

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*



**Winter Stated Meeting
February 19, 2026**

**First Presbyterian Church
Talladega, AL**

THE PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY
PROPOSED DOCKET / FEBRUARY 19, 2026
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TALLADEGA, AL

Please silence all cell phones and electronic devices

9:00 AM Registration

9:30 AM Call to Order and Opening Prayer Moderator Jonathan Yarboro
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. To approve the minutes of the November 20, 2025 stated meeting;**
- 2. To approve the requests for absences from today's meeting;**
- 3. To accept the invitation of Southminster Presbyterian Church to host the meeting of the Presbytery on Thursday, May 21, 2026; and to accept the invitation of First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa to host the meeting of the Presbytery on Thursday, August 20, 2026.**

9:45 AM Welcome from Host Church The Rev. Leeann Scarbrough

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Prelude Kenny Lewis

Call to Worship Jonathan Yarboro

The journey of Lent is a journey inward, to examine our hearts.

The journey of life is a journey outward, spending our lives for the sake of love.

Lord, gather us in honest and faithful community.

Prepare us to be people of hope and grace, and kindle in us the courage to live as faithful disciples.

†Hymn 2 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

†Time of Confession Suzanne Cornett

With humble hearts, let us confess our brokenness, our selfishness, and our sin.

Loving God, you call us to a time of examination and preparation, but we resist, full of our own agendas. You alone know the ways in which we have sinned. We would rather argue about your instructions than live by them. We would rather ignore the hurting people around us than take the time and effort to be with them. We are quick to make excuses as if we are afraid of the hard work of discipleship. We continue to participate in unjust systems and refuse to speak up for those who can't. Forgive us. Renew us. Transform us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

†Assurance of Forgiveness

†Sung Response 582

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

***Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.***

Prayer for Illumination

Brenda Uptain

Scripture

Ezekiel 37:1-10

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Leeann Scarbrough

Affirmation of Faith (from Romans 8)

I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Necrology Prayer and Report

Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek

Holy Being, who called all us into life,
from the first Adam and Eve to the babies born around the world this morning,
you have labored and we have been born; holy is your name in all the earth.

We thank you this day for all who have shown us your way.

Abraham and Sarah heard your call and ventured to new places,
even when they were old.

We listen for your call today.

Miriam and Moses danced and led your people from suffering
toward a new promise.

We await a vision of your burning fire today.

Deborah fought, Samuel prayed, and they led in different ways.

We are preparing to lead this day.

David and Bathsheba sinned and were forgiven.

We confess our sin and long for your grace today.

Amos spoke and Esther stood tall for the sake of justice.

We open ourselves to your strength today.

Mother Mary and Brother Jesus accepted your call.

We attend to your word this day.

Peter and Paul, Magdalene and Lydia,
and saints through the ages picked up their cross.

We pray that we might faithfully follow today.

Holy Being, hear now the names of those
who faithfully answered your call to ordered ministry in this life,
and in the life of our Presbytery,
The Necrology of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley is read aloud.
We give thanks to you that their baptism is now complete.
We give thanks for their lives and service,
for all in them that was good, and kind, and faithful,
and we commend them to your eternal and merciful care.

**Holy Being, who called us into your holy life through the saints in our lives,
be born anew to us, that we might serve all your saints:
the hungry and thirsty, the sick and imprisoned,
the naked and forgotten,
to honor to your holy name in all the earth. Amen.**

†Hymn 546 For All the Saints (vss. 1, 4, only)

Honor the retirement of the Reverend Richard Atkerson. (Dana Waters, Ed Hurley, Cort and Abby Gatliff)

†Hymn 546 For All the Saints (vs. 6 only)

Installation of Moderator Terry Hamilton-Poore, Vice Moderator Jothany James, and Stated Clerk Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek (in the worship folder)

Presentation of stole and gavel	Jonathan Yarboro
Words from outgoing moderator	
Words from incoming moderator	Terry Hamilton-Poore

Invitation to Generosity and Prayer of Dedication Terry Hamilton-Poore
As we prepare to offer our gifts to God, let us pray: **We give you thanks, O God, that you have given us the resources to do the work you call us to do. Fill us with your Spirit, that we might be alive and eager to live as your disciples. Accept our gifts and use them for justice, mercy, and peace. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

(50% of the offering goes to CPM for candidates and 50% is used as a Presbytery discretionary fund for pastoral care. Mail checks to the Presbytery office or donate online at: <http://pslpcusa.org/online-giving-paypal> Please give generously.)

†Doxology 607

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all creatures here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Tri-une God, whom we adore. Amen.*

Invitation to the Table Leeann Scarbrough and Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Lord's Prayer
Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and the Cup
(You will be served in your seat. Please do not pass the elements over the partition in the middle of the pews. Instead pass the plate to the person farthest from the aisle, and as it is returned, take some bread and a cup. Gluten free bread is available—let one of the servers know if you need it. You are invited to partake of each element as soon as you receive it.)

Prayer after Communion

†Hymn 292 God of Grace and God of Glory

Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Liturgical Sources: Call to Worship, The Book of Common Worship, 2018

Leading Worship:

Kenny Lewis, Organist, First Presbyterian Church, Talladega and Director of Music and Organist, South Highland Presbyterian Church
Jonathan Yarboro, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka
Suzanne Cornett, Elder, South Highland Presbyterian Church and Senior Director of Development, Presbyterian Home for Children
Brenda Uptain, Elder, First Presbyterian Church, Talladega
Leeann Scarbrough, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Talladega
Terry Hamilton-Poore, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham
Marilyn Tucker-Marek, Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

MINISTRY WITHIN OUR PRESBYTERY

- 11:00 AM Transition Search Committee – General Presbyter Jane Clayton
The Search committee recommends Rev. Dr. Mark McCormick for the position of General Presbyter effective April 1, 2026. Terms of Call: Salary and Housing \$80,000; BOP \$23,425, SECA \$6120, Continuing Education \$2400, General Presbyter Travel \$3200. TOTAL PACKAGE \$115,145
- 11:20 AM Executive Council (page 6) Jonathan Yarboro
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.
- 11:35 AM “Good News” Moment Mission Coordinator (page 10) Ralls Coston
- 11: 45 PM Nominating (page 12) Caroline Kelly
**The Committee nominates the following to fill a new term as indicated:
Anti-Racism Committee
Class of 2028
Lukata Mjumbe***
- Election of Bills and Overtures Committee 2026 Terry Hamilton-Poore
Susan Clayton*, Jim Toomey - First, Birmingham, Deborah Thomas - First, Auburn
- 12:00 PM Lunch
- 1:00 PM Enrichment – The History of the Presbytery’s Relationship with the Congo
- 1: 40 PM General Presbyter's “Good News” Moment (in worship folder) Sue Westfall
- 1:45 PM Commission on Ministry (page 13) deNay Kirkpatrick
**1. Approve the Supply Relationship List for 2026.
2. Approve the request from Lindsey Becker-Brady to lay aside her ordination (G-2.0507) and remove her from our roll.**
- 2: 00 PM Presbyterian Home for Children “Good News” Moment (pages 16-20) Doug Marshall
- 2: 05 PM Living River “Good News” Moment (pages 21-24) Rachel Mathews
- 2: 10 PM Stated Clerk (pages 25-36) Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek
1. Reports from Administrative Commissions (page 26)
 2. New Business from Bills & Overtures (pages 27-36)
Action Item: Overtures to the 227th General Assembly, “Changing Course for a Green Future” and “The Green Future Endowment Fund,” presented

for the concurrence of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley by: The Rev. Sam Hamilton-Poore, Teaching Elder serving Montevallo Presbyterian Church; Jim Carnes, Ruling Elder Commissioner to Presbytery from First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham; and The Rev. Leanne Pearce Reed, Teaching Elder and Co Pastor serving Southminster Presbyterian Church.

3. Minutes Review Plan

3:00 PM Adjournment with Prayer

Moderator Terry Hamilton-Poore

†Please stand, if able

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

We wish to extend a special thank you to Rev. Leeann Scarbrough, the staff, and the volunteers of First Presbyterian Church, Talladega for hosting the Presbytery meeting today. We would also like to thank Kenny Lewis, Organist, Jonathan Yarboro, Suzanne Cornett, Brenda Uptain, Terry Hamilton-Poore and Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek for participating in today's worship service.

**Next Stated Meeting - May 21, 2026
Southminster Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, AL**

Installation of Moderator, Vice Moderator and Stated Clerk of Presbytery

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer males and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. 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. 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.

CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

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. The call of Christ is to willing, dedicated discipleship. Our discipleship is a manifestation of the new life we enter through baptism. Discipleship is a gift and a commitment, an offering and a responsibility. **Terry, Jothany and Marilyn**, 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 which *serve* Christ. God called you to a particular service. Show your purpose by answering these questions.

Who is your Lord and Savior?

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his word and showing his love?

I will with God's help.

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

I do.

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.

Do, we the members of the presbytery confirm the call of God to Terry and Jothany as Moderator and Vice Moderator and Marilyn as Stated Clerk in the service of Jesus Christ?

We do.

Will you support and encourage them in this ministry?

We will.

INSTALLATION PRAYER

Faithful God, in baptism you claimed us; and by your Holy Spirit you are working in our lives, empowering us to live a life worthy of our calling. We thank you for leading **Terry, Jothany and Marilyn** to this time and place. Establish them in your truth, and guide them by your Holy Spirit, that in your service they may grow in faith, hope, and love, and be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever. Amen

CHARGE AND BLESSING

Terry, Jothany and Marilyn you are installed to service as Moderator, Vice Moderator and Stated Clerk in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Him. 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. Amen

Report from the Search/Transition Team

The Search Team that has worked very hard this past year includes James Ephraim, Cecilia Chang, Elizabeth Goodrich, Darryl Love, David Seamon, and Joe Spransy.

After a thorough and almost year-long search process, today our Search Team presents Dr. Mark McCormick as our choice for the next General Presbyter of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Many, if not most of you, already know Mark, as he is a member of this presbytery.

He has earned PhD and Master of Arts degrees from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, a Master of Divinity from Southeastern Seminary, and a Bachelor of Arts from Samford University. Mark is currently serving as an Associate Professor of Religion at Stillman College and formerly served as Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Stillman. Mark has served this presbytery as stated Supply at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Northport, CPM and Administrative Commission member, and teacher of multiple courses for Commissioned Ruling Elder training.

The Search Team believes that Mark brings collegiality, compassion, and organization to this position, in addition to his experience in teaching and administration.

The terms of call are as follows:

Salary	\$50,000
Housing	\$30,000
Effective Salary	\$80,000
SECA	\$ 6,120
Health Insurance	\$ 15,029
Covenant Package (10% Pension, Death and Disability, Temporary Disability)	\$ 8,000
Dental	\$ 396
Total Effective Salary, SECA, BOP Benefits	\$109,545
Continuing Education	\$ 2,400
General Presbyter Travel	\$ 3,200
Total Package	\$115,145

The next weeks will provide time for transition: Sue will continue through March, and Mark will begin as General Presbyter on April 1, 2026.

Report of the General Presbyter
Sue Westfall
February, 2026

You might be surprised to see a report from me here in the February packet! The Executive Council has asked that I stay on through March at the latest to assist with this presbytery meeting and other transitional tasks in anticipation of the new General Presbyter whom you will have an opportunity to vote on today. Deep gratitude for the work of the search team! It is the eve of an exciting new chapter in this presbytery's history!

With that in mind, I just wanted to lift up what I have been so grateful for here as I have had the privilege of serving among you. Let me name some of the characteristics that distinguish this presbytery:

- You daily demonstrate your strong love of Christ and his church and are committed to following his way in the world in service to others. There are so many people of such deep faith here and it shows up both in what you do and in how you do it.
- This presbytery has a very active and engaged membership – both clergy and non-clergy. The Presbyterian Church's foundational principles emphasize the essential parity of Teaching and Ruling Elders and that is very much lived out here.
- This presbytery enjoys strong and trusting relationships. This is not the case in all presbyteries, so it stands out all the more here. There is great freedom to try new things and create new pathways in this atmosphere of genuine love for one another and a basic trust that even when you disagree there is a spirit of good will and confidence that you are all pulling in the same direction.
- You care deeply about the world that God in Christ came to save. As a Matthew 25 presbytery, you demonstrate the tangible ways that we are called upon to advocate for justice for all people, making a real difference in the life of our communities and state. You do this individually as congregations and collectively in your witness as a presbytery. You are not afraid to do the hard work of anti-racism and boldly seek to live out and make real the Beloved Community.
- You take God seriously which enables you to take yourselves lightly. There is a spirit of humor and joy in your interactions and relationships and confidence that, as you listen to God, God will guide you in the right directions. That makes you able to breathe and truly enjoy this life of faith together.

This will be my last presbytery assembly in my role as General Presbyter and I am truly grateful to be retired by such a presbytery as this. It has been my privilege and joy to serve in this role these last six years and with you I look to your future in joyful anticipation of all that God will do among and through you in the years to come!

As ever in prayer,

Sue

THE PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS & LAPSLEY TREASURER REPORT FOR 2025

The year 2025 was a stable financial year for the Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley. Let us start with:

OPERATING INCOME-

Actual revenues were \$509,376 or \$77,857 higher than plan of \$431,519. This revenue increase resulted from a combination of an unbudgeted rental income and Closed Church operating giving of \$84,914. Revenue reductions of (\$11,864) reduction in Mission Giving accounts offset the increased revenues.

Operating Expenses were \$457,716 or higher than the plan of \$444,084 by (\$13,632). Total Council Expenses were in line with the plan. ENC expenses were \$2,885 better than plan. Due to water damage repairs to our office, Maintenance costs were (\$11,661) higher than planned.

Operating net income at Year End 2025 was a \$51,661 compared to a planned loss of (\$12,565).

OTHER REVENUES AND EXPENSES-

Below Operating revenues include Other Revenues of \$26,780 in Notes Receivables interest and \$115,830 in Investment income revenues. Due to the sale of churches, a gain on Property Contribution was \$416,449. Year-end Investments balance was \$1,415,765.

Adding this Other income and expenses to Operating Income nets a total bottom line income of \$577,205.

During 2025, as we do every year, our finance group also updated Appendix II of the Standing Rules, the Manual of Financial and Accounting Procedures. We looked at the original purpose and history of our restricted funds to identify which funds, based on their original intent and history, could be available for Presbytery growth needs.