - c. Rev. Bae was installed on August 13, 2023.
4. Examine and approve the Rev. Lukata Mjumbe, Executive Director of the Alabama African American Civil Rights Heritage Sights Consortium, for Validated Ministry within Sheppards and Lapsley.

Respectfully submitted,

*Carl G. Martin*  
Moderator

PASTORAL CALL FORM

(Updated 6-2019)

Presbytery of Sheppard's & Lapsley Presbyterian Church (USA)

The Korean Presbyterian Church of \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (City, State), being well satisfied with your qualifications for ministry and  
 confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose service will be profitable to  
 the spiritual interests of our church and fruitful for the Kingdom of our Lord, earnestly and  
 solemnly calls you, In Chan Bae to undertake the office of  
Pastor (Pastor, Associate Pastor) of this congregation  
 beginning April 9 2023 promising you in the discharge of your duty all  
 proper support, encouragement and allegiance in the Lord.

That you may be free to devote full time (part-time) to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments  
 among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to provide you the following annually:

Effective Salary for Pension/Medical calculation

Cash Salary

\$ 30,660.-

Housing

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Allowance  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Manse

\$ 15,000.-

(If Manse is checked, put in 30% of total of all other Effective Salary)

Utilities and/or furnishing allowance

\_\_\_\_\_

Deferred Compensation

\_\_\_\_\_

Unvouchered allowances (e.g., bonuses, gifts from employer, books, car  
 medical deductible and co-insurance other than through formal group plan)\*

Child and Elder care, educational loans, house downpayments given, interest savings\* \_\_\_\_\_

Premiums for individual Coverage (including Optional Coverage under the benefits plan) \_\_\_\_\_

SECA Tax Allowance in excess of 50% of SECA obligation \_\_\_\_\_

Any Professional Allowance/expenses listed below which are not  
 part of an accountable/reimbursable plan (For example: auto  
 allowance given in 1/12 amounts)\* \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY**

\$ 45,000.-

CHURCH EXPENSE

Benefit plan dues 3% effective 1-15)

17,550  
~~\$16,650.-~~

SECA Tax allowance up to 50% of SECA obligation \_\_\_\_\_

\*All employees MUST be covered, otherwise premiums are  
 Effective Salary

\*See Understanding Effective Salary Booklet, if in doubt

**CERTIFICATION OF CALL**

**By Presbytery of Call**

By the Presbytery of Sheppards + Lapsley

This call has been reviewed by the Commission on Ministry. The Commission recommends that the presbytery approve this call.

Date of action 4-9-24 (Signed) [Signature]  
COM Moderator

This call was approved by the Presbytery of Sheppards + Lapsley, through action taken by its Commission as authorized by G-3.0307.

Date of action 4-9-24 (Signed) Walter J. Wilkins, Jr.  
Stated Clerk

**By Presbytery of Care or Present Call**

This call has been reviewed by the Commission on (Ministry or Preparation for Ministry). The Commission recommends that the presbytery find it expedient to release \_\_\_\_\_ to accept this call.

Date of action 4-9-24 (Signed) [Signature]  
Commission Moderator

The Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_ hereby finds it expedient to release \_\_\_\_\_ to accept this call and therefore has placed this call in the Teaching Elder/candidate's hands.

Date of action \_\_\_\_\_ (Signed) Walter J. Wilkins, Jr.  
Stated Clerk

**By Candidate**

This is to certify that I have received and accepted the call.

Date of Acceptance 4/9/24 INCHAN BAE [Signature]  
Signature

**STATEMENT OF FAITH**

I believe in the triune God as creator, sustainer and redeemer of all creation. I believe in the one living God that biblical scripture reveals as the champion of the people Israel. I believe that this same God continues to be a liberating God in the lives and the multi-dimensional realities of the globally disinherited and dispossessed today.

I believe that by the power of the Spirit, God was incarnate in Jesus the Christ. I am convinced that the Christ came not to condemn, but as a savior to rescue the world through his life, death and resurrection. I embrace the witness, work and spiritual anointing of Jesus the Christ that proclaims the Good News to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, healing for the broken and freedom for all those that are oppressed.

I believe that God has put all things under the lordship of the Christ as the only head of the Church. The Church's life and mission are a joyful participation in Christ's ongoing life and work of liberation to proclaim the Good News for the salvation of all people, to shelter, nurture, and provide spiritual fellowship for God's children, to maintain divine worship, preserve truth, promote social righteousness, and to joyously exhibit the kingdom of heaven to all the world!

I believe that the Sacraments are visible signs and seals of the presence and power of the Christ that serve as symbols and reminders of God's action. I believe that we connect with God through our Sacraments and that through them God seals us in our redemption, renews our identity as God's people, and marks us for service with the power of the Holy Spirit.

I believe the power and the counsel of the Holy Spirit continues to be readily available to us as believers and as a Church today as we seek to discern and build the kingdom and "kin-dom" of God. We must not quench the Spirit in our worship, work or study of Holy Scripture.

I accept the authority of Scripture and believe that the Holy Bible is the Word of God written, witnessing to God's self-revelation. I believe the Scriptures are true and reliable witness of God's unfolding plan that should be considered theologically and with full exegetical consideration of genre, original context and present application.

I embrace the Confessions as statements subordinate to the authority of Jesus Christ and Scripture. The Confessions enable me to better understand Scripture and the ways the Church has historically interpreted and understood Scripture. With humility and understanding of my perfect imperfection, I embrace the affirmation of

"Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei."

In my "Christian Hope," I am being led to imagine that we are already living in what the Bible describes as the 'end times' which was inaugurated at the life, death, and resurrection of the Christ. I see humanity in an esch+atological struggle in which the ultimate glory of God is being realized. As believers, we are called to witness, work, discover and discern as if the Church has access to the kingdom / kin-dom promises right now.

**Reverend Lukata Agyei Mjumbe**

**April 4, 2024**

## FAITH JOURNEY

My name is “Lukata Agyei Mjumbe” which is a combining of three different African languages and is translated as “dynamic representative sent by God.” It is a name that was given to me 30 years ago when I was in my early twenties by Sundiata Acoli, a political prisoner of the Civil Rights / Black Liberation Movement. I ultimately helped lead a campaign that brought him home after serving 49 years in prison.

I believe that early in my life I was called to serve. As a young person, I was drawn to community service projects, fundraising drives for “Jerry’s Kids” and even presidential campaigns. Influenced by politically conscious parents and a precocious older sister that demanded excellence, I was raised to believe that I was called to help people and change the world. Even though I grew up as a “child of the Church” I did not understand my “service” in a ministerial context. In fact, I fled from any such orientation and sought refuge in politics and other non-ecclesial commitments to social change.

In high school I was elected to serve on the Board of Education as the Student Representative in 1988. I imagined a call to electoral politics and dreamed of being elected the first African American President in 2012. Obama beat me to it four years ahead of my schedule. In college, I became a student activist and community advocate. I committed myself to labor for ‘the liberation and salvation’ of oppressed people. I eventually dropped out of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia in the middle of my senior year to dedicate myself ‘full time to the struggle.’ In 1992, in addition to having run out of scholarship money to pay for my final semester, I believed that I was answering an even greater call to serve.

Over the course of the next several years I faced life changing experiences as an activist frequently targeted for arrest, a homeless man, an orator and lecturer, a husband and a father with a new African name. I was also blessed to receive transformational training as a listener, grassroots community organizer, strategist, leader and organic intellectual rooted in the southeast United States. In addition to my tireless community organizing in the city of Atlanta, in Georgia I served as a national Director of Public Information of the Center for Democratic Renewal, a non-profit organization that monitored white supremacist groups and the far right. I also served as a Human Rights Fellow campaigning against the death penalty for Amnesty International-USA as well as the State Organizer of the Georgia Citizens Campaign on Hunger.

Across multiple southern states I served as a Labor Organizer for the AFL-CIO and as the Coordinator of the African American Environmental Justice Action Network serving 12 states in the southeast. In all my work, I found myself working with and being taught by extraordinary ordinary people often deeply connected to the Church and other faith communities. These ordinary extraordinary folk ultimately encouraged me to go back

and finish college. They did more than speak with their words. They handed me envelopes and balled up handfuls of cash. They passed the plate at the end of community meetings, revivals and church picnics. They let me know that I was to serve as their “dynamic representative sent by God.”

The day after graduating from college in the year 2000, I moved to the Alabama Black Belt. It was there that I had fallen in love with the people and the land. More importantly, I began to feel a call to obedience. I had not yet unpacked it as a spiritual calling but it was compelling beyond my capacity to resist. My family soon joined me as I began to work with Black farmers and rural communities as the Director of the Rural Training & Research Center of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives / Land Assistance Fund. Working with Black farmers I encountered the greatest theologians that I ever met and the first people to reach me in a way that did not lead me to retreat into rebellion. In fact, laying in a hospital bed being prepared for emergency brain surgery in Meridian, Mississippi I finally submitted and called upon the name of Jesus in earnest for the first time. I heard Jesus say, “Ok” and I never ended up needing the surgery. Something even more radical emerged -- I was called to serve in the ministry

Over the course of the next 10 years in Alabama, I divorced, remarried and served as a District Policy Director for a member of Congress, the Executive Director of Alabama’s leading anti-poverty state association and was ordained as a Commissioned Lay Pastor in the Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley. In my last four years in Alabama (2007-2010), I served as the Pastor of Northern Heights Presbyterian Church in Selma and Westminster Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama. In a continuing effort to serve and obey, I quit my job(s), gathered my family and enrolled in Princeton Theological Seminary where I earned my Master of Divinity and Master of Theology. During my time in Princeton I was blessed to study and minister in India, Africa, Israel-Palestine, South America and the Caribbean. I was ordained in the Presbytery of New Brunswick in 2014.

In New Jersey, following seminary I served both non-profit organizations (United Mercer Interfaith Organization (2013-2014), Urban Mission Cabinet, Inc. (2014-2016), The Praxis Project (2016-2017)) and churches (First Presbyterian Church of Irvington (2016-2018), Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church (2018-2023)). In 2023, twelve years after leaving Alabama I returned to serve as the Executive Director of the Alabama African American Civil Rights Heritage Sites Consortium. I committed to serve at least one year before I would consider returning to parish ministry. I do not know what the LORD intends for me in this season of the journey. Nevertheless, my intention is to serve, trust and obey as a dynamic representative sent by God.

Reverend Lukata Agyei Mjumbe

April 4, 2024





# PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY

*“partner with and equip present and emerging PC(USA) faith communities  
in central Alabama to serve Christ and our neighbors”*

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Birmingham, Alabama 35216

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Fax (205)  
978-0330

Dear Friends,

I need your help!

At its meeting on March 12, 2024, the Presbytery’s Commission on Ministry granted me permission to assemble a brief history of the churches of the Presbytery. I hope to include all currently active congregations, as well as reaching back in our history to include congregations present before reunion in 1983 from what was known as the Birmingham Presbytery. My reason for proposing this project is to help us connect with each other across the miles and share how the Holy Spirit has led us in the past and how the Spirit is still guiding us toward the future in the name of Christ.

This will be quite an ambitious undertaking and I did not volunteer to do all the work myself! I am asking pastors, clerks of session, and church members to contribute to this history. As you can see from the attached example, there will be a page for each church. The narrative will be brief, and please limit the references to specific persons (pastors). A picture of the church will be included on the page, but no photos of people, in order to keep the information as objective and timeless as possible. I will reserve the right to edit as needed to fit the available space.

An example of the visual format I propose to use is attached. I encourage you to be creative in your presentation. Please include programs and mission work that is dear to the heart of your congregation. You may also want to share your plans for the future of ministry in your location. This is not meant to be only a rehashing of facts and figures, but will hopefully open us to be inspired in the sharing of visions and dreams with one another.

We plan to make this information available on the Presbytery website as well as provide a printed copy for each congregation. You may send your submissions to me at [revsharon1@gmail.com](mailto:revsharon1@gmail.com) as soon as possible and we will get started with this project.

Please feel free to contact me if there are any questions. I am excited to learn more about each of our churches as we share our stories and get to know one another better as brother and sisters in Christ.

Blessings and peace,

Rev. Sharon Schuler, HR



### **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FORT WALTON BEACH**

First Presbyterian Church of Fort Walton Beach had its beginnings in the spring of 1930, when a group of residents built a non-denominational church with the financial assistance of summer home owners in the area. The church was named Grace Community Chapel.

As attendance grew, Methodist and Baptist ministers preached occasionally, but there was always a Presbyterian minister conducting services both mornings and evenings at least once a month.

On February 1, 1945, the Presbyterians leased Grace Community Chapel, hired a resident minister, and began to grow. On March 20, 1942, the church was organized and by 1944 the chapel was purchased.

As the congregation increased in size land was purchased diagonally across the street on the northwest corner of Beal Parkway and First Street for a new church site. Grace Community Chapel was sold to the Collegiate Baptists and is now occupied by the Salvation Army.

Ground-breaking for the building now known as Fellowship Hall was December 13, 1964. Then, on March 20, 1977, 35 years to the day from the date the church was organized, ground-breaking for construction of the sanctuary took place. An additional building known as the Youth Activities Building or Rigdon Hall was constructed.

The Fort Walton Beach Presbyterian Church grew rapidly in its new location and at the end of 1989 had 337 active members. The Rev. Mr. Bryan H. Mickle is the current pastor.





# A New Benefits Plan to Serve the Changing Church

Keenan Rodgers  
Church Consultant



## Who we are

The Board provides robust benefits and services to PC(USA) churches, agencies, and affiliated employers — like seminaries, colleges, and universities; camps and conference centers; retirement and senior housing communities; and human services organizations.

- ✓ More than 300 years of caring for others
- ✓ Commitment to wholeness and mutual care
- ✓ Benefits reflect living in caring community



**THE BOARD OF PENSIONS**  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

## Why a new Benefits Plan

- ✓ The Church has changed, but the Benefits Plan has not
- ✓ Current dues structure does not support today's congregations
- ✓ Fewer congregations can afford to install pastors
- ✓ Majority of PC(USA) churches did not have an installed pastor

## Season of rebuilding: exploration and engagement



- ✓ Initiative launched in 2023 to restructure the Benefits Plan to meet the needs of the changing Church
- ✓ Gathered input across the Church

# New Benefits Plan

**Effective Jan. 1, 2025**



**Flexibility  
and choice**



**More pastors  
may receive  
benefits**



**May lower  
costs for  
congregations**



**Improves  
parity**

# Two new dues packages

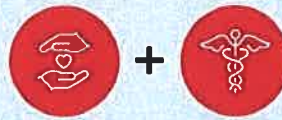
## Covenant Package



An entry point  
into the  
Benefits Plan

Any eligible  
employee

## Congregational Pastors Package



Required for  
installed pastors

May be offered to  
any eligible  
congregational  
pastoral leader



# Covenant Package

## Benefits include



Defined  
Benefit  
Pension Plan



Death &  
Disability  
Plan



Temporary  
Disability  
Plan



Employee  
Assistance  
Plan



Assistance &  
Education  
programs

# Covenant Package

## Eligibility



Any employee  
20 hours per  
week

## Dues



10% of effective  
salary  
paid entirely  
by employer

# Congregational Pastors Package



## **Noncontributory dues package**

### **Eligibility**

Required for installed pastors

Available for any congregational  
pastoral leader scheduled to work  
20 hours or more per week

# Congregational pastoral leader

A minister or commissioned pastor employed by a congregation and sanctioned by the presbytery

# Congregational Pastors Package

## Benefits



PPO medical coverage for congregational pastoral leader  
+  
All benefits in Covenant Package

## Dues



16% effective salary for medical  
+  
10% for income protection  
  
Paid entirely by congregation

# Congregational Pastors Package



## **Dependent Coverage**

May offer medical coverage for spouses and children

Congregation may choose to pay all, some, or none of the cost

Flexibility to offer benefits needed without paying for benefits not needed

# Congregational Pastors Package

## Dependent Medical Coverage 2025 dues



Child(ren)  
\$8,950



Spouse  
\$11,000



Family  
\$20,600

# Congregational Pastors Package

## 2025 Member and Dependent Medical Dues

Coverage Level	Dues	Combined Minimum Dues	Combined Maximum Dues
Member-only	16%	\$6,000	\$17,000
Member + Child(ren)	16% + \$8,950	\$14,950	\$25,950
Member + Spouse	16% + \$11,000	\$17,000	\$28,000
Member + Family	16% + \$20,600	\$26,600	\$37,600

Plus 10% for income protection benefits



# Transitional Pastor's Participation

- ✓ Optional three-year dues structure
- ✓ Helps transition from current dues structure to new one
- ✓ Available to employers who have a minister in Pastor's Participation as of Dec. 31, 2024



# Transitional Pastor's Participation

## Medical Dues

Year	Percentage	Minimum Dues	Maximum Dues
2025	33%	\$15,000	\$43,000
2026*	No less than 37%	\$18,000	\$50,000
2027*	No less than 41%	\$21,600	\$57,000

Plus 10% for income protection benefits

*\*2026 and 2027 rates are minimums (subject to future Board of Directors approval)*

# Death, Disability & Life Plans changes



- ✓ Better meet the needs of the changing Church
- ✓ Improve benefits offered through the Board of Pensions
- ✓ Bring parity to all Benefits Plan members

# Death benefits changes

## **Lump-sum death benefit**

- ✓ Maximum salary increased:
  - \$110,000 to IRS compensation limit
- ✓ The value of this benefit has increased for survivors of members age 50 to 64

# Death benefits changes

## **Supplemental death benefits**

- ✓ Dues reduced by 10%
- ✓ Employers may pay some, none, or all of the cost

# Disability changes

## Death and Disability Plan

- ✓ Disability benefits based on actual salary, up to the legal maximum
- ✓ Maximum salary used to calculate benefit increases:
  - \$110,000 to IRS compensation limit



# Disability changes

## Death and Disability, Long-Term Disability & Temporary Disability plans

- ✓ Disability benefit increases from 60% to 70% of actual or median salary (whichever is greater)
- ✓ Waiting period reduction from 14 to seven calendar days

# Median effective salary

## Promotes community nature



Benefits dues

Medical deductibles

Pension credit accrual

Death and disability  
benefits



One median  
effective salary to  
calculate benefits

Based on the  
congregational  
ministers' median



# Additional plan changes



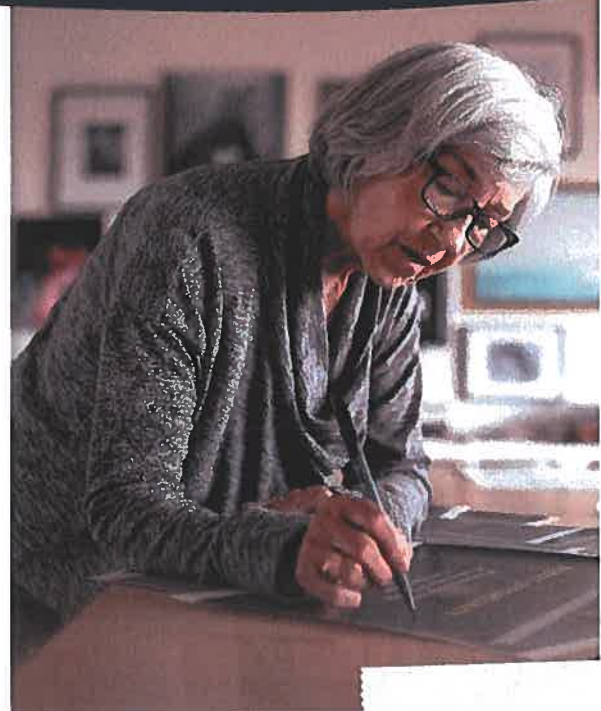
## Member couples

- Family coverage is no longer mandatory
- Need for member couple status has been removed
- No longer receive enhanced medical and prescription drug benefits

# Additional plan changes

## Post-retirement service rule

- ✓ Retired members receiving their pension benefit who wish to return to work 20 or more hours per week
- ✓ May return to work in a temporary, non-installed position at a church other than their pre-retirement employer
- ✓ Approval from Board of Pensions no longer needed



# Innovative ministries

## Benefits Grants for Organizing Pastors and Evangelists

- Grants provide benefits support for up to five years
- Supports ministers as they work to spread the gospel and develop new congregations

# Innovative ministries

## Pathways to Renewal

- Sunsetting as new Congregational Pastors Package approximates the subsidy for small churches
- Those enrolled in Pathways to Renewal as of Dec. 31, 2023, will continue in that dues structure for the approved five-year window or until the dissolution of the call

# Innovative ministries

## Shared Ministry Program

- Offers benefits support when two or more congregations partner to provide full-time employment to a minister
- Positions may be installed or non-installed
- Benefits dues subsidy:
  - 50% of the cost of pastoral benefits
  - Up to a maximum of \$10,000 per year per call
  - Three years

# Considerations for Committees on Ministry

## When applying the 2025 Benefits Plan to ministerial calls

- Look at the context as each situation may be different
- Remain flexible regarding individual pastoral calls
- Engage pastors and churches about the benefits they need
- Consider a COM strategy for deciding terms of call

## Next steps

### Conversations to support faithful decision-making



Talk with  
presbyteries and  
pastoral leaders  
to choose options  
that best meet  
their needs



Church  
Consultants can  
help church  
leaders understand  
the Benefits Plan  
and options

# Resources

Review 2025 Benefits Plan information:  
[seasonofrebuilding.pensions.org](https://seasonofrebuilding.pensions.org)

Call the Board of Pensions:  
800-PRESPLAN (800-773-7752) (TTY: 711)

Keenan Rodgers  
Church Consultant  
[krodgers@pensions.org](mailto:krodgers@pensions.org)  
215-341-8143



### **Statement of Call- Teddy Vaughn**

A statement of the Inquirer's understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to their sense of call. This statement will be the basis of Presbytery's examination at the time the Inquirer is presented to Presbytery for Candidacy.

Vocation and Call are closely related, but one informs the other, and you cannot have one without the other. Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition is one of responsibility and accountability. Much like calling and how it is my agency in this vocation, we are all called. My sense of my call comes from how who I am can be used for the benefit of ministry.

Vocation is a word used to describe my relationship with God and how I work with Them to continue in the creation of a heaven on earth as we await Jesus's return. Vocation is what we are all called to as Christians, but that doesn't mean that you have to be an ordained clergy member to participate in your vocation within God's mission for us all. Our call is how I interpret how I live out that mission and ministry daily. My call was one to a life of ministry, and to do this ministry, I need to be ordained.

I consciously felt a call to ministry when I was in high school. I became more active in my youth group at church and the session. There was a moment at a Montreat youth conference in the summer of 2009 when I heard my call. It came through the radio via the word crystal on the ride home from that conference week, but this narrative starts a year earlier. On our free morning, we would hike Lookout Mountain. Our back-home group always had a group that would hike the mountain; this year, I was a part of that group. One of our adult chaperones also came on the hike; he was a retired PC(USA) pastor, and we were hiking buddies. During our hike, we talked about various things, primarily about the conference, and he mentioned to me that he thought I would make a good pastor one day. At the time, I dismissed this comment as him just trying to compliment me, and he didn't think that. However, despite his knowing it, he planted a seed that continued to grow throughout the rest of the year and into the following summer's conference at Montreat. This conference is where I wrestled with what this idea of being a pastor meant for my life until the end of the conference on the way home on the bus when an awkward 16-year-old individual was praying for a crystal clear sign on whether I should go to seminary. Then, moments later, I heard a voice yell crystal over the radio. I was confused and shocked, especially when I continued to listen to the song, and crystal is nowhere in any of the lyrics of that song. I finally received the answer to the question I was brave enough to ask one summer afternoon in 2009 via a miracle. From that moment on, I had a goal: going to seminary. After that, everything seemed to fall into place. I was offered jobs as an intern in various churches I was a part of from high school into college.

That was the beginning of my call to ministry, and it has taken many twists and turns to get me to where I am now. Since then, my idea of vocation has shifted in unexpected ways. I am still confident that my purpose in life resides in ministry and caring for others in whatever shape that takes. I am called to provide excellent pastoral care to individuals, which is the basis of my ministry and where I operate. I have always known this about myself, even before seminary, and I know I have been given gifts and talents to flourish in this kind of position. When deciding which seminary to go to after college, Columbia Theological Seminary won because it offered a way for me to concentrate on pastoral care. I excelled in this discipline while in seminary and plan to continue to excel in my continued ministry practice.

My passion resides in my connection to souls and how something divine happens when two souls authentically meet. Healing and wholeness are restored when we know that we are not alone in this world. That is why I am called to the work of chaplaincy, where I am awarded the opportunity to be with people in a moment of connection and healing. My goal in this ministry is to teach others how to do this by becoming a CPE educator.

Teddy Vaughn  
My Expression of Faith:  
(based on the Apostle's Creed)

I believe in God, the Parent almighty,  
Creator of all that is and all that is to be.

I believe we have been offered safety and to be in covenant with our God,  
through the act of baptism.  
We enter into a brave new life with purpose and conviction as our sins,  
and the sins of our ancestors are washed away.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, who was conceived by divine works,  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
He suffered under the authorities of this world, was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to hell and shattered it.

On the third day, he rose from hell and death.  
He ascended to heaven  
and is seated with God the Parent almighty. From there, He will offer a new  
relationship with us all.  
He is the one on whom we can depend on.

I believe that Jesus offered himself in the bread and cup of communion,  
as a bridge for us all,  
our bridge to a relationship with God, our Creator.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
and Her work with and through us for the good of the whole.  
I believe in Her mystery and relationship with each of us.  
She weaves her thread through our lives in a way to make sense of the complexities  
of life.

I believe in the Trinity, the three in one,  
And their ability to connect with us and through us,  
By way of the Creator, Son, and Spirit.

I believe in the holy institutional and non-institutional unified church,  
the cloud of witnesses,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.

**Daniel Killilea**

**Statement of Call**

*A statement of the Inquirer's understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to their sense of call. This statement will be the basis of Presbytery's examination at the time the Inquirer is presented to Presbytery for Candidacy.*

I understand the Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition to be...

- Deeply personal
- Hard work that engages the whole person: body, mind, heart, and soul
- A direct connection to and relationship with God (no mediator)
- A practical one that, while rooted in the rigor of academic theology, flourishes in the lived-out expressions of faith in the world
- A historically relevant one that connects experiences of both progress and oppression, requiring those who serve to remember how Christianity has helped Creation and to reconcile how it has created harm
- A holistic understanding of call to care for all of Creation locally and globally – humankind, nature, resources, etc.
- Free of power dynamics/differentials and justice-filled for all, with special attention to those who exist on the margins of society
- Transformational for the one called and the ones who they are called to serve alongside
- Connectional work for a connectional church

This relates to my sense of call because...

- I, too, value the personal – the ‘spark of the Divine’ (Philo) and the “sound of the genuine” (Thurman) within
- I, too, know “the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few” (Mt 9:37; Lk 10:2) as I “do the work [my] soul must have” (Cannon)
- I, too, recognize the priesthood of all believers and am proud to serve alongside all siblings in faith
- I, too, exercise my body and mind as a practical theologian, living out my understanding of what it means to be Christian in a beautiful and broken world
- I, too, grasp the concepts that have laid the foundations for our religion and denomination to be at their current states, and I know – like every humanmade institution – it is/has not all been for good
- I, too, believe we are to be stewards of Creation and yet be more than that as active participants and co-creators in God’s handiwork
- I, too, advocate for the walls of division and injustice to be razed, just as “the curtain of the temple was torn...from top to bottom” (Mt 27:51; Mk 15:38; Lk 23:45), as I seek to build bridges rather than dig ditches and give voice to the voiceless
- I, too, embody the mystical work of the Holy Spirit within and celebrate her inspired work beyond
- I, too, trust the work of relationships I have cultivated in my life to serve as the invitation for an always-open seat at God’s infinite table

**Daniel Killilea**

**Statement of Faith**

*A statement of personal faith that incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition. This should be considered the initial draft of the Statement of Faith that will be presented to Presbytery at the time of presentation for ordination examination.*

I believe in the Trinitarian God – Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer – from whom came human life and all of Creation, past, present, and future.

I believe in God, the Divine Parent of Creation and the omnipotent and omnipresent force that orders all things. God's sovereignty is unmatched in all of history, and yet God knows each person more deeply and more personally than we could ever comprehend. God does not favor any one person or people group but rather loves all despite the sinful ways in which we exist. God is delighted when we are true to our calling, is disheartened when we stray from it, and welcomes us with exuberance like the prodigal's father when we return. God is made known to us in many ways through the writings of scripture, which were both crafted and canonized by human hands to the degree that inerrancy and infallibility are debatable.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the manifestation of the Holy One in human form, who was fully human and fully divine. Jesus came from humble beginnings and lived a life ostracized by some and misunderstood by others. As a Palestinian Jew who lived in the occupation and oppression of the Roman Empire, he preached a version of kingdom that was countercultural to the teachings of the ways in which Jewish law and Rome were intertwined, which ultimately led to his death. Jesus' life and ministry calls all to work for justice for the marginalized and oppressed. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus redeemed all people from the sin that captured us, and our hope is built on his eventual return to conquer its pervasiveness once and for all.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Advocate for humanity and the Encourager that facilitates how our faith expressions show up in the world. The Spirit is the most tangible connection to the Trinity, and she provides moments of witness that God is indeed still at work in Creation. The Spirit sustains us through every experience of joy, sorrow, awe, trauma, disbelief, and more as a reminder that we will never be alone in our times of plenty and need. Just as she hovered over the waters in the beginning, the Spirit hovers over our world today, making ways in the wilderness where there seems to be no path. The Spirit is the divine ether in which opportunities of ministry exist, connecting with both intentionality and serendipity.

I believe the gift of the Church is to secure its people to a stable sense of identity and purpose in Christ Jesus. Without it, the winds of this world would blow people in every direction to follow desires and seek meaning that has a finite end. Like a harbor without moors, this existence is not God's ultimate purpose for humanity. The Church seeks to educate, illuminate, and prepare all of God's beloved children to assume the role of vessels taking the shape of their contents, with God's purpose for individuals and God's will for Creation as the contents. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are two primary ways the Church harkens to ancient, God-inspired practices that connect us with all Christians through time and place, sanctifying our lives and the adoption into God's family. Through this adoption and the professions we make (or are made on our behalf), the salvific waters of baptism claim us with an indelible bond that God will never renounce. Until the day Jesus returns, our eternal hope rests in the one true God – Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer – who knows us, loves us, and empowers us to be agents of God's will to be done here on earth as in heaven.

## Mission Coordinator Report to Presbytery May 9, 2024

1. This Presbytery will host the annual meeting of the Congo Mission Network for 2025. The Presbytery's Congo Mission Team is associated with the Congo Mission Network. The Network supports and coordinates activities of Teams in the US with the Presbyterian Church in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The 2025 Network meeting will be in the fall of 2025, in Tuscaloosa. There will be more information coming in the next months. Please consider attending the 2025 meeting and consider joining our Presbytery's Congo Mission Team.

2. We are asking for the churches in the Presbytery to tell us of their work in combating hunger. Churches are doing a variety of things to mitigate hunger, such as: operating food pantries, sending food and money to food pantries and food banks, participating in Rise Against Hunger projects, gleaning and rescuing food, operating gardens and giving the produce, etc. Please share what your church is doing. We can get ideas from each other. Please send your church's information to: Ralls Coston, Mission Coordinator, [rcoston@pslpcusa.org](mailto:rcoston@pslpcusa.org).

3. The 2024 Pentecost Can-paign will run from May 19 through July 29, 2024. Churches participating in the Can-paign collects cans of food or money (\$1 equals 1 can of food). The churches then give the collection to the hunger program of their choice. Then, by August 10, 2024 inform Ralls Coston, [rcoston@pslpcusa.org](mailto:rcoston@pslpcusa.org) how much your church has collected and where the food was sent. I will compile the results and report to the Presbytery meeting in August. The Pentecost Can-paign is a way to focus us on fighting hunger.

4. The Presbytery will sponsor a Habitat for Humanity house in the Birmingham area for 2024. This will be about 30 houses Presbytery has sponsored. I will ask the Birmingham area churches to contribute money and volunteers for the house construction. Construction will begin Thursday, September 12, 2024 and run for about 8 weeks.

Also, do not forget that the Tuscaloosa chapter of Habitat for Humanity is very active in building houses in Tuscaloosa and repairing roofs in Tuscaloosa, Pickens, Hale and Greene Counties. Please give them a call if your church wants to help in west Alabama.

5. As a member of the Alabama VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters), this Presbytery has been contributing money to the Dallas County Long Term Recovery Group. This LTRG has been working to alleviate some of the long term needs of the people of Selma in recovering from the tornado of January 2023. So far, this Presbytery has contributed approximately \$31,000 to help with 5 cases. The money was spent to pay for the replacement of queen size beds, dining table, washing machines and dryers, roofing and structure repair and a portion of the cost (\$115,000) of a new 2 bedroom house. This money was donated by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and several churches in this Presbytery. We are channeling donations through the Presbytery's Perry/Dallas County Fund.

The Dallas LTRG is comprised of local churches, business people and the United Way. So far, the LTRG has been involved in the construction of 14 houses and roof repairs on 50 houses.

# Pentecost CANpaign

Alleviate Hunger in Central Alabama

May 19, 2024-July 29, 2024

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## Why have a Pentecost CANpaign?

This time of year, the cupboards are **bare** at food pantries across the state.

## What do you do?

Collect and distribute canned goods or other non-perishable food items &/or financial donations to local food pantries. Then by August 7 report the number of cans &/or amount of money collected and distributed. If you collect non-perishable food items that are not “cans”, please estimate the dollar value at 1 can equals \$1. As you collect the food and money, send it to your local food pantries. They need the food now. Send the food collection information to:  
[rcoston@pslpcusa.org](mailto:rcoston@pslpcusa.org).

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**All participating & reporting churches will be recognized at the August 15, Presbytery Meeting.**



**Statement on DEI Law in Alabama**

On March 20, 2024, Governor Kay Ivey signed into law Senate Bill 129. This new state law prohibits Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) offices in the state's universities. It will become effective on October 1, 2024.

As Christians in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), serving in Central Alabama, we humbly and prayerfully submit that this law is a regrettable overreaction to genuinely difficult questions about history, race, and equality. Whatever the real complications involved, those issues can be addressed without the overreach of outlawing and defunding DEI offices. Indeed, we cannot escape the conclusion that this law is political scapegoating instead of providing political leadership for tackling the deep, historic challenges of economic, racial, and gender equality in our state. These challenges continue to be exacerbated by our state's unwillingness to invest in underserved, under-resourced communities.

As believers in Christ committed to obey our Lord's command for care of the least of these (Matthew 25:31-46), we call on our elected officials in Alabama to reject pandering, partisan politics. Instead, we pray for careful consideration of policies that will withstand the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).



# SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 6, 2024

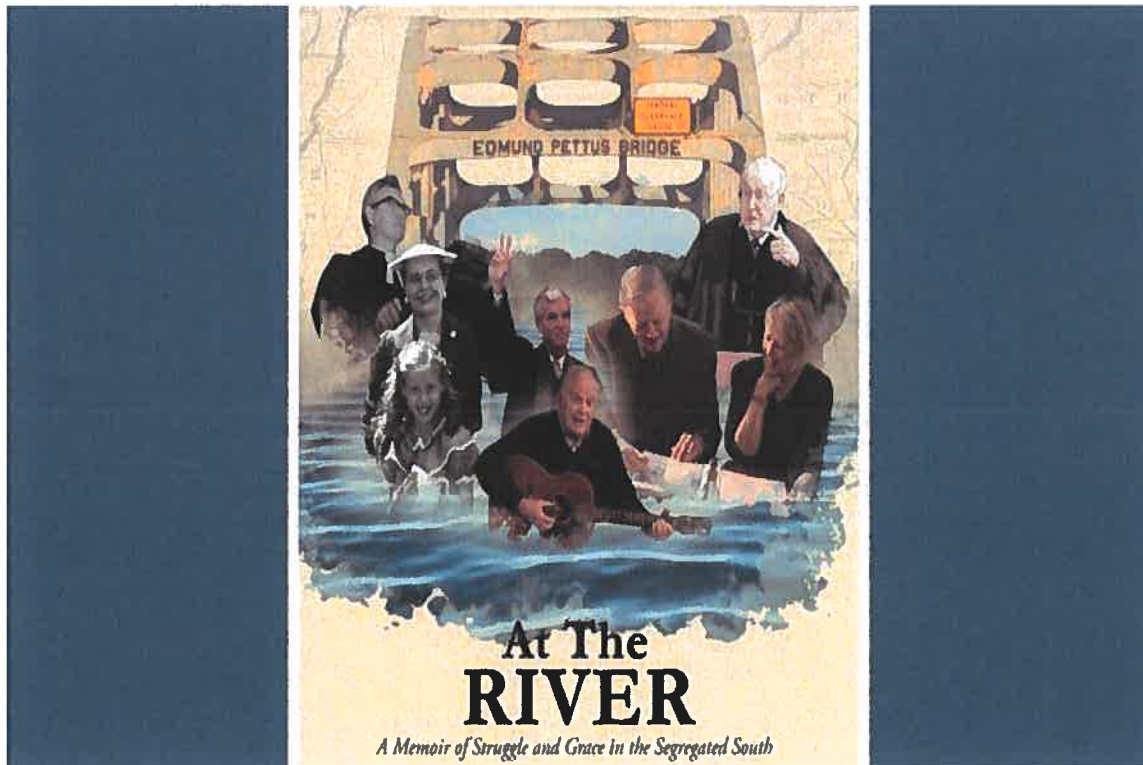
*Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley  
Anti-Racism Committee*

*Presents*

## *“At the River: Grace and Struggle in the Segregated South”*

*A Documentary Film by Carolyn Crowder*

*Please join us for a screening of the film, followed by a discussion facilitated  
by film’s director, Carolyn Crowder. Dinner will be served.*



**Southminster Presbyterian Church**

**1124 Montgomery Highway**

**Sunday, October 6, 2024**

**3:00 P.M.**



**May 2024  
Newsletter**



**Over the last few months, Living River has participated in:**

Friends of Shades Creek Salamander Festival, Cahaba Riverkeeper's 15th Year Celebration, Cahaba River Society's Annual Meeting, Environmental Educators Association of Alabama Annual Conference, Birmingham Parent Magazine Camp Expo, SAIL (Summer Adventures in Learning) Enrichment Fair, Alabama Rivers Alliance Water Rally, and BAMA Kids

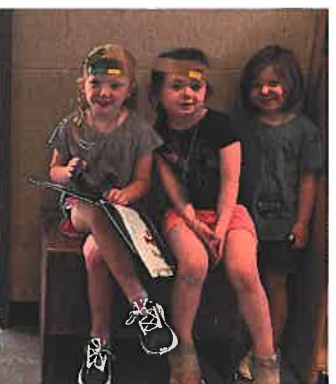
**And visited:**

Immanuel Presbyterian, Gardendale Presbyterian, First Presbyterian Tuscaloosa, South Highland Presbyterian, Riverchase Presbyterian, First Presbyterian Talladega Cahaba Springs Presbyterian, Montevallo Presbyterian, First Presbyterian Eufala, and Mountain Brook Presbyterian



**We would love to visit your church or an organization you're a part of. Invite us to speak, table at an event, or play games with kids you know! Every time we meet new families or groups, and share about Living River's mission, programs, and facilities, we prayerfully grow!**

**Some Spring You & Me Memories! We hope you'll join us next time!**



## Sign your youth or child up for Summer Camp!

There are still many 1/2 off-the-base cost scholarships left for any camper through the Presbytery of Shepherds and Lapsley. They are first come, first serve.

And, please share about Living River Summer Camp with your grandchildren, neighbors, friends, and family. Living River is for everyone!

Summer Camp offers outdoor experiences, faith exploration, environmental education, unique traditions, independence, skill building, and fun. Campers experience canoeing, archery, disc golf, hiking, fossil hunting, swimming, fishing, games, crafts, and more! Living River is a safe space that becomes a home for children and youth where they explore and grow.

Only five more weeks until camp!

Find more information and register online.



**A big THANK YOU to all who have donated toward Living River's Wilcox Co. Scholarship Fund. The Fund has collected over \$12,000 so far, enough for at least 28 campers fully covered. We're working with partner M.I.N.D. (Mentoring in New Dimensions) to recruit campers. It's going to be a great Summer!**

**We've got a great group of counselors for this Summer** led by returning Head Counselor, Abby Bunn!

**Rising high school juniors or seniors, be a Counselor in Training (CIT)!** High schoolers can be CITs at any Elementary or Creative Camp. It's a great opportunity to learn, build confidence, make new friends, and form lasting memories! Visit our website for more information.

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**Join us this year for Living River's annual Cahaba Lily Adult Retreat for outdoor, spiritual, and creative exploration, May 17-19, or for Spring River Fest on May 18!**

9:10 AM- Cahaba Lily Festival (Including Lunch), West Blocton

12:00-7:00 pm- Spring River Fest, Living River

**Ft. Craft Demonstrations and a keynote from the Southeastern Mvskoke Nation**

Come and go or stay all day! More details for both events are on our website.



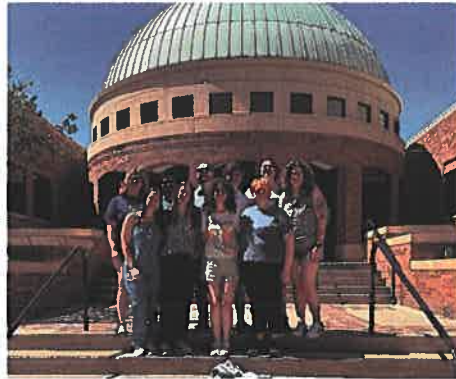
## Living River's Financial Health Year-to-date

Budget Report			
Sources of Funds	Year-to-date 03/31/2024		2024 Annual Budget
Program	18,495	21%	87,000
PSL - Trinity Property	8,379	25%	33,504
Donations	49,492	21%	233,200
Grants	48,000	100%	48,000
Other	813	4%	22,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 125,179</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>\$ 423,904</b>
Uses of Funds			
Personnel & Fees for Services	53,240	22%	237,854
Program Expenses	3,388	9%	37,850
Facilities	27,898	28%	101,349
Mortgage Payments	7,539	23%	33,504
Administration	4,396	33%	13,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 96,461</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>\$ 423,807</b>

Statement of Financial Position		
	3/31/2024	12/31/2023
<b>Assets</b>		
Operating Account	\$ 162,576	\$ 115,972
Capital Account	158,968	158,155
Other Current Assets	-	15,655
New Covenant Endowment Fund	439,032	416,066
New Covenant Scholarship Fund	8,308	7,874
Fixed Assets - Net	6,637,978	6,634,213
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 7,406,862</b>	<b>\$ 7,347,935</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable	\$ 7,871	\$ (6,711)
Program Deposits	13,500	11,100
Payroll Liabilities	3,903	3,580
Oakworth Mortgage	124,905	131,007
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>150,179</b>	<b>138,976</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Net Assets	7,256,683	7,208,959
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 7,406,862</b>	<b>\$ 7,347,935</b>

### Financial Note:

Living River has had a great diversity of rental groups (12 so far this year!) including the Presbytery of Shepherds and Lapsley Spring Youth Retreat (below left), the Presbyterian Student Center at UGA on a Civil Rights Pilgrimage (below center), the Edgewood/Second Presbyterian Women (below right), families camping, and more like The STAY Project (look them up, a really awesome group).



### You Can Support Living River's Mission

**Do you have administrative skills?** We're a small staff! Living River can always use help with mailings, organization, or administrative tasks.

**Be a Living River Bedrock Sustaining Donor** and help cover operational costs so other revenue sources are freed to expand Living River's mission and grow its reach. Last year, Living River's annual giving covered just 67% of its operational costs. Your support goes a long way in growing Living River's ability to grow and reach more people. Become a Bedrock Donor by giving a minimum of \$25 a month or \$300 annually, strengthening Living River's foundation! Donations can be made online or by mailing a check. Sustaining Donors will be recognized annually, first-time donors with a beautiful glass piece like the one pictured right by artist Sherri Van Pelt. **You can find more information about the Bedrock Donor program and a list of "Needs and Dreams" on Living River's website under "Donate."**



## Highlight from Living River's Annual Board Retreat

Thank you to the board members who rolled off at the end of 2023- Brian Massengale, Janet Ort, and J.D. Powell. Your dedication shown through volunteering your time and expertise, encouraging and being a friend to Living River's staff, being a Living River advocate, and giving generosity have brought Living River to where it is now. All who love Living River say, "Thank you!" to you. And, welcome to Living River's new board members- Allen Jones, Marlon Harton, and Blake Westbrook.

Living River's board engaged Suzanne Martin of **transform.** for strategic development, and many of you participated in step one of that work by coming to a listening session or filling out a survey. Thank you so much! Your feedback was key in helping Living River's board rewrite Mission and Vision statements (step two). Here they are for their official debut!

**Mission:** Living River stewards a sacred space on the Cahaba for connection to self, others, nature, and God.

**Vision:** Living River seeks to cultivate generations caring for creation and assured of God's love.



LIVING RIVER  
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

2000 Living River Parkway  
Montevallo, AL 35115



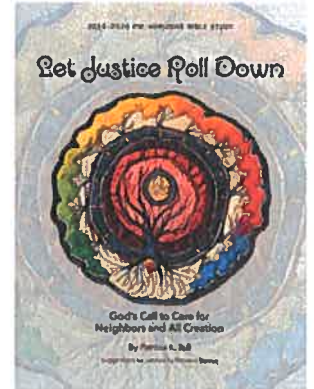
## Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

April 2024

Presbyterian Women are charging into 2024 with energy and hope. As we participate and support our communities with busy hands, prayerful hearts, Bible study and mission, we also are looking to the future.



We are preparing to celebrate our Churchwide Gathering August 8 - 11, 2024, in St. Louis, Missouri. The Bible Study Authors, Patricia Tull [24-25: *Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation*], Rashell Hunter [25-26: *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Identity in Jesus Christ*] and Veda Pendleton [26-27] will present workshops and speak during our meeting times.



Registration has started. Go to <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/> and click on Gathering. There is a scholarship for the registration available for one Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley PW planning to attend. Let me know if you or someone at your church is interested in attending this joy-filled event.

This year, Julianne Tharp, PW member at Edgewood Presbyterian, will be our Representative at the Business Meeting occurring before the Gathering. Thank you, Julianne, for being willing to serve!

Spring is always a busy time at Mission Haven and Columbia Seminary. Come See Columbia Day is occurring as I type. Mission Haven is gearing up with improvements and staff. See the attachments for their newsletter and their salute to long-time missionary and staff member, Glenice Johnson.



This Presbytery is still looking for a representative to the *Columbia Friendship Circle*. PW has a history of over 75 years of supporting CTS students with families. CFC has flourished because Presbyterian Women of throughout our Synod and the Synod of South Atlantic continue to care about these future pastors and their families...with their prayers, their

dollars and their voices. We need to identify one person in Sheppards & Lapsley Presbytery who would be willing to do three things:

1. Share 2-3 email communication pieces per year with the PW and older-adult groups across the Presbytery.
2. Be the voice of the CFC at Presbytery Meetings and reach out to a short list of congregations who have supported CFC in the past
3. Attend (virtually or in-person) our annual board meeting in October at CTS.

Please let me know if you or someone you know would love to support this effort. It's really a very low-maintenance, but vital, Ambassadorship...sharing a few email newsletters and reminding the Presbytery to remember CFC as it continues to bless our future pastors and their families!

Coordinating Council for the PW in our Presbytery is still looking for interested women to assist in renovating the thrust of PW. If anyone is interested in re-forming and re-energizing Women in the Presbytery, please let me know!

For God's Glory

Kathy Tracey, Moderator, PW [PS&L]



**What's New?**

- Volunteers Needed
- Resident Spotlight
- Savannah PW
- Passing the Baton
- Landscaping
- Money Matters
- Recipe Reminder

**Volunteers****Wanted**

Do you have a heart for mission?

We are seeking local volunteers to operate and maintain our 6 apartments and 3 houses. If you, or anyone you know, live in the Atlanta area and are available to assist with repairs and maintenance, managing our team, or furnishing our residences, please contact us — it's meaningful service, and it offers great fellowship.

Use this flyer to spread the word.



Jackson Dimmock

gratitude

# HAVEN HAPPENINGS

*Housing ~ Hospitality ~ Clothing ~ Prayer*

**Mission Haven Newsletter** When God's People Are In Need, Be Ready To Help Them. Always Be Eager To Practice Hospitality. – ROMANS 12:13



Melissa Johnson in Savannah

**Resident Spotlight****Jackson Dimmock**

Recent graduate, Jackson Dimmock (son of Frank and Nancy) has been helping Mission Haven for 14 years! When he was only 4½, his family was here for the summer, and he is seen here with broom in hand. Now, quite a bit taller and more muscular, he's contributing once again.

Jackson has evaluated our gym equipment and bicycle inventory to identify needed repairs.

He is also assisting Susan Adle to re-organize seasonal and toy storage in the apartment basement and will be power washing our campus soon. Thank you!

**Picnic Area Improvement & Expansion**

Time and weather have taken their toll on our outdoor patio. Although the firepit is in good condition, the bricks surrounding the area have been uprooted and create a tripping hazard. Thanks to a generous memorial contribution from Savannah's Presbyterian Women, we have funds not only to repair, but to expand the picnic area. The new space will accommodate up to four tables and will provide room for all residents to gather for fellowship. Stay tuned for progress updates.

Mission Haven is supported and operated by Presbyterian Women in the Synods of South Atlantic and Living Waters.

We rely on YOUR contributions to maintain 3 houses and 6 apartments.

Visit us at [www.missionhaven.net](http://www.missionhaven.net) and "like" us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/missionhaven)!

**Savannah Visit Melissa Johnson**

Presbyterian Women in Savannah Presbytery hosted their annual gathering on January 27<sup>th</sup> with the theme *Close Encounters of the Sacred Kind* and showcased Mission Haven. This year, Melissa Johnson, a former PCUSA mission co-worker who served in Zambia, had the honor of sharing her story and how Mission Haven is a thin place, a place of sacred encounters for the community of mission co-workers and seminary students. She also shared how the PW Thank Offering has empowered and improved the lives of the women of Zambia through health, education, and self-sufficiency.

**Passing the Baton****Nancy & Jodi**

As Glenice, our resident manager, prepares for her next life chapter, she identified the many tasks she has joyfully undertaken while living at Mission Haven for nearly 2 decades.

Nancy Dimmock will assume the role of accepting and coordinating reservations.

Jodi McGill will provide hostess duties to incoming and outgoing residents.

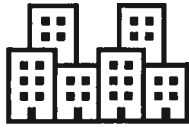
Other tasks await willing volunteers.

**Landscaping Camellias**

Last fall, we removed a large tree that was leaning on one of the houses. In its place and the surrounding area, we have planted three new camellias to beautify our grounds. Special thanks to team member Scott Uthlaut for making this happen!

**Money Matters****Share our Story**

Remember to describe this important ministry to church members, friends, and neighbors.



## Mission Haven Update – April 2024

### FAREWELL CELEBRATION: *Glenice Johnson*

After a career of medical service in the mission field in Congo and Taiwan, Glenice Johnson returned to Mission Haven to recharge and discern next steps. When Mary Elizabeth Etheridge retired as our Resident Manager in 2013, Glenice discovered her new calling. She welcomed incoming missionaries, oriented them to our facilities and the neighborhood, and provided ongoing support during their stay with us. To the children, she became known as “Aunt Glenice.” To the adults, she became a treasured friend.



She nurtured relationships, fostered community, and continued to network with PCUSA mission co-workers as well as missionaries in other organizations. Her inclusive hospitality was evident to everyone.

This month, Glenice is retiring from Mission Haven to live in a nearby retirement community.

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, current and former residents, the local management team, and friends gathered in our Meeting Room to share our appreciation for the great care she has taken of all of the residents, and for her many years of service as resident manager at Mission Haven.

We will miss her greatly, but knowing she is just a few miles away will give her successors a nearby resource as they assume new responsibilities.



*May you find rest and challenge, quiet and adventure. May you be sustained by the achievements of your work life and inspired by the possibilities of what lies ahead. May you allow yourself to experience silence and rest, and may you open yourself to the new music that may emerge from that silence.*



We love and appreciate you, Glenice!

Housing ~ Hospitality ~ Clothing ~ Prayer



Stated Clerk Report  
May 9, 2024

Omnibus Motion

1. Approve the minutes of the February 15, 2024, meeting.
2. To approve absences for today's meeting.
3. To adopt an "Electronic Meetings Rule" for this meeting so that virtual attendees seeking recognition from the Chair be allowed to unmute themselves and call for the attention of the Moderator for recognition and obtaining the floor.
4. To receive and record the minutes of the Commission to install Rev. Caroline Kelly as Pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa on March 3, 2024.

For Information:

1. A change in the Presbytery's Standing Rules was approved in our March 9, 2023, meeting. The change seeks to "achieve parity of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and ruling elders to be enrolled as voting members" at any meeting of Presbytery. The new criteria for determining the number of elders from your church: "Churches with 150 or fewer members shall be represented by one ruling elder commissioned by the session, preferably for a one-year term. Churches with membership above 150 shall be represented as follows: 151-500 - 2 elders; 501-1000 - 3 elders; 1001 and above - 4 elders." **The meetings last year averaged 41 ministers and 43 ruling elders.**
2. The **226th Meeting of the General Assembly** begins via Zoom on June 25 - 27, 2024; then in person through July 4, 2024 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Commissioners will be the Rev. Nick Reed; Ruling Elder Debra Love; and YAAD Abby Bunn.
3. The Stated Clerk continues to review **Session minutes**, and is planning gatherings of clerks and pastors for reading and support. If your Minutes have not been reviewed, [a] you may drop them off at the presbytery office or, [b] call the Stated Clerk to initiate conversations about how to send or bring them to the office. Or, [c] you may do a check list of your own minutes, print, sign, scan, and email them to: statedclerk@pslpcusa.org **The next reading of Session minutes is Saturday, May 11, at Bethel Church in Northport, at 9:30 AM.**
4. **Our Per Capita Assessment for 2024 is \$27.00:** \$9.85 of this goes to the General Assembly, \$3.98 to Synod of Living Waters; \$12.17 to Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley; \$1.00 to Campus Ministry. **What difference does your per capita giving make?** It makes possible our quarterly meetings where the well-being of the church is addressed, where ministers are received, where the mission of our congregations is celebrated, where connections with Living River, the Presbyterian Home for Children, and the Congo Partnership are renewed.
5. Our policies call for **background checks** to be done every three years. The only exemption is for those who are no longer engaged in ministry or who have a documented background check within the last three (3) years. Please contact the Stated Clerk with any questions or concerns you have in regards to background checks.

5. Administrative Commission Reports: Anniston, Fairfield- Highlands, Five Mile, Second

**For action:** from the AC for Five Mile Presbyterian Church:

The Administrative Commission for Five Mile Presbyterian Church requests permission to accept, if the way be clear, a cash offer of \$200,000 for the remaining portion of the Five Mile property. The potential buyer is Pentecostal Temple, LLC, who plans to constitute a worshipping congregation on the site as well as a day care / pre-school. The property is perfectly suited to continue to serve families in the neighborhood. The AC requests permission to have all documents related to sale and closing reviewed by PSL Trustees and be given the authority to execute the contracted sale if the way be clear.

6. The 2023 Statistical Report of churches is attached.

# THE PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY

## Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

### Annual Review of Session Records – Checklist

**TO THE CLERK OF SESSION AND MODERATOR:** Thank you for your important service in maintaining accurate records. The purpose of this list is to aid you and the reader in finding some items to be verified in minutes, rolls, and registers. Please complete this checklist before the review and by including date and page numbers where appropriate. For items that occur regularly (e.g., opening and closing with prayer), the date and page# column may simply give a single representative example. *You do not need to list every occurrence of the item.*

If events, such as regularly scheduled observances of the Lord's Supper or election of a clerk for more than a one-year term, have been approved by previous sessions and no change has been made, check the "N/A" column, and under "Date and Page #," either note the reference from when the action was last taken (if it is in the same minute book), or write "Prior Action." If the authorization of such events is by rule in the session's *Manual of Administrative Operations*, then write "Manual" in the "Date and Page #" column.

Congregation Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Covered in Review: \_\_\_\_\_

	Requirement	YES	NO	N/A	DATE AND PAGE #
1	Stated meetings were held at least quarterly with the date, time, and place of meeting being recorded. [G-3.0203]				
2	Minutes record whether meetings were special (called) or regular (stated), and the purpose for which special meetings were held is stated. [G-3.0203]				
3	Meetings were opened and closed with prayer. [G-3.0105]				
4	Minutes record the approval of minutes from the previous meeting either as distributed/read or as corrected. [G-3.0107]				
5	Minutes are signed by the clerk for the meeting				
6	The session authorizes all observances of the Lord's Supper, which is celebrated at least quarterly. [W-3.0410]				
7	The session authorizes all baptisms, which are appropriately recorded in minutes, rolls, and registers. [G-3.0204, G-1.0401]				
8	Minutes record the reception and dismissal of members and by what method they were received or dismissed (profession, reaffirmation, transfer, removal), and these actions were duly recorded in rolls and registers. [G-3.0201c, G-3.0204a]				
9	Minutes record the approval of all marriages performed in the church's facilities. [W-4.06]				

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>DATE AND PAGE #</b>
10	The session reviewed the roll of active members and counseled with those who neglected membership responsibilities. [G-3.0201c]				
11	Names were appropriately deleted from the roll or moved to an informal list of inactive members. [G-3.0204a]				
12	Commissioners to were elected for presbytery meetings, and they report to the session after the meetings. [G-3.0202a]				
13	Special offerings were approved by the session. [G-3.0205]				

14	Those responsible for various congregational funds reported to the session at least annually. [G-3.0205c]				
15	A Treasurer was elected for a specific term. [G-3.0205]				
16	An annual audit or review of financial records was conducted. [G-3.0205, G-3.0113]				
17	New ruling elders and deacons were trained and examined. [G-3.0201c]				
18	The ordination and installation of ruling elders and deacons – and was recorded in minutes, rolls, and registers. [G-3.0201c, G-3.0204]				
19	A Clerk of Session was elected for a specific term. [G-3.0104]				
20	At least one congregational meeting was duly called by the session and held. [G-1.0501, G-1.0502]				
21	A budget was adopted. [G-3.0113]				
22	The work of the deacons was reviewed. [G-2.0202]				
23	Terms of call for all ministers were reviewed at least annually. [G-2.0804]				
24	Property and liability coverage was obtained. [G-3.0112]				
25	The annual statistical report was completed. [G-3.0202f]				

These items must be recorded in **congregational meeting** minutes:

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>DATE AND PAGE #</b>
26	Minutes of congregational meetings are signed by the secretary of the meeting.				
27	A Nominating Committee was elected. [G-2.0401]				
28	Church members were elected for ordered ministries (Ruling Elders, Deacons) [G-2.0404, G-2.0401]				

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>DATE AND PAGE #</b>
29	The congregation approved any decisions to buy, sell, or mortgage real property [G-1.0503d]				
30	All matters related to the calls of installed pastors were approved by the congregation. [G-1.0503c]				
31	Minutes of congregational meetings were approved by either the congregation or an entity designated by the congregation.				
32	An annual Congregational Meeting was held, with public notice given and a quorum established. [G-1.0501]				
33	Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws have been adopted and conform to the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). [G-4.0101 and G-4.0102]				

REVIEWED BY:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

EXCEPTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

(Use Additional Page If Needed)

BOOK STAMPED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

**Report of the Administrative Commission  
Five Mile Presbyterian Church  
May 9, 2024**

The Administrative Commission for Five Mile Presbyterian Church has not met since our last report, but work towards closing the church continues. The commission is charged with assisting the Session of Five Mile with the closing of the church. The final worship service was held on May 7, 2023. Members of the church have worshipped at Leeds PCUSA and Cahaba Springs PCUSA since that time.

Final legal documentation regarding the establishment of the Five Mile Foundation, a 501c3 entity charged with providing perpetual care for the historic sanctuary and cemetery has been completed. This work was begun by the Five Mile Session and approved by the congregation almost a decade ago. The last piece of that work involves replatting the church property into two separate properties. Once that work is signed off on by governing municipalities, the separation will be complete.

At the August meeting or Presbytery, approval was given to the AC to deed the portion of the Five Mile property containing the cemetery and historic sanctuary to the Five Mile Foundation once the proper legal documentation is completed. As soon as that property separation takes place, the remaining property will be clear for sale. A contract offer for the remaining property has been received.

**MOTION**

**The Administrative Commission for Five Mile Presbyterian Church requests permission to accept, if the way be clear, a cash offer of \$200,000 for the remaining portion of the Five Mile property. The potential buyer is Pentecostal Temple, LLC, who plans to constitute a worshipping congregation on the site as well as a day care / pre-school. The property is perfectly suited to continue to serve families in the neighborhood. The AC requests permission to have all documents related to sale and closing reviewed by PSL Trustees and be given the authority to execute the contracted sale if the way be clear.**

**RATIONALE**

The whole point of handling the sale this way is to avoid the legal fees of transferring the property to PSL, putting it on the market, and then having another closing when it sells. All bills related to the Five Mile property, such as utilities, insurance, lawn maintenance, etc. are being paid by the Five Mile treasurer out of remaining Five Mile funds on hand. As soon as the sale is finalized, all remaining financial assets will be transferred to Presbytery. The AC will ask Presbytery to officially dissolve the congregation and dismiss the AC from its responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jonathan Yarboro  
Chair / Five Mile Administrative Commission  
Pastor / First Presbyterian Church of Wetumpka

**AC Members:**

Sharon Eich  
David Knox  
Daryl Love  
John Tally

**Report of Administrative Commission**

**First Presbyterian Church of Anniston**

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley      May 9, 2024**

**February, 2024**

- The Community Foundation of NE Alabama, partnering with FPC Anniston, met with consulting arborists to determine tree and landscaping hazards to the church property. All rotten and unstable trees were removed; shrubs were removed around the foundations of the buildings.
- Wharton Engineering has been engaged to design and replace the HVAC system throughout the building.
- Pete's painting will repair and paint water damaged walls.
- Susan Williams, Foundation VP of Advancement and Communications, is helping create histories of all the objects and furnishing of the church. She is also doing video recordings of interviews with church members to capture the church's long history.

**March, 2024**

- The annual congregational meeting was held March 15 to present the budget and report that stewardship letters are being mailed to members. Responses may be mailed to the church treasurer.
- The Session met to discuss a proposal to refurbish rooms 100,101,102,103 in the education wing to be used for temporary worship space. Bids for the work are being submitted.
- The Session met with Foundation principals March for building update: The elevator is totally out. No decision has been reached regarding repair or replacement. Decision may be in 4-6 months.
- Easter service March 31 was a "homecoming" prior to the sanctuary being unusable until all renovations are completed. Many former members and family members, including 13 children, attended.

**April, 2024**

- Mitch Rogers, VP of Community Partnerships, reported by email that a burglar broke a window in the church's boiler room and entered the property. The SWAT Team responded quickly, and the burglar was arrested.
- Mitch reports that all asbestos is being removed from the entire building in the coming weeks. Containment areas will be self-contained and pose no health risk during removal. Painting is suspended until all asbestos work is completed (approximately 4-6 weeks).
- The Sunday after Easter, worship area was set up in the Sims Classroom. Chairs, communion table, podium, and piano are in place for weekly worship. This area is designated worship space until further notice.

2023 Presbytery Statistical Report

Appendix B-26

**Presbytery** Sheppards And Lapsley  
**Address** 3603 Lorna Ridge Dr, Birmingham, AL 35216  
**Phone** 205-978-0320 **Fax** 205-978-0330  
**Email** [psl@pslpcusa.org](mailto:psl@pslpcusa.org)  
**Web Site** [pslpcusa.org](http://pslpcusa.org)



<b>Membership</b>			
Prior Active Members	7379	Adjusted membership	7382
<b>Gains</b>		<b>Losses</b>	
Certificate	112	Certificate	50
Youth Professions	21	Deaths	129
Professions & Reaffirmations	78	Deleted for any Other Reason	710
<b>Total Gains</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>Total Losses</b>	<b>889</b>
<b>Total Ending Active Members</b>	<b>6704</b>		
<b>Baptisms</b>		Average Weekly Worship Attendance	1559
Presented by Others	56	Friends of the Congregation	277
At Confirmation	1	Ruling Elders on Session	281
All Other	8	Do you have Deacons? Yes / No	8 / 23
<b>Age Distribution of Active Members</b>		<b>People with Disabilities</b>	
17 & Under	132	Hearing impairment	113
18 - 25	321	Sight impairment	29
26 - 40	686	Mobility impairment	109
41 - 55	585	Other impairment	183
56 - 70	984		
Over 70	1334	<b>Gender Distribution</b>	
<b>Total Age Distribution</b>	<b>4042</b>	Women	2848
		Men	2159
		Non-Binary	9
<b>Youth in Congregation</b>			
Age 4 and under	215	Middle School (6th – 8th grade)	154
Elementary School (K-5th grade)	253	High School (9th – 12th grade)	197
		<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>819</b>
<b>Racial Ethnic</b>			
Asian/Pacific Islander/South Asian	41	Native American/Alaska Native/Indigenous	5
Black/African American/African	229	White	4528
Middle Eastern/North African	3	Multiracial	13
Hispanic/Latino-a	14		
		<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>4833</b>
<b>Budgeted Income</b>	<b>11,791,270</b>		
<b>Budgeted Expense</b>	<b>12,085,370</b>		
<b>Receipts</b>			
Regular Contributions	10,293,294	Bequests	1,826,335
Capital Building Fund	1,132,232	Other Income	1,439,226
Investment Income	10,173,875	Subsidy or Aid	32,199
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Local Program	9,018,665	Investment Expenditures	350,890
Local Mission	1,455,544	Per Capital Apprt	193,921
Capital Expenditures	2,413,551	Other Mission	424,006



General Presbyter's Report for the May 9, 2024 stated meeting of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley at Oakmont Chapel  
Sue Westfall  
4/19/2024

Friends,

As it happens, I will not be present for this May meeting. When the date needed to be changed the new date conflicted with my son's commencement from college and this mama was already scheduled to be in Tucson, Arizona, throwing a party for, and attending the festivities around his graduation from the University of Arizona. I love seeing you all as we gather to attend to our communal spiritual life and to attend to the business of the presbytery and I am sorry I will need to miss. You'll be in my prayers from afar.

Here is some of what I see from where I sit:

- Since we last met in February at the Northern Heights Presbyterian Church building in Selma, (and a grateful shout-out to our Anti-Racism Committee and Debra and Darryl Love for your parts in pulling that off) our churches have observed Lent and Easter in various and very meaningful ways. From weekly Lenten Bible or book studies, to deep and beautifully moving contemplative worship during Holy Week, to the glorious strains and brass and shouts of "Alleluia, he is risen indeed!" on Easter Sunday – from all that we would have to have been doorknobs if our hearts were not strangely warmed and our walk with Jesus not strengthened and deeply nourished.
- And now we are in Eastertide. I pray that you experience the unfathomable joy that Christ's risen life, and our risen lives in him, instills.
- Our new office neighbors – the Caminos Program of the Presbyterian Home for Children – are getting moved into their newly furnished rooms on the other side of the presbytery's suite of offices. A Director for the Caminos Program is soon to be named and they will be off and running. We look forward to welcoming these new neighbors and the vital work they will be doing reuniting unaccompanied minors with family and/or other appropriate placements across the United States.
- While we're speaking of the property, Ralls Coston has planted a series of crepe myrtle and tea palms to replace the Bradford pear trees that were taken out by a young driver who could not navigate the hill and curve (thankfully, he was not hurt!). Check them out next time you're in the neighborhood (though they are still quite small and you may have to squint to see them.) (God will take care of the growth.) And thank you to Bill Stribling for replacing the mailbox also taken out in the same incident.
- The Trustees have been working overtime! As a sample, they are assisting Second and Edgewood with their merger, preparing the property of the former Fairfield Highlands for transfer to the presbytery and sale, and problem-solving a

“lease to buy” situation at the former Center Point Church which hasn’t been working out.

- In addition to the items they’ll bring before you today, the COM has been assisting pastors and congregations in understanding and responding to the significant changes to our Board of Pensions benefit plan. Stay tuned!
- We have four pastors who will be on sabbatical at some point this year – Kevin Long (IPC), Tom Bryson, (Southminster) and Joe Genau (Edgewood), and Lou Ann Sellers (First Tuscaloosa). I bring this up to commend these congregations for recognizing the vital importance of this kind of focused time away for the health and vitality of pastors’ ministries and lives, and that of the churches.
- The Executive Council at its last meeting had a lively discussion about the many ways the presbytery is seeking to embody Matthew 25 commitments. As part of this presbytery meeting they will be inviting congregations (whether they’re declared Matthew 25 congregations or not) to lift up what is happening in your locale around Congregational Vitality, Eradicating Systemic Poverty, and Dismantling Structural Racism.
- Our congratulations to Ron Wilson on his recent marriage to Amelia. Ron is a temporary member of our Presbytery serving Carbon Hill.
- We were saddened by the death of minister member Catherine Oliver’s husband, Mike Oliver on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 of Lewy Body Dementia. Mike was an investigative reporter and a spokesperson and fund raiser for Lewey body research. Our prayers are with Catherine and her family.
- Finally, we’re retiring two long-time pastors in this presbytery – Bruce McClendon and Richard Hanna. Bruce is retiring from First, Alexander City, and Richard is retiring from a chaplaincy at Kirkwood by the River. Well done, good and faithful servants!

As ever in prayer,

Sue



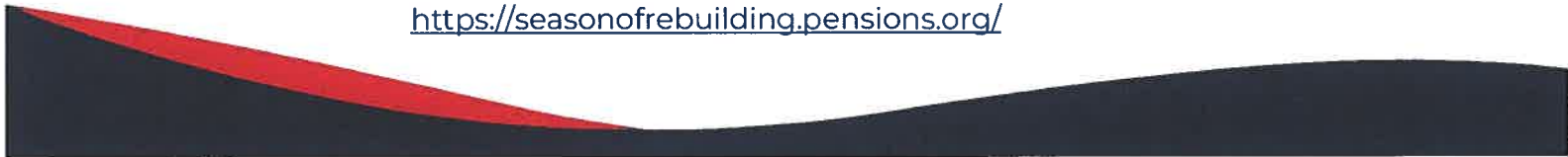
# Season of Rebuilding: A New Benefits Plan to Serve the Changing Church

Pastors and church leaders/elders are invited to a one-hour orientation about upcoming changes to the Benefits Plan of the PC(USA). The same presentation will be shared at each session.

- Wednesday, May 15 at 4:00pm, Southminster Presbyterian Church, Birmingham
- Thursday, May 16 at 9:30am, Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Montgomery

Keenan Rodgers | [krodgers@pensions.org](mailto:krodgers@pensions.org) | 215-341-8143

<https://seasonofrebuilding.pensions.org/>



**UKirk Birmingham Report**  
May 2024

UKirk Birmingham just finished up its school year of events on April 18th. We went to a rage room so that we could release all the stress from this past year to be able to start fresh. We are in discussions about what next year will look like for UKirk Birmingham and are starting to plan for that. We will still meet over the summer so the students can keep in touch with them and keep them engaged. We are looking forward to a new academic year and thank you all for all of your support throughout this year. If you know of any college-aged individuals who may be interested in learning more about UKirk or would like to get involved please direct them to our instagram @ukirk\_bhm or our website [ukirkbirmingham.org](http://ukirkbirmingham.org).

Date : 04/26/2024  
Time : 11:00:11 AM

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley  
Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - Summary  
January to March 2024

Appendix B-30

Accounts	MTD Actual (This Year)	MTD Budget (This Year)	YTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Budget (This Year)	YTD Budget/Actual (This Year)	Annual Budget (This Year)
<b>Revenues</b>						
General Fund	\$14,378.44	\$21,183.49	\$71,800.65	\$63,550.47	\$8,250.18	\$254,202.00
NCD Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mission Giving-Income	\$1,563.97	\$1,851.92	\$8,255.27	\$5,555.76	\$2,699.51	\$22,223.00
Per Capita Income	\$11,327.95	\$15,987.83	\$45,540.28	\$47,963.49	(\$2,423.21)	\$191,854.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$27,270.36</b>	<b>\$39,023.24</b>	<b>\$125,596.20</b>	<b>\$117,069.72</b>	<b>\$8,526.48</b>	<b>\$468,279.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
<b>Council</b>						
Council Expenses-Other	\$0.00	\$806.25	\$0.00	\$2,418.75	\$2,418.75	\$9,675.00
<b>Salaries &amp; Allowances</b>						
Executive Presbyter	\$10,868.75	\$10,771.83	\$31,735.54	\$32,315.49	\$579.95	\$129,262.00
Missional Development Exec	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Administrative Salaries	\$1,050.00	\$350.01	\$1,050.00	\$1,050.03	\$0.03	\$4,200.00
Benefits - Administration	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Staff Expenses	\$0.00	\$350.00	\$0.00	\$1,050.00	\$1,050.00	\$4,200.00
<b>Total Salaries &amp; Allowances</b>	<b>\$11,918.75</b>	<b>\$11,471.84</b>	<b>\$32,785.54</b>	<b>\$34,415.52</b>	<b>\$1,629.98</b>	<b>\$137,662.00</b>
<b>Total Council</b>	<b>\$11,918.75</b>	<b>\$12,278.09</b>	<b>\$32,785.54</b>	<b>\$36,834.27</b>	<b>\$4,048.73</b>	<b>\$147,337.00</b>
<b>Equip, Nurture, Connect</b>						
Other ENC Expenses	\$1,880.88	\$1,683.34	\$5,338.26	\$5,050.02	(\$288.24)	\$20,200.00
<b>Total Equip, Nurture, Connect</b>	<b>\$1,880.88</b>	<b>\$1,683.34</b>	<b>\$5,338.26</b>	<b>\$5,050.02</b>	<b>(\$288.24)</b>	<b>\$20,200.00</b>
<b>Mission</b>						
UKirk Birmingham	\$2,151.26	\$2,460.84	\$5,864.60	\$7,382.52	\$1,517.92	\$29,530.00
Trustees	\$5,152.56	\$4,787.42	\$16,166.74	\$14,362.26	(\$1,804.48)	\$57,449.00
Anti-Racism	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Presbytery Per Capita Expenses</b>						
Stated Clerk & Moderator	\$3,201.88	\$2,234.15	\$6,891.36	\$6,702.45	(\$188.91)	\$26,810.00
Presbytery Commissions	\$551.43	\$374.98	\$560.34	\$1,124.94	\$564.60	\$4,500.00
Asst.to Stated Clerk/Ofc Mgr	\$5,231.24	\$5,110.66	\$15,693.72	\$15,331.98	(\$361.74)	\$61,328.00
<b>Total Presbytery Per Capita Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,984.55</b>	<b>\$7,719.79</b>	<b>\$23,145.42</b>	<b>\$23,159.37</b>	<b>\$13.95</b>	<b>\$92,638.00</b>
Per Capita-Expenses	\$6,017.99	\$8,473.50	\$24,193.32	\$25,420.50	\$1,227.18	\$101,682.00
Mission Giving-Expenses	\$1,563.97	\$1,851.92	\$8,255.27	\$5,555.76	(\$2,699.51)	\$22,223.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$37,669.96</b>	<b>\$39,267.40</b>	<b>\$115,749.15</b>	<b>\$117,802.20</b>	<b>\$2,053.05</b>	<b>\$471,209.00</b>
<b>Net Operating Total</b>	<b>(\$10,399.60)</b>	<b>(\$244.16)</b>	<b>\$9,847.05</b>	<b>(\$732.48)</b>	<b>\$10,579.53</b>	<b>(\$2,930.00)</b>
<b>Other Revenues</b>						
Designated Income (Loss)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$163.52	\$0.00	\$163.52	\$0.00
Gain on Debt Forgiveness	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Other Revenues</b>	<b>\$2,485.10</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$7,628.49</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$7,628.49</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>						
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,585.78</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$8,378.67</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$8,378.67)</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>(\$13,500.28)</b>	<b>(\$244.16)</b>	<b>\$9,096.87</b>	<b>(\$732.48)</b>	<b>\$9,829.35</b>	<b>(\$2,930.00)</b>