

Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley--CORRECTED  
Synod of Living Waters  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Stated Meeting  
February 19, 2026

**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 February 19, 2026, hosted by First Presbyterian Church in Talladega, 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 Jonathan Yarboro\*, 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 A-1**

The Docket was adopted by unanimous consent, with change to the time of the GA overture and CP Moderators request of 5 minutes on the docket. The Stated Clerk requested an addition to her report (for the good of the whole).

**Recognition of First Time Commissioners and Visitors**

**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; and Independent Church to host the meeting of Presbytery on Thursday, November 19, 2026.**

**Approved.**

## Ministers of the Word and Sacrament

Ministers Present (30) Excused (50) Absent (29)

Atkerson, Rick, HR	P	Hayes, Jeff	A
Bae, In Chan	A	Hurley, Ed, HR	P
Bailey, Michael	E	Hurst, Clyce HR	E
Bang, Yoo Chang	E	Inman, Robert F, HR	E
Bird, Shelaine	A	Jeong, Junmo	A
Broyles, Vernon, HR	E	Jo, Jae Seon	A
Bryson, Tom	P	Kelly, Caroline	P
Bruchey, Wayne, HR	E	Kim, Samuel	A
Burgess, Sid, HR	P	Kim, Sun Jae	A
Butler, Heather Jones	A	Kim, Sung Eun	A
Carleton, Rhon, HR	E	Kim, Sung Woong	A
Carter, Clyde, HR	E	Kim, Young	A
Chaney, Patsy, HR	P	Kukal, Chuck, HR	E
Chang, Cecelia	A	Laney, Susan, HR	E
Cheong, Tae Ho	A	Long, Kevin	A
Chinula, Donald	E	McCarter, Neil, HR	P
Cho, Timothy	E	McClendon, Bruce, HR	E
Choomack, Jim, HR	E	McClure, John	A
Clark, Molly, HR	E	McCormick, Mark	P
Clayton, Susan	P	McElrath, Pete, HR	E
Clendenin, Monty, HR	E	McLaughlin, Wayne, HR	E
Coker, Jeff, HR	E	Mathews, Rachel	E
Davis, Becky, HR	E	Mjumbe, Lukata	A
Davis, Lant, HR	E	Mylalsingh, Emerson, HR	E
Dippenaer, Vic	A	Newton, Nicole	A
Durham, Charles, HR	E	Newland, Terry, HR	E
Durham, Erica	E	Northen, Margaret, HR	E
Edwards, Robert	E	O'Neill, Elizabeth	E
Ephraim, James, HR	P	Oh, Jyung, Ho	A
Feagin, Debbie, HR	P	Oliver, Catherine, HR	E
Frandsen, Emily	P	Park, Daekeun	A
Free, Zana	A	Patton, Roger, HR	E
Gatliff, Abby	P	Ponder, Luke	E
Gatliff, Cort	P	Porter, Mary, HR	E
Genau, Joe	P	Price, Sandra, HR	E
Goodrich, Elizabeth	P	Pyburn, Richard, HR	E
Hamilton-Poore, Sam	P	Reed, Kathy	P
Hamilton-Poore, Terry	P	Reed, Leanne	P
Hanna, Richard, HR	P	Reed, Nick	E
Harmon, Dawson, HR	E	Roberts, Madison	A
Hay, Robert, HR	E	Scarbrough, Leeann	P

Schuler, Sharon, HR	P	Turner, Lucy, HR	E
Scrivner, Joe	A	Turpen, Sam	A
Seamon, David	P	Vanek, Daniel	A
Seitz, Craig, HR	E	Wade, Lindsey	A
Sellers, Lou Ann	E	Waters, Dana, HR	P
Shelton, Jack, HR	E	Watson, Cody	P
Sims, Charles, HR	E	Wells, Jim, HR	E
Son, Junqkyun	A	Westfall, Sue	P
Speaker, Cary, HR	E	Wilkins, Jay, HR	E
Sprk, Petra	A	Wills, Bill HR	E
Stephens, Gerald, HR	E	Winter, Rachel	P
Thurman, Michael	A	Winton, Carlton, HR	E
Tingle, Terry, HR	E	Yarboro, Jonathan	P
Tucker-Marek, McKelvey Marilyn	P		

#### Commissioned Pastors with Vote

Present (5) Excused (1) Absent (13)

Allison, Banyon	A	Hughes, Carl	A
Arellano, Ben	A	Kirkpatrick, deNay	P
Bonner, Jeff	P	Lyons, David	A
Dodson, Beverly	E	Martin, Carl	A
Eich, Sharon	A	McCrackin, Olympia	A
Emerick, Robert	A	Sauser, Bill	A
Fancher, Cherie	A	Tatum, Frankie	A
Haynes, Ernie	P	Thomas, Roger	A
Holt, Cal	A	Veasey, Lin	P
		Schuler, John	P

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

Present (5) Excused (3) Absent (0)

Linda Burrowes	P	Wendy Tucker	E
Jothany James	P	Jean Russell	E
Terri Jones	P	Donna Winn	E
Debra Love	P	John Schuler	P

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

Jenny Thagard P      Kathy Tracey P      Deborah Thomas P

## Elders

Number in parentheses by church name indicates the number of commissioners authorized. "NR" indicates that the church did not have elder representation. There are fifty-six (56) churches in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Thirty-three (33) Commissioners were present.

Alexander City	First (1)	NR
Annemanie	Arlington (1)	NR
Anniston	Church of the Covenant	Jerry Paris
Anniston	First United (1)	Debbie Miller
Anniston	Korean (1)	NR
Auburn	First (3)	David Burkhart
		Brooke Myers
		NR
Bessemer	Good Hope (1)	NR
Birmingham	Bold Springs (1)	Charles Lane
Birmingham	Edgewood (2)	Catherine Rodenhauer
		Richard Galbraith
Birmingham	First (2)	Jim Carnes
		Brenda Toomey
Birmingham	First United of Forestdale (1)	Terri Jones
Birmingham	Independent (4)	Jean Shanks
		Paul Romjue
		Lee Walthall
		Susan Haskell
Birmingham	Korean (1)	NR
Birmingham	Mountain Brook (2)	NR
		NR
Birmingham	Oakmont Chapel (2)	Charlie Parks
		Janet Barnes
Birmingham	Riverchase (1)	NR
Birmingham	South Highland (3)	John Gleysteen
		Suzanne Cornett
		NR
Birmingham	Southminster (2)	Jothany James
		John Schuler
Birmingham	Westminster (1)	Darryl Love
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)	NR
Goodwater	First (1)	NR
Green Pond	Green Pond (1)	NR
Jacksonville	First (1)	Carolyn Padgett
Lafayette	Lebanon (1)	NR
Leeds	Leeds (1)	NR
Livingston	First (1)	NR
Magnolia	Rock Springs (1)	NR
Marion Junction	Marion Junction (1)	NR
Montevallo	Montevallo (1)	Charlotte de Rocher
Montgomery	Calvary	NR
Montgomery	Immanuel (1)	Pam Tidwell
Montgomery	Korean (1)	NR
Montgomery	Providence (1)	NR
Northport	Bethel (1)	NR
Opelika	Korean (2)	NR
Oxford	Dodson Memorial (1)	NR
Piedmont	First (1)	NR
Selma	Pisgah (1)	NR
Selma	Valley Creek (1)	NR
Sylacauga	First (1)	Frances Wildsmith
Talladega	First (1)	Allen Scarbrough
Troy	Williams Memorial (1)	NR
Trussville	Cahaba Springs (1)	Karen O'Brien
Tuscaloosa	Brown Memorial (1)	NR
Tuscaloosa	First (3)	Jill Cilimberg James Tucker NR
Tuscaloosa	Grace (2)	April Lane Rebecca Ballard
Tuscaloosa	Korean	NR
Tuskegee Institute	Westminster (1)	Judith Baldwin
Union Springs	Union Springs (1)	NR
Wetumpka	First (1)	Luci Tracy

### **Welcome from the Host Church**

Rev. Scarbrough welcomed the Presbytery to First-Talladega. The Sanctuary was built in 1859. They share space with the Ascension Leadership Academy of the Home for Children. She spoke on the way lives from the Academy are being changed.

Leeann Scarbrough

## **Order of Worship**

**Prelude** Kenny Lewis

**Call to Worship** Jonathan Yarboro

**Hymn #2** *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

**Time of Confession** Suzanne Cornett

### **Assurance of Forgiveness**

**Sung Response #582** *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

**Prayer for Illumination** Brenda Uptain

**Scripture** Ezekiel 37:1-10

**Sermon** Leeann Scarbrough

### **Affirmation of Faith**

**Necrology Prayer and Report** **Appendix A-2** Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek

**Hymn #546** *For All the Saints (vs. 1, 4 only)*

**Honor the retirement of the Reverend Richard Atkerson** **Appendix A-3**  
(Dana Waters, Ed Hurley, Cort and Abby Gatliff)

**Hymn #546** *For All the Saints (vs. 6)*

**Installation of Moderator, Terry Hamilton-Poore; Vice Moderator, Jothany James and Stated Clerk, Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek** **Appendix A-4**

### **Presentation of stole and gavel to Incoming Presbytery Moderator**

**Words from Outgoing Moderator** Jonathan Yarboro  
Jonathan read from Philippians. He talked about Joe Slane and his service to Presbytery during his lifetime. He asked for prayers while he serves as Moderator of Council for the coming year.

**Words from Incoming Moderator** Terry Hamilton-Poore  
Terry gave Jonathan a gift as a thank you for serving the Presbytery the past year. She commented that First-Birmingham uses the Advent wreath that Jonathan made every year.

We need to be rooted in Christ and connected to each other. We need to focus on Matthew 25-- Building congregational vitality; Dismantling structural racism; Eradicating systemic poverty.

## **Invitation to Generosity and Prayer of Dedication**

### **Doxology**

**Invitation to the Table**                      Leeann Scarbrough & Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek

### **Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

#### **The Lord's Prayer**

#### **Words of Institution**

### **Sharing of the Bread and Cup**

#### **Prayer after Communion**

Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek

**Hymn #292**                      *God of Grace and God of Glory*

### **Charge and Benediction**

Leeann Scarbrough

### **Postlude**

## **Ministry Within Our Presbytery**

**Transition Search Committee**      **Appendix A-5**    Jane Clayton

**MOTION: 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**

**Approved**

Mark was asked about his prayer life. He prays every morning and reads the lectionary for the day. His prayer for the Presbytery is that we function as a body to witness in central Alabama.

## **New Business from Bills & Overtures**      **Appendix A-6**

**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.**

**Approved**

**Executive Council Appendix A-7**

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.

**Correction:** Executive Council Report-Second paragraph—Deborah Thomas should be listed, not Debra Love.

**“Good News” Moment Mission Coordinator**

Ralls Coston

1. The Presbyterian Church's Pentecost Offering has been discontinued. In response, the Executive Council has approved an Offering for Congo Missions, to be collected during Pentecost. The Presbytery's Congo Mission Team will use the funds collected by this Offering to fund projects in DR Congo. There will be more announcements about the Congo Offering in the upcoming weeks.
2. At today's meeting of the Presbytery, we will be showing the PowerPoint presentation about the history of Presbyterian missions Congo and our Presbytery's relationship with the Presbyterian churches in DR Congo. This PowerPoint presentation was shown at the October meeting of the Congo Mission Network, which was hosted by Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church.
3. To avoid confusion, please remember that the Congo Offering to be received at Pentecost is different from the Pentecost Can-Paign, which will be received in July. The Pentecost Can-Paign is a hunger offering, to combat hunger in Alabama.
4. Lastly, we are planning to sponsor another Habitat for Humanity house in the Birmingham area in 2026. Please contact Ralls Coston, [rcoston@pslpcusa.org](mailto:rcoston@pslpcusa.org), if you have any questions.

**Congo Partnership** Committee Chair: Lydia Wilfong

Meeting date(s) since last stated Presbytery Meeting: We met January 12 and will meet again Feb 6 at 10:00 at the Presbytery Office

Summary of Subjects discussed and/or Actions Taken: We requested, and the executive council approved, that we promote a Pentecost Offering for Congo this year.

At our Feb 6 meeting we will consider how best to publicize this offering to all our churches. Support for our partners in Congo has declined in recent years and we want to encourage all our churches to become involved going forward.

Action Items to be presented for Presbytery Approval:

Other Items about which you wish to make a verbal presentation at the next Stated Presbytery Meeting: The Pentecost Offering for Congo.

**Nominating Committee**  
**For Action:**

Caroline Kelly

**The Committee nominates the following to fill a new term as indicated:**

**Anti-Racism Committee**

**Class of 2028 Lukata Mjumbe\***

**James Tucker-First, Tuscaloosa**

**Approved**

**Election of Bills and Overtures Committee 2026**

Terry Hamilton-Poore

**Susan Clayton\*; Jim Toomey – First, Birmingham; Deborah Thomas – First, Auburn**  
**Approved**

**Lunch**

**Enrichment—The History of the Presbytery’s Relationship with the Congo**

Ralls presented a PowerPoint presentation on the beginning of our relationship with the Congo, For the last 135 years American Presbyterians and Congolese have worked together. Samuel Lapsley and William Sheppard were the first American Presbyterian missionaries to the Congo. Mr. Sheppard graduated from Stillman College in 1888. Mr. Lapsley was from Selma, Al. He attended Union Seminary and later went to McCormick Seminary and finished his theological degree in 1889. Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Lapsley wanted to go to Africa and met with the Foreign Missions Committee in January, 1890. They arrived at the mouth of the Congo River in 1890 and the Kasai River in 1891. Mr. Sheppard was the problem solver. Mr. Lapsley’s health was deteriorating and he died in March, 1892. Mr. Sheppard and Lucy Gantt married and she went to the Congo with her husband. Mr. Sheppard used his Kodak camera to take pictures of the atrocities happening under King Leopold and let the world know. In 1910 they returned to the U.S.

Maria Fearing was born into slavery in 1838 in Sumter County. She went to school in 1865 in Talladega, became a teacher, and was able to buy a house. Maria wanted to go serve in the Congo but the Presbyterian Missions Board told her no, as she was 56. She sold her house and went to the Congo and stayed until 1917. Maria lived her final years on the same plantation where she was born into slavery and died in 1937.

In 2005 members of the Presbytery Congo Team went to DR Congo. Our team focuses on the Kasai region. We’ve built two schools with restrooms, provided books, motorcycles, and have done work at IMCK hospital.

**General Executive “Good News” Moment Appendix A-8**

Sue Westfall

**Action Items:**

1. **Approve the Supply Relationship for 2026. Approved Appendix A-10  
Add Carl Hughes, First United Forestdale.**
2. **Approve the request from Lindsey Becker-Brady to lay aside her Ordination  
(G-2.0507) and remove her from our roll. Approved**

**Report of Co-Directors of Commissioned Pastor Program**

Sharon Schuler

Plans to begin a new class of educating persons interested in serving as Commissioned Pastors (CP) will begin on **Saturday, August 22** with a one-day retreat at Living River. We had hoped to start classes earlier in the year, but we are trying to get a new curriculum in place which is taking longer than expected.

We are asking all pastors to think prayerfully about identifying people in your congregation who might be a good candidate for this training. The small churches in our Presbytery have benefitted greatly from the leadership of CPs over the last 20 + years and the need is still there for dedicated leaders.

If anyone is interested, we encourage you to self-refer following the guidelines found on the Presbytery website.

Information packets are also available on the display table outside the sanctuary today.

The deadline for applications is April 30, 2026. All instructions and materials are available on the Presbytery website under "Resources." Applications should be emailed to John and Sharon Schuler at: [cp-cre@pslpcusa.org](mailto:cp-cre@pslpcusa.org).

If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to call or text John or Sharon at these numbers:

John Schuler Cell Phone: 850-218-0660

Sharon Schuler Cell Phone: 850-218-2788

**Presbyterian Home for Children "Good News" Moment Appendix A-11 Doug Marshall**

**Living River "Good News" Moment Appendix A-12 Jenny Thagard**

**Stated Clerk Appendix A-13**

Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek

1. Reports from Administrative Commissions **Appendix A-14**
2. Minutes Review Plan

### **Good News**

Grace-Caroline Kelly—They have been able to hire personnel for their food pantry Table of Grace, thanks to a grant from Independent Church.

Westminster-Darryl Love—March 1 they will have the Stillman choir sing for their annual concert.

First Presbyterian-hosting a sing-in from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. on March 2.

### **Personnel**

Committee Chair(s): Michael Bailey FPC Tuscaloosa

Meeting date(s) since last stated Presbytery Meeting:

We meet the 4th Thursday by Zoom, so I anticipate we will have met 1/22/26

Summary of Subjects discussed and/or Actions Taken:

I anticipate our focus will be on managing staff transitions and assisting in searching, onboarding, etc.

Action Items to be presented for Presbytery Approval: I do not anticipate having any action items.

Other Items about which you wish to make a verbal presentation at the next Stated Presbytery Meeting: None that I anticipate

### **Trustees**

Committee Chair: Rev. Lant B. Davis, H.R.

Meeting date(s) since last stated Presbytery Meeting: We do not have regular meetings, but rather meet when there is business to transact. Often we handle things by email. If all trustees indicate by email that they are in favor of a proposed action, then we treat it as an "action by unanimous consent taken without a meeting." Then, for purposes of recording the action for the Presbytery records, we make a note of it the next time we have an actual meeting (which would typically occur via Zoom).

Summary of Subjects discussed and/or Actions Taken: Our last action by unanimous consent concerned the property of the former Church of the Good Shepherd (Anniston). On January 2, 2026, we agreed (a) to reject the offer of the current tenant to purchase the property or to continue leasing it, (b) to direct our property managers to give notice to the current tenant to vacate the property, and (c) to authorize and direct the officers of the Presbytery to execute and deliver the listing agreement and brokerage disclosure form in substantially the same forms as were circulated among the trustees (i.e., providing for an "asking" price of \$450,000).

Action Items to be presented for Presbytery Approval: None.

Other Items about which you wish to make a verbal presentation at the next Stated Presbytery Meeting: None.

**Treasurer's Report    Appendix A-15**

**Finance    Appendix A-16**

**Revenue & Expenses Summary    Appendix A-17**

**Presbyterian Women    Appendix A-18**

**Adjournment with Prayer**

Moderator Terry Hamilton-Poore

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Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek, 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*



**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

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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

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley  
2025 Necrology**

**Teaching Elders**

Robert "Bob" Crutchfield – May 3, 2025  
Finley Patton – June 14, 2025  
Joseph "Joe" Slane – October 21, 2025

**Ruling Elders**

**Church of the Covenant**

Frank Cobb – June 2025  
Jack Cavendar (First, Anniston) June 2025  
Fleeta Todd – March 2025

**First, Auburn**

Mary JoAn Cooper – August 19, 2025

**First, Birmingham**

Reba Hammond – March 27, 2025  
Rick Shelton – August 12, 2025  
Deacon, Deborah Stegall – June 30, 2025

**First, Eufaula**

Nan Metz – December 14, 2024 (did not report until after the Feb. meeting)

**First, Jacksonville**

Gary Brown – October 2025

**First, Wetumpka**

Jon Lambert – December 26, 2025

**Gardendale**

Richard Nail – May 14, 2025

**Immanuel**

Kathleen Lenore Kneeland – May 4, 2025  
Sherry Lee McFeely – December 28, 2025

**Mountain Brook**

Bob Dudelston – March 1, 2025

Susan Hosford – April 19, 2025

**South Highland**

John Goff – August 13, 2024 (did not report until after the Feb. meeting)

**Southminster**

Jim Kelly – February 25, 2025

Ann Tillman – April 2, 2025

Pete Van Pelt – June 2, 2025

Jim Archibald – August 9, 2025

**Westminster, Birmingham**

Willis P. Beverly, Jr. – March 18, 2025

## **RICK ATKERSON**

When I came to Birmingham as the pastor of SHPC, I was immediately told that there was an engaged couple who had gone through pre-marital counseling with my predecessor, but he had counseled them to wait for the new pastor to conduct the wedding. I'm happy to say that they did, and Rick and Beth Atkerson became my first wedding six weeks after I arrived which was the beginning of a friendship of almost 40 years.

Rick had become a member of SHPC a year earlier, continuing the commitment he made as a ten year old at 76<sup>th</sup> Street Presbyterian, and where he had become a Deacon at age 21 and an elder at 24. At SHPC. He joined the choir the second Sunday he visited, and is still singing there today. He also became involved in a young singles group where he met and fell in love with Beth. His participation at South Highland led to his being elected a Deacon in 1985, and an Elder in 1988.

Years before, Rick's pastor nurtured the seed of a call to ministry, and Rick responded to that call by coming under the care of the CPM and enrolled at Columbia Seminary. That decision meant his resignation from the Session and the loss of our chair of the Worship Committee.

Incidentally, Rick was followed in that Session responsibility by Molly Clark, who during her term of leadership of the Worship Committee also felt the Spirit calling her to ministry, and she followed Rick to Columbia Seminary a short time later.

At Columbia, Rick was elected class president in his first year, and in his last year was chosen as a Theological Student Advisory Delegate to the 1982 General Assembly.

Rick fell in love with the original languages of the Scriptures, and became a tutor of other students in both Hebrew and Greek. During the summer before his senior year, he served as the lead teacher in the Greek school, and graduated the next spring with an M.Div. with distinction. Rick stayed at Columbia for two additional years, completing a Masters degree in Old Testament and Biblical languages in 1995.

If there had been an opening for a professor of Old Testament at one of our Seminaries, Rick would have pursued that ministry. That was not available, and Rick and Beth moved back to Birmingham for Beth to finish her degree and preparation to become a physical therapist.

Before Seminary, Rick had been an accountant, and about the same time, SHPC lost our Director of Finance, our DCE, my Administrative Assistant, and my Associate Pastor. Rick stepped into two of those roles in 1998 and 1999.

But I will let Ed Hurley pick up the story at that point.

## **Celebrating the 3 M Ministry of**

**The Reverend Richard “Rick” Atkerson**

**Mathematician - Musician - Minister**

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley meeting at First Presbyterian Church,  
Talladega, AL**

**February 19, 2026**

**Dr. Ed Hurley**

Today the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley celebrates the ministry of the Rev. Richard “Rick” Atkerson. Rick is a native of Birmingham. In fact as native as they come, having grown up here, gone to college here at Samford University, worked here in both business, the arts, and ministry. Rick is a lifelong Presbyterian having grown up in the 76th Street Presbyterian Church, before as a young adult coming to South Highland and begun singing in the choir under Andrew Gainey. At South Highland Rick met his lovely wife Beth in the Young Adults Fellowship Group. In fact, speaking of being a native, Rick often said, he was open to following the Will of God anywhere – as long as it is in Birmingham!

I first met Rick on September 12, 2001 where, the day after the tragedy of 9-11 I had driven down from Bowling Green, KY along the utterly empty Interstate 65 to meet with the Committee on Ministry to be examined for serving as the Sr. Pastor of South Highland. Rick was then serving as the Interim Associate Pastor at South Highland, and as such he led a massive quickly called prayer service at noon, in the sanctuary filled to capacity with members and community friends, who lived and worked in the Southside, gathering to pray for and receive God’s comfort in those bewildering days immediately after 9-11. Then I had the pleasure of working alongside Rick for about six months as I began at South Highland.

Rick was wonderful in teaching me how to get around at South Highland and in Birmingham. He warned me about the Sacred Cows, “Don’t mess with the Flower Committee.” “The 8:30 service uses the then new Blue Presbyterian Hymnal, the 11:00 service uses the old Red Hymnal because when the committee was meeting to consider getting the Blue Hymnal Dr. Dewey White of blessed memory had gone out and purchased enough Red Hymnals for the whole Sanctuary.” Rick showed me where you park to go into Childrens Hospital, UAB Hospital, and St. Vincents Hospital. It was fun

and very helpful to have Rick coaching me and sharing in the leading of Sunday Worship each week.

As I said, Rick has the 3 M's – Mathematician, Musician, Minister in his portfolio. He studied accounting in college and had a first career as a CPA. In fact he used his accounting skills at South Highland serving not only as a Pastor, but prior to that as the Interim Business Manager. While he has had several careers – as an accountant and a pastor, he has had one overarching love through them all – music. For many years Rick has been singing with South Highland Chancel Choir, and also with the Alabama Symphony Chorus and also with a long-standing Men's Barbershop Chorus. For a number of years Rick not only sang with the Symphony Chorus but worked as the ASO Chorus Business Manager.

In mid-life Rick sensed a call to ordained ministry and left Birmingham for the first time to study at Columbia Theological Seminary where he received his M.Div. There he focused on Old Testament and was mentored by the world renowned scholar Dr. Walter Brueggemann. He then served, back of course in the Birmingham area as pastor at the Springville Presbyterian Church, and then at Riverchase Presbyterian Church for 7 years. After Riverchase Rick returned to active involvement at South Highland, always singing in the choir, assisting with the Youth Group, especially going along as a chaperone to Montreat.

Rick's work with the Presbytery is encyclopedic! I think perhaps he has served in more roles with the Presbytery than anyone other than Dana Waters. His service here includes:

- Many years as Treasurer of the Presbytery.
- Treasurer of the General Assembly Committee when they met here.
- Many years on CPM including a year as Chair.
- 15 years as a reader of Ordination Exams.
- Many years on the Presbytery Nominating Committee, most recently as Chair.
- Years serving on the board of Living River.
- Elected as Commissioner to the General Assembly next summer.
- Rick worked many years with the Emmaus Community and was responsible for many Presbyterians participating in this ecumenical renewal ministry.

Rick and Beth continue to be active at South Highland where Rick still holds down the Chancel Choir and occasionally teaches Sunday School or leads a Wednesday night Class, preferably on the Old Testament! He is regularly a Lay Scripture Reader,

although he is Clergy, not Lay. He is a dear colleague and friend to us all, and we can be assured that his new title of "Honorably Retired" will in no way diminish his work and ministry among us.

Rick, paraphrasing the words of the Apostle Paul to the Philippians and applying them to you:

"We thank our God every time we remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of our prayers for you because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. We are confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ... The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." (Philippians 1:3-6, 4:23)

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

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

The Rev. Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek  
Stated Clerk  
Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

Dear Rev. Tucker-Marek:

We request that our presbytery concur with the actions of the Presbytery of Cayuga Syracuse in approving two overtures to the 227<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2026) of the Presbyterian Church (USA): “Changing Course for a Green Future” and “The Green Future Endowment Fund”. We hope this can be done at our next meeting on February 19, 2026.

These two overtures were prepared by members of the Advocacy Committee of Presbyterians for Earth Care—a nationwide, grassroots organization of Presbyterians committed to caring for God’s creation through prayer, action, advocacy, and education.

For decades, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has called upon the church at every level to practice and promote caring stewardship for God’s creation as central to Christian discipleship. Throughout these decades, the crisis of climate change has been repeatedly the subject of great and dire concern to the PCUSA. Both attached overtures seek to address concrete ways in which our denomination may respond to this crisis by continuing to align our financial practices with our faith values.

Thank you for your assistance in placing these important overtures before the presbytery on February 19, 2026.

Wishing you Christ’s peace,

Jim Carnes  
Ruling Elder  
First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham  
Commissioner to Presbytery

The Rev. Sam Hamilton-Poore  
Teaching Elder  
Montevallo Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Leanne Pearce Reed  
Teaching Elder  
Co Pastor, Southminster Presbyterian Church

## Changing Course for a Green Future

In concurrence with the action of the Presbytery of Cayuga Syracuse, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley overtures the 227th General Assembly (2026) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to:

1. Declare that the continued investment of PC(USA) funds in the exploration, development, extraction, refinement, transportation, and sale of fossil fuels is incompatible with the mission and goals of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and our call to serve as faithful stewards of creation.<sup>1</sup>
2. Commend The Presbyterian Foundation and The Board of Pensions for reducing their fossil fuel and (aggregated) energy sector holdings (respectively).<sup>2</sup>
3. Commend the many faith institutions, including the World Council of Churches on their decisions to remove fossil fuel investments from their portfolios, answering “the prophetic call to care for our common home and stand in solidarity with those who suffer most from climate injustice.”<sup>3</sup>
4. Affirm that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has satisfied the substantive requirements of The Divestment Strategy: Ethical and Institutional Context (1984)—and any successor policy which may be adopted by the General Assembly—for determining when divestment is warranted with respect to the fossil fuel industry.
5. Call upon all PC(USA)-related fiduciaries, to:
  - a. Undertake the orderly removal of investments from all companies whose primary business (more than 50% of annual profit) is based on the extraction, refinement, transport or sale of fossil fuels, with the goal of fully completing this divestment by 2030 or as soon thereafter as prudent management allows;
  - b. Cease from initiating new investments in such companies; and
  - c. Seek suitable opportunities in renewable energy sectors that meet established ethical and risk-return criteria.

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<sup>1</sup> The Divestment Strategy: Principles and Criteria, MINUTES, 196th GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.), May 29-June 6, 1984, Phoenix, Arizona. This policy 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.* [emphasis added] (Paragraph 25.202.) Also see paragraphs 25.204 and 261

<sup>2</sup> Between 2018 and 2025 PF moved from 5.14% to 2.24% of total investments and the BoP from 4% in 2019 to 1% of total energy sector investments as of September, 2025. The dollar value of these two combined is still a combined estimated total of around \$141,772,800.

<sup>3</sup><https://oikoumene.org/what-we-do/care-for-creation-and-climate-justice/ecumenical-decade-of-climate-justice-action>

6. Direct the Unified Agency through its Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), the Office of Faith Based Investing and other components) to:
  - a. Continue and expand the church's stockholder advocacy efforts to resist lending and insurance institution practices as directed in the "Green Future" policy adopted by the 225th G.A.
  - b. Encourage all Unified Agency program components to advocate for a just global transition away from fossil fuels and toward ethically produced renewable sources of energy and to stand with local communities who suffer either from the the harms of the fossil fuel industry and climate injustice or the dislocations of the energy transition.
7. Direct the Stated Clerk to:
  - a. Inform all appropriate Church constituencies and church and public media outlets, and ecumenical partners of the passage of this overture;
  - b. Encourage governing bodies, institutions, congregations, and members to engage in theological reflection and advocacy concerning the harms of fossil fuel dependence and the need for a just energy transition; and
  - c. Provide pastoral care to any among our Presbyterian household who may experience dis-ease with the Church's decision or dislocation or other negative consequences which will result from the energy transition envisioned in this overture.

## **Rationale**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has long affirmed that caring for God's creation is central to our discipleship and our public witness. In doing so we have repeatedly proclaimed our corporate commitment to teaching and practices which will fulfill the mandate in the book of Genesis for humankind to be "keepers and nurturers" of the earth. (Genesis 2:15).

In light of humanity's failures in this regard, and seeking to amend our own efforts as a church, the 226th (2024) General Assembly recommitted the PC(USA) to align its program with that of the global efforts of the United Nations to battle human caused climate change by prioritizing ". . . responses to the urgent needs associated with the existential threats of the climate crisis, including those related to limiting global warming to well below two degrees Celsius, as outlined in the Paris Agreement. . ." and "transitioning away from fossil fuels in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade. . . ." <sup>4</sup>

**Why is this decade critical? Why the focus on fossil fuels?** Greenhouse gasses produced from extraction, production and use of fossil fuels comprise around 70

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<sup>4</sup> ENV-06

percent of climate changing emissions. The global scientific consensus confirms that the world must make significant emissions reductions by 2030 to avoid temperatures which will be catastrophic for all life.<sup>5</sup> We already are experiencing many of these consequences in the form of “super-sized” weather events which wreak havoc on all in their path but disproportionately impact those least equipped to recover.

In its adoption of *Investing in A Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation*, the 225th General Assembly confessed our denomination’s failure to take sufficient action to implement the “turnaround decade” proclaimed in the 1990 Assembly’s *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice*. In each of these, (and many more) statements, the Church recognized that faithful stewardship of the earth requires both confession and concrete change. The current overture seeks to bring our Church’s financial practices into alignment with the commitments we have already made by describing the kind of change demanded by the repentance we have offered.

The “Green Future” policy also underscored that the Church’s financial practices must align with its commitments to creation care, encouraging individuals, congregations, and church entities to evaluate how their investments contribute to climate harm and to consider shifting resources toward renewable and just energy systems. In its supporting rationale for that document, ACSWP noted that investment decisions across all levels of the Church have direct moral implications and called for discernment around our denominational investments that reflect our responsibility to safeguard God’s good creation.

Despite these clear policy foundations, the denomination continues to maintain significant investments in fossil fuel companies—companies whose core business activities remain a primary driver of the climate crisis. Our current engagement strategy has yielded only limited improvement in corporate behavior related to emissions from their operations and does not address the larger reality that the products of this industry, when used exactly as intended, are destabilizing the global climate. As a result, our existing investment posture remains out of step with the theological commitments and moral direction repeatedly expressed by past General Assemblies.

**Our denominational stockholder strategy related to fossil fuel companies is focused only on harms resulting from company activities but not on their products.** This, in essence, is the reason we must divest: to send a clear message regarding our refusal to continue to enable the production of products which are poisoning the planet and wreaking havoc on the most vulnerable of our siblings. Our current strategy of investing millions of dollars in these businesses in order to maintain a “seat at the table” comes at too great a price as it contributes to the very harms we claim to want to heal, as well as undermining the integrity of our Christian witness. We believe, with the leaders of the Laudato Si movement in the Catholic Church, that, “By

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<sup>5</sup> IPCC Synthesis Report, 2023, <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-cycle/>

divesting from fossil fuel companies, faith institutions remove the social licence of fossil fuel companies to continue pursuing new fossil fuel projects and exacerbating the climate crisis.”<sup>6</sup>

Our strategy as related to fossil fuel companies must now shift to advocacy with lending institutions and end users of fossil fuels and to the social, political, legal and moral spheres, some of which may be achieved through MRTI and others through the Office of Public Witness, the Office of the Stated Clerk and other programmatic initiatives. Communities in need of support in their struggles with fossil fuel companies that pollute and abuse or the economic dislocation associated with the energy transition, may be assured that we have not abandoned them because we have other means of providing assistance and support than through our current practice of stockholder engagement.

While we acknowledge the preference, inherent in our Reformed theological tradition, to practice stockholder advocacy as a strategy for exerting leverage toward outcomes aligned with God’s vision for humanity, we believe that, having pursued the engagement course for decades, divestment is the more faithful choice at this point in time. For the sake of our public witness, as well as our commitment to address environmental racism and other forms of climate injustice, we must take our stand with and give voice to those who have been, as our Brief Statement of Faith puts it, “long silenced”: the poor, marginalized, future generations, and the creatures of the planet, with no voice in our decision processes.

**A Green Future is Possible Now and Saves Lives and Money.**<sup>7</sup> Today, we have viable, cheaper and safer alternatives to fossil fuels with solar, wind, hydropower and battery storage. This action will bring our investments into alignment with the 225th General Assembly’s call for all congregations, mid councils and agencies to “Work toward a goal of 100% renewable energy . . . by 2030 by practicing energy efficiency, purchasing our power from renewable energy sources and investing in the development of renewable energy.”

While as individuals we are still often dependent on or even addicted to living lives deeply intertwined with fossil fuels, we are called as a Church to move forward into the

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<sup>6</sup> From the Catholic Church’s Laudato Si Divestment COP 30 announcement letter of September 15, 2025. [https://laudatosimovement.org/news/no-faith-in-fossil-fuels-join-the-global-divestment-announcement-ahead-of-cop30/?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=2025-10-31&utm\\_campaign=Hope+gratitude+and+care+for+creation+November+Prayer+Guide](https://laudatosimovement.org/news/no-faith-in-fossil-fuels-join-the-global-divestment-announcement-ahead-of-cop30/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_term=2025-10-31&utm_campaign=Hope+gratitude+and+care+for+creation+November+Prayer+Guide)

<sup>7</sup> See: “The Precautionary Principle: Managing Technological Risks to Protect Humanity and our Planet,” Approved by the 223rd General Assembly (2018) I. AFFIRMATION AND DESCRIPTION OF PRECAUTIONARY RESPONSIBILITIES “In retrospect, the climate change crisis reflects the widespread failure of market systems to assess and reduce the impacts of fossil fuel use.”

new day of renewable energy and away from our corporate financial investments in the polluting production and use of fossil fuels. By acting now to redirect our investments away from fossil fuels and toward a more sustainable future, we believe our denomination will more faithfully embody the fruits of repentance previous assemblies have called for and strengthen our witness to God's justice, care, and hope for creation.

## **The Green Future Endowment Fund<sup>1</sup>**

In concurrence with the action of the Presbytery of Cayuga Syracuse, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley overtures the 227th General Assembly (2026) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to:

1. Declare that expressions of denominational (i.e. corporate) confession and repentance, as well as the Christian witness and example of the PC(USA), require corporate accountability and response.
2. Affirm that as recently as 2022, with the adoption of “Investing in A Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation”, we confessed to our Church’s failure to live up to past commitments to cherish the earth entrusted to our care and expressed our intention to undertake actions involving our “treasure and vision” in the pursuit of restoration and healing.<sup>2</sup>
3. Establish a permanent endowment fund created and held in perpetuity by the Presbyterian Foundation in their Fossil Free Investments on behalf of the General Assembly from which The Foundation will make spending formula payments available to the PCUSA, A Corporation to be disbursed in turn to the Unified Agency or its successor to make grants for the following restricted purposes:
  - a. To support greenhouse gas emission reduction, renewable energy transition, and adaptation to climate change;
  - b. To support restorative processes in and to address harms suffered by marginalized communities and natural habitats within the U.S. and abroad as a result of extractive damage, environmental racism and systemic climate change; and
  - c. To address dislocation and community harms related to the transition to renewable energy sources.
4. Direct the Unified Agency (or its successor) to assign a group of six people to a Green Future Fund Design Team (or simply DT), consisting of three staff representing programmatic, (especially the Center for Repair of Historic Harms), as well as financial components of the Unified Agency, and three at-large persons, meeting virtually over the course of the coming two years to design administrative protocols for a “Green Future Endowment Fund” and report back to the 228th (2028) General Assembly.

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<sup>1</sup> This overture seeks to implement the vision of the 218th and 225th General Assemblies in their adoption of “The Power to Change:U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming”, recommendation 3.b, and “Investing in a Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation, recommendation 3

<sup>2</sup> IBID. Recommendation #3

- a. Request that the DT explore options for amount and method of capitalization of the fund.<sup>3</sup>
  - b. Request the Design Team, Unified Agency, and Presbyterian Foundation to consult and if feasible, proceed with establishing the fund account or a temporary account if advised, for the purpose of receiving contributions prior to the adoption of the DT report.<sup>4</sup>
    - i. Request the DT consider recommending a “Green Future Grants Committee” housed within the appropriate office of the Unified Agency, composed of five to nine persons, possibly including representatives of the denomination’s Center for the Repair of Historic Harms and the ecumenical “Center for Jubilee Practice.”<sup>5</sup>
5. Direct the Stated Clerk to:
- a. Inform all appropriate Church constituencies and church and public media outlets, and ecumenical partners of the passage of this overture;
  - b. Encourage governing bodies, institutions, congregations, and members to prayerfully consider making financial contributions to the fund; and
  - c. Promote connections with ecumenical and interfaith restorative justice efforts which may enhance the effectiveness of this initiative.

## Rationale

**Repentance is a practice rooted in scripture.** It is more than expressing sorrow for our past actions but includes the kinds of future-oriented changes in direction which John the Baptist called “the fruits of repentance”.<sup>6</sup> Jesus also embraced this. In the

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<sup>3</sup> These sources should include possible contributions from Presbyterian Women, congregations, philanthropies, companies, etc as well as unassigned General Assembly funds and the sale of church properties, with the goal of beginning the granting process within ten (10) years of the fund’s establishment but not before the 228th General Assembly adopts the Green Future Fund Design Team report in 2028

<sup>4</sup> The DT should plan to communicate the existence of the Green Future Endowment Fund initiative immediately following its formation so that potential contributors may begin to participate in its capitalization prior to the official establishment after the receipt of the Green Future Fund Design Team’s report to the next Assembly. The endowment fund will then be officially established by the Foundation upon direction from the Unified Agency that the work of the DT as set forth in this overture is complete.

<sup>5</sup> These individuals should possess the requisite skills for evaluating proposals, making and monitoring the grants and outcomes, and reporting back to the General Assembly in a manner to be determined. Ideally, we would recommend the majority of this committee should be elected members and not PCUSA staff and reflect the demographics of the communities who suffer most from climate change and other forms of environmental injustice, especially the original caretakers of this nation’s lands and wildlife, the Native American community.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 3:8

Background Analysis for the Church's policy document titled, "The Power to Speak Truth to Power", Robert Stivers addressed Jesus' statement about repentance found in Mark 1:14-15:

"Repentance in this situation means: 1) taking this confession seriously; 2) sensitivity to the world's 800 million malnourished and impoverished; 3) awareness of the delicacy of ecosystems; and 4) a change of direction to more frugal energy consumption, justice, and greater sharing in community."<sup>7</sup>

**The 225th (2022) General Assembly confessed the need for denominational repentance related to our complicity with climate change.**<sup>8</sup> Reflecting upon the failed efforts of the church in the two decades since the adoption of "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice" they declared:

[We] "Confess that we have not sufficiently "responded to the cry of creation" and hereby recommit to a "turnaround decade" for restoring creation. We have failed to place the intrinsic value of God's creation above the idols of the world, such as wealth, power, acquisition and status. We have failed to fully embrace the principles of stewardship and sustainability, of God's concern for those experiencing poverty and their participation in processes and policies, of accepting for our own lives that which is sufficient (rather than the constant accumulation of more), and of solidarity with all creation. **We recommit our energy, our treasure and our vision to a future in which God's creation is restored**, the human family lives together in balance and justice with each other, and the social and ecological destruction that our society inflicts on the world is reversed and repaired. (emphasis added)<sup>9</sup>

**We should invest in a green future.** Beyond seeking out investments in renewable energy projects, Investing in a Green Future calls upon us to recommit to the "Polluter Pays" principle first lifted up in "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice."<sup>10</sup> As we begin to take seriously our culpability for the harms our investments in fossil fuels and

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<sup>7</sup> The Power to Speak Truth to Power: A Public Policy Statement on Energy, Its Production and Use, Adopted by the 121st (1981) General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S., and by the 193rd (1981) General Assembly, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.; with a Background Analysis, by Robert L. Stivers, Commended for Study in Connection with the Public Policy Statement. Section II, Theology.

<sup>8</sup> Investing in A Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation; Recommendation 3

<sup>9</sup> IBID

<sup>10</sup> IBID. 8.e

addiction to careless patterns of living have inflicted, we commit to use our financial resources to right these harms by establishing a fund from which grants would be made to address them in restorative and redemptive ways in accordance with the broadened vision of the “Green Future” document – ways which may represent a truly just transition.

Writing in the ACT Alliance Final Reflection on COP 30, November 26th, 2025, Elena Cedillo, Lutheran World Federation Program Executive for Climate Justice writes:

“A just transition is not just a technical change to energy systems, but a comprehensive transformation grounded in equity, participation, and human rights.” [A Just Transition will] “ensure that the transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future is truly just and leaves no one behind.”

In “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming”, the 218th General Assembly (2008) urged “the ‘Restoring Creation’ program to establish a Presbyterian Green Energy Fund, which would help congregations and other organizations in our church reduce their carbon footprint through investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy production, and Green-certified carbon offsets.” (Recommendation 3.b) So far as we are aware, no such fund was ever established. The Green Future Fund we are proposing, inspired by the broad vision of a just transition for society as well as the church, would be much broader than the one envisioned by the 218th General Assembly and would therefore require substantial investment of time, energy, contributions, and publicity for the realization of its purposes.

**What we do as a denomination matters.** To those who might complain regarding the use of scarce financial resources for such an undertaking, we would quote once more from “Investing in a Green Future”:

“Instead of focusing on the difficulties or expense, we must lift up our vision and actions to create a revived environment, better health outcomes, employment opportunities that provide a living wage, clean air and water, wilderness preserved for its own sake, universal access to healthy food and the reconciliation of broken relationships.”<sup>11</sup>

May this action become a small step toward the “fruits” which John the Baptist said all true repentance requires.

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<sup>11</sup> “Green Future” Rationale conclusion.

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley**  
**Executive Council report to Presbytery**  
**February 19, 2026**

**Members of Executive Council****Class of 2026**

Debra Love  
 Neil McCarter\*  
 Wendy Tucker  
 Jonathan Yarboro\*

**Class of 2027**

Tom Bryson\*  
 Terry Hamilton-Poore\*  
 Terri Moon Jones  
 Donna Winn

**Class of 2028**

Leeann Scarbrough\*  
 Joe Scrivner\*  
 John Sculer CP  
 Jothany James

**Action Items:**           None

**Information Items:**

The Executive Council of PSL held regular, monthly meetings in December 2025 and January 2026. The majority of EC focus has been on the ongoing work of the Transition Team. The body elected a new Stated Clerk in November. Marilyn Tucker Marek began service in that capacity in December and was able to have some transition time with outgoing Stated Clerk Jay Wilkins.

EC, together with the Transition Team, decided it would be helpful to establish a bridge team to work alongside our new Stated Clerk and General Presbyter. This team would serve for approximately six months once both positions have been filled. Michael Bailey, Deborah Thomas ( not Love), Jothany James, and Jonathan Yarboro have agreed to serve as the bridge team.

In addition, PSL staff, EC, PSL Personnel, and the Transition Team concurred that it would be best to extend Sue Westfall's service as General Presbyter through the end of March, if needed. Sue agreed to delay her official retirement until that time. This adjustment should allow for a smoother transition to a new General Presbyter once that person is called.

In December, EC began to discuss possible priorities for 2026. In January, those priorities were solidified. They are:

1. EC will facilitate Opportunities for Enrichment at each Presbytery meeting in 2026.
2. Emphasizing and enhancing connectional nature with smaller congregations.
3. Encourage congregations to designate Pentecost Offering 2026 to the Congo Partnership Scholarship program.
4. Follow and empower redevelopment of UKirk B'ham.
5. Future connection for some congregations with Rooted Good.
6. Continued advocacy and support for Matthew 25 Initiative.

EC wants to shift the focus of presbytery meetings from hearing reports to celebrating God's good news as it continues to be revealed. The docket and requests for time to address the body will be adjusted accordingly. Our main focus should be worship, fellowship, and opportunities for enrichment.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Yarboro  
Moderator / PSL Executive Council 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

Committee: Commission on Ministry

Committee Chair(s): deNay Kirkpatrick, Commissioned Pastor and the Reverend Nick Reed,  
Co-Moderators

Meeting date(s) since last stated Presbytery Meeting: December 10, 2025 and January 13, 2026  
- possible meeting to be held February 10, 2026

Summary of Subjects discussed and/or Actions Taken:

Information Items:

1. Honor the retirement of the Reverend Richard Atkerson
2. Report from the Co-Directors of the Commissioned Pastor program
3. Thanked the Rev. Jonathan Yarboro, the Rev. Elizabeth O'Neill, Elder Charles Nash, and Pastor Carl Martin for their years of faithful service to the COM
4. Nick Reed and deNay Kirkpatrick were elected Co-Moderators and Rachel Winter was elected Clerk for the 2026 year.
5. Reverend Yoo Chang Bang was given permission to serve outside the bounds of our presbytery at the Open Kingdom Korean Presbyterian Church in Montgomery, Alabama. It is a PCA church. He is serving in PC(USA) campus ministry in the Montgomery area and will continue to do so while also serving at Open Kingdom.
6. COM voted to concur with Lee Cleveland serving as a representative for the Enduring Legacy Committee.
7. Separation Guidelines for Stated Clerk and General Presbyter were approved.
8. Along with Michael Bailey, Moderator of the Personnel Committee, held an exit interview with the Rev. Sue Westfall

Actions Items to be presented for Presbytery Approval:

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 role.

Respectfully submitted,

deNay Kirkpatrick, Commissioned Pastor, Co-Moderator

The Reverend Nick Reed, Co-Moderator

Other Items about which you wish to make a verbal presentation at the next Stated Presbytery Meeting: none

**Appendix A-10**

**Churches requesting permission to continue supply relationships for 2026:**

- a. **Calvary** requests permission to continue their relationship with Lisa Winston.
- b. **Cahaba Springs** requests permission to continue their relationship with deNay Kirkpatrick. Terms \$13,860 yr
- c. **Dodson Memorial** requests permission to continue their relationship with David Lyons. Terms \$300 each Sunday
- d. **First, Jacksonville** requests permission to continue their relationship with David Lyons and Terry Tingle – Terms \$175 plus mileage and with Rev. Shelaine Bird – Terms \$225 plus mileage.
- e. **First Sylacauga** requests permission to continue their relationship with Charles Sims through August 31, 2026
- f. **Gardendale** requests permission to continue their relationship with Jeff Bonner – Terms \$17,160 yr.
- g. **Goodwater** requests permission to continue their relationship with Pete McElrath, Jeff Coker and Paul Golden – Terms \$250 per Sunday.
- h. **Green Pond** requests permission to continue their relationship with Beverly Dodson. Terms \$150 week
- i. **Leeds** requests permission to continue their relationship with Sharon Eich – Terms \$175 per Sunday
- j. **Marion Junction** requests permission to continue their relationship with George Wood.
- k. **Montevallo** requests permission to continue their relationship with Wayne McLaughlin. Terms \$270 each Sunday
- l. **Pisgah** requests permission to continue their relationship with Ira Blanchard. Terms \$3,250 yr.
- m. **Riverchase** requests permission to continue their relationship with Robert Emerick- Terms \$1854 month
- n. **Union Springs** requests permission to continue their relationship with Bill Sauser – Terms \$800 per month
- o. **Valley Creek** requests permission to continue their relationship with David Hodo. No salary
- p. **Westminster, Tuskegee** requests permission to continue their relationship with Michael Thurman. Terms \$301.92 per Sunday
- q.

# Presbyterian Home *for* Children

*Raising hopes, growing confidence, and nurturing faith since 1868*

Post Office Drawer 577 ♦ Talladega, Alabama 35161

Telephone: 256.362.2114 ♦ Fax: 256.362.6265 ♦ E-mail: [info@phfc.org](mailto:info@phfc.org) ♦ Website: [www.phfc.org](http://www.phfc.org)

Appendix A-11



MR. DOUG MARSHALL

*President/CEO*

January 29, 2026

Dear Friends in Christ,

2025 was a big year for PHFC as we made significant investments as part of a multi-year plan to renovate our historic 80-acre campus and strengthen services addressing housing instability, family separation, educational barriers, and trauma-related needs. These efforts reflect a growing emphasis on stability, hope and long-term healing for the children and families PHFC serves. We are excited about restoring our historic chapel and providing a place for residents, staff and guests to meditate, reflect and pray. Our Director of Spiritual Life Rev. Leeann Scarbrough will have an office there where individuals can come for guidance and grace.



We are completing our new playground for small children and families on campus to enjoy. The accompanying pavilion will be named in memory of Felicia Ayers Storey, honoring her nearly 40 years of faithful service and leadership at the Home. Our dear leader and friend passed away in February 2023.

We formed an innovative partnership with Talladega College's Social Work program that allows their social work students to complete practicum instruction alongside our experienced social workers. This will help them gain hands-on experience while serving our moms and children, as well as young women without children who live on our campus. Students will work directly with clients who receive support with housing, budgeting, education assistance,



transportation, parenting classes, and healing from crisis and trauma. This partnership strengthens our mission while preparing compassionate, skilled social workers to make a lasting impact in our communities.

The Home also expanded our relationship with Talladega College and their new President Willie Todd, Jr. – pictured sitting with me and our leaders above – by offering the option for their students in need to participate in our Transition to Adult Living program. This program helps young women ages 19-26 who are without a strong support system. They come to live on our campus and get full wrap-around program supports until they're ready to fly.

In November, we told you about our new initiative in our Secure Dwellings Program that currently provides safe and secure housing for children and their female caregivers that need a home, like Olivia and her two boys pictured at First Decatur Cottage. Through our new Family Unity Center, we have been working with DHR to help moms who have lost custody of their children due to unsuitable housing regain custody. They move onto our campus, and we stabilize and strengthen the moms and then we advocate for them with DHR to get their children back. Once they regain custody of their children, they can move into one of our Secure Dwellings cottages with our other families or into suitable housing within the community. We have already seen success in this program with one mom getting her three children back in late January with the help of our social workers advocating for her in court!



Education remains a cornerstone of our impact. At Ascension Leadership Academy, our K-12 private school, we opened an entire new floor to accommodate growth and prepare room for more students. The school has seen a lot of success in helping families access the state's CHOOSE Act scholarship, making high-quality, personalized education more accessible. And, looking ahead to 2026, ALA plans to enroll 20 additional students through the CHOOSE Act. Ascension is located at



First Presbyterian Church of Talladega, who is hosting the Presbytery meeting in February. We are very grateful for the special mission partnership with this faithful congregation and are looking forward to welcoming everyone to Ascension and to our beautiful campus under renovations on your way home.

PHFC also continued to expand Caminos®, our specialized program serving unaccompanied migrant minors off campus in homes across Alabama and neighboring states. Through home studies and post-release services in partnership with the US Office of Refugee Resettlement, Caminos® helps ensure children are placed in safe environments and connected to essential resources.

The Home grew our Mission Outreach in Wilcox County, where families face some of the state's highest poverty rates. This fall, we expanded to support 250 elementary students at a school in Pine Hill through a new Caring Closet that provides food, clothing, school supplies, access to laundry equipment, and faith-based encouragement. We hope to add two more Caring Closets at the other elementary schools in Wilcox County this year.



In November 2025, Rev. Brandon Miles, who was our Moderator, and I wrote a letter to our Board after our Strategic Planning Retreat in October. I wanted to share a part of that letter regarding the early framework of a long-term strategic plan for PHFC. "To accomplish this, committees and staff are being assigned follow-up items across the major priority areas identified at the retreat: mission clarity, program alignment, financial sustainability governance, development, culture of faith and wholeness, community partnerships, and performance management. This update includes an action plan with assigned roles for committees and staff to complete a long-term strategic plan for the PHFC. The work we do in the coming months will set the tone for the coming years. We pray this time might be a holy time, a time of diligent work, while also pausing to listen to the still small voice of God moving amongst us and with us. As we move into this new chapter, we are embracing what Henri Nouwen called active waiting. A posture of slowing down enough to listen for God's direction while still taking responsible, purposeful steps forward. Active waiting is not inactivity. It is discernment with intention. It is planning at the pace of the Spirit. It is strategic thinking rooted in trust. In that spirit, our committees and leadership team are

invited to begin the careful work of mission refinement, financial analysis, partnership evaluation, and program alignment. Thank you for your willingness to embrace this rhythm of listening and leading. The path ahead is hopeful as we walk it together, with God's steady guidance."

As always, we are deeply grateful for the Presbytery's prayers, encouragement, and steadfast partnership. Your support sustains this ministry and makes it possible for PHFC to respond faithfully and creatively to the needs God places before us. We remain committed to walking alongside you as we seek God's guidance, trusting that the Spirit is at work in the lives of the children and families we serve and in the church that surrounds them. Thank you for journeying with us in hope, discernment, and shared mission.

Thanks be to God!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doug Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Doug Marshall

President and CEO



## February 2026 Newsletter

### Living River Annual Report, 2025

#### Living River's Impact

- Living River served over 360 kids and youth in 2025:
  - Living River's retreats and Summer Camp served 226 kids and youth.
  - With your generous help, 15 campers were able to attend summer camp with almost full scholarship plus 11 campers from Wilcox Co. with full scholarships.
  - Field trips served 134 kids and youth.
- Over 300 individual visitors come to Living River either enjoying the property during an Open day or participating in Fall River Fest, 2025. This year at Fall River Fest, Alabama's Poet Laureate, Ashley Jones, and Poet Jermaine Thompson shared poems and stories plus live music, river walks, painting, and more!
- A diversity of rental groups booked and enjoyed retreats at Living River throughout the year, including two week-long Civil Rights Pilgrimages, one from Wisconsin and one from California. Over 900 people found *connection in a sacred place* as a part of a retreat group.
- The University of Alabama Atkinson Mussel Lab, Alabama Aquatic Biodiversity Center, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services monitored species, and Cahaba Riverkeeper continued water testing.

#### Thank you to Living River's 2025 donors!

All donations of time, talent, and resources of every size made Living River's ministry possible last year! Bolded names are **Bedrock Sustaining Donors**. Bedrock Program details are on Living River's website.

<b>Anonymous Donor</b>	<b>Carolyn Collins</b>	Edward Gilmore	Jeanne Jackson
Barrett Abernethy	<b>Ralls &amp; Denise Coston</b>	<b>Pat &amp; Charles Goodman</b>	<b>Frank &amp; Jothany James</b>
<b>Robert &amp; Ree Almon</b>	<b>Frank Covington</b>	<b>Michael &amp; Gillian</b>	<b>Carl &amp; Julie Jamison</b>
Augusta Andrews	<b>Deborah and Scott</b>	<b>Goodrich</b>	Christian Johnson
<b>Tambra Angle</b>	<b>Crumpton</b>	<b>Gene &amp; Dorothy Grimes</b>	Seth Johnson
M.F.R. Ashcraft	<b>Mary Curtner-Smith</b>	<b>Park &amp; Ann Grimmer</b>	<b>Allen &amp; Lindsay Jones</b>
<b>Steve &amp; Carolyn Ashworth</b>	<b>Mary Dalrymple</b>	<b>Susan Grimmer</b>	<b>Heather Kaiser</b>
<b>Rick &amp; Beth Atkerson</b>	<b>Larry &amp; Rebecca</b>	<b>Benga Harrison</b>	Lili Kane
<b>Jim &amp; Susan Bannon</b>	<b>Davenport</b>	Marlon & Monique Harton	<b>Sara Kaylor</b>
Janet Barnes	<b>Glenn &amp; Chris Davis</b>	<b>Kent &amp; Anna Hartzog</b>	<b>Helen Keller</b>
<b>Karin &amp; Sam Bell</b>	<b>Doug Deslattes</b>	<b>Wyatt &amp; Susan Haskell</b>	<b>Leland &amp; Marty Keller</b>
<b>Susan &amp; Art Benke</b>	<b>Molly Dorman</b>	<b>Bess Hatcher</b>	<b>Kara Kilpatrick &amp;</b>
<b>J &amp; Heather Benoit</b>	<b>Charles &amp; Sandy Durham</b>	<b>Kevin and Julie Hay</b>	<b>Jeno Smith</b>
<b>Lee Benoit</b>	Larry & Kathleen Dutton	<b>Robert &amp; Morgan Hay Jr.</b>	<b>Shelley King</b>
<b>Suzanne Benton</b>	<b>John &amp; Susan Edwards</b>	<b>Robert &amp; Janice Hay</b>	<b>deNay &amp; Will Kirkpatrick</b>
<b>Don &amp; Mary Blakeley</b>	Mark & Ginny Ezekiel	<b>Scott &amp; Angie Hayes</b>	Harvey & Dottie Kline
Jeff & Cathie Bonner	Betsy Faucette	David Henderson	Deborah Laws
Sara & Brewer Brown	Kimble Forrister &	<b>Sarah &amp; Alan Hewitt</b>	<b>Melinda &amp; Norris</b>
<b>Barry Burns</b>	Calli Patterson	<b>Helene Hibbard</b>	<b>Leavelle</b>
<b>John Childers</b>	<b>Amy Frasier</b>	Lisa Hohman	Linda LeBron
<b>Linda Cicero</b>	Jane French	Kent & Lisa Howard	Debra and Darryl Love
<b>Gretchen Cloud</b>	<b>John &amp; Pam Gam</b>	<b>Hilda Hudson</b>	<b>Bruce &amp; Jeannine Ludwig</b>
<b>Frank &amp; Jo Ann Cobb</b>	<b>Yvonne Gauntt</b>	<b>Steven &amp; Stephanie Hunt</b>	Summer Lusk

**Virginia MacRae**  
 Anna Mandy  
**Brian & Chris Anne**  
 Massengale  
**Rachel & Wes Mathews**  
 Tommy & Beth McDanal  
 Allen McGiffert  
**David & Ann McGiffert**  
**Megan McGiffert**  
**Price & Elizabeth**  
 McGiffert  
**Henry McPherson**  
**George & Bess Miller**  
**John Miller**  
**Ira & Anne Mitchell**  
 John Moore  
**Betsy & Bill Murphy**  
**Al & Janet Nebrig**  
**Robert Newman**  
**Barbara & Robert Nicol**

Ives Ort  
 Janet Ort  
**Jay Patton**  
**Joe and Amy Perkins**  
**Lee Ann & Preston**  
 Peyton  
 Mary Porter  
**Ellen & Daniel Potts**  
**Julie Potts**  
**John Powell**  
**Charlie Pritchett**  
**Caryl Privett**  
**Natalie Reed**  
**Nick & Kathy Reed**  
**Rick & Judy Reed**  
**Mallory & Martha**  
 Reeves  
**David Renaker**  
 Patrick Riley  
**Joe & Bonnie Rives**

**Emily Roberts**  
 Emily & William Robison  
 Sandy Schrohenloher  
**Ed Senter &**  
**Jessica Germany**  
**Jim & Katherine**  
 Shepherd Jr.  
**Anita Sherman**  
 Kay Smith  
 Ridgley Smith  
 Rush Smith  
 Andy Spaulding  
**Alan & Linda Speaker**  
**Alan & Leanne Spencer**  
**Jim & Sue Stapleton**  
**Allen Tartt**  
 Frankie Tatum  
**Jenny & George Thagard**  
**Sharon & Les Thagard**  
**Hannah Tucker**

**Wendy & James Tucker**  
**Marilyn Tucker-Marek &**  
 Ken Marek  
**Steve and Laura Underhill**  
**Lin & Lawson Veasey**  
**Myrna Walker**  
**Lee Walthall**  
 Suzanne & Phillip Ward  
**Dana Waters**  
 Thomas Watkins  
**Thomas Wells**  
**Meagan & Blake**  
 Westbrook  
**Sue Westfall**  
**Lydia Wilfong**  
**Bill & Frances Woodruff**  
 Willis & Barbara Young



**Special Thanks to 2025's Grant-Giving Foundations and Church/Organizational Donors**

**Thank you to the Calhoun Presbyterian Apartments Foundation, Inc.,** for painting the exteriors of five of its eight buildings to preserve their integrity and help attract new retreat groups, camper families, and partners.

**Thank you to The Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation** for renewing a grant for a development staff position. Dedicated staff attention to development and programming is essential for Living River's growth.

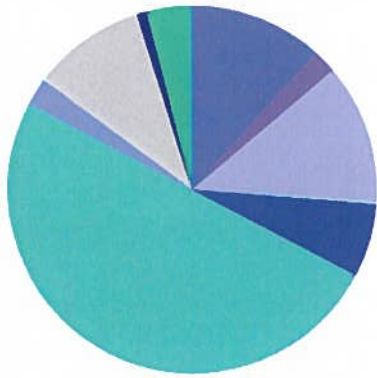
**Thank you to the Southminster Presbyterian Church Foundation** for a grant to put shade over Living River's outdoor recreation area.

**Edgewood Presbyterian Church**  
**First Presbyterian Church Auburn**  
**First Presbyterian Church Birmingham**  
**First Presbyterian Church Livingston**  
**First Presbyterian Church Tuscaloosa**  
**First Presbyterian Church Wetumpka**  
**Grace Presbyterian Church**  
**Immanuel Presbyterian Church**  
**Independent Presbyterian Church**  
**Montevallo Presbyterian Church**  
**Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church**

**Oakmont Chapel Presbyterian Church**  
**Presbyterian Ministries United Appeal**  
 Presbyterian Women, Brown Memorial  
**Presbyterian Women, Grace**  
**Presbyterian Women, South Highland**  
**Riverchase Presbyterian Church**  
**South Highland Presbyterian Church**  
**Southminster Presbyterian Church**  
**St. John's Episcopal Church**  
**The Claude Bennett Family Foundation**

## Financial Review of 2025

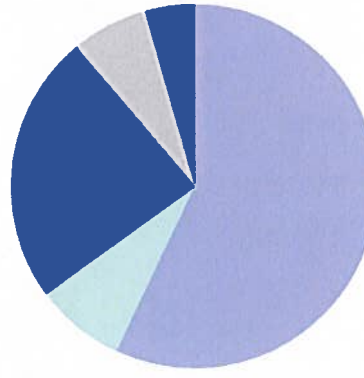
**Living River's Sources of Funds, 2025**



- Summer Camp - 11.7%
- Year Round LR Programs - 2.1%
- Retreat & Rental Revenue - 12.4%
- Merchandise/Misc. Revenue - 0.1%
- Trinity Presbyterian Sale Payments - 6.4%
- Annual Contribution Fund - 50%
- Summer Camp Scholarship Fund - 2.4%
- Grants - 10.1%
- Interest/Dividends - 0.8%
- Withdrawal from Endowment - 4%

**Total 2024 Operating Revenue: \$477,366**

**Living River's Uses of Funds, 2025**



- Personnel & Fees for Services - 57%
- Program Expenses - 8%
- Facilities - 23.9%
- Mortgage Payments - 6.7%
- Administration - 4.4%

**Total 2024 Operating Expenses: \$446,754**

### Exciting Ways to Make an Impact through Living River

Living River's endowment, the Living River Legacy Fund, grew to \$496,200 in 2025. **Please consider bequests to the Living River Legacy Fund in your will or by designating donations to the Legacy Fund.** A 4% annual endowment draw supports Living River's operations. Imagine what will be possible as the Living River Legacy Fund grows!



#### Help Living River retire its mortgage by Jenny's retirement, July 2027

When Jenny started as Living River's Executive Director in 2018, Living River's mortgage was over \$1 million. The mortgage balance now stands at \$78,205! With regular monthly payments, the mortgage would be paid off in 2.5 years. Help Living River pay it off early by July 2027 as a retirement gift to Living River's longtime, faithful leader, Jenny, and free up more funds for Living River programming!



#### Living River's Capital Improvement Fund

To perform preventive maintenance and replace appliances as needed, Living River aims to maintain a capital improvement fund of at least \$150,000. Consider helping Living River raise \$60,000 to replenish its Capital Improvement fund. Thank you!

**To donate or learn more about Living River visit [www.livingriver.org](http://www.livingriver.org).**

#### 2026 Living River Calendar

<b>April 11-13</b> You & Me Retreat	
<b>May 27-June 6</b> Counselor Training	
<b>June 8-13</b> Night Owl Camp and Elementary Camp 1	<b>Open Days</b>
<b>June 16-20</b> Creative Camp	<b>Feb. 14 July 18</b>
<b>June 22-26</b> Elementary Camp 2	<b>March 21 Aug. 15</b>
<b>June 27-29</b> You & Me Camp	<b>April 11 Sept. 19</b>
<b>October 19</b> Fall River Fest	<b>May 9 Nov. 21</b>
<b>November 9-11</b> Elementary Retreat	<b>June 20 Dec. 19</b>

#### Other Opportunities at Living River

**Share the Counselor in Training (CIT) opportunity!** High schoolers can be CITs at elementary or creative camps, a great way to learn and build friendships!  
**Volunteer to help with administrative tasks, maintenance projects, or for Summer Camp.** As a small staff, Living River can use help with mailings, facilities projects, and adult leadership, kitchen help, or nursing for summer camp! Email [office@livingriver.org](mailto:office@livingriver.org) with any questions.

## Executive Director's Corner

It's always a bit of a nail-biter when we turn the corner at year-end to wait on the December contributions to be deposited, and the final bills to be paid. We received an email from our incredible bookkeeper, Wendy Tucker, after everything had been reconciled, with the first sentence of **"What an amazing year at Living River!"** Big exhale, and a whoop of joy!

Many thanks to Rachel for her good work in raising funds, obtaining grants, developing donors, building relationships, and developing programs; Brett's good work in staying under budget by making repairs that could have been contracted out, taking on cleaning duties, and monitoring utility costs; and Greg's good work in providing assistance and hospitality to our retreat groups. Living River operated within our budget, and donations totaling \$238,601 exceeded our \$207,000 target. Wendy also noted that Living River had never broken the \$200,000 threshold for individual contributions. More importantly, is the impact Living River has had on campers, organizations, and congregations who have been our guests this past year. We appreciate each of you who sees and supports Living River's work as we strive to steward this sacred space on the Cahaba for connection to self, others, nature, and God. -Jenny Thagard



LIVING RIVER  
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

2000 Living River Parkway  
Montevallo, AL 35115



## **Report from the Stated Clerk, Rev. Marilyn McKelvey Tucker-Marek**

**Administrative Commissions and Response Teams:** See the included report from the Administrative Commission to Providence Presbyterian Church.

### **Bills and Overtures**

Deadlines for the 227th General Assembly February 22, 2026: All reports from General Assembly entities, all overtures with constitutional implications, all requests for authoritative interpretation; April 22, 2026: All overtures without constitutional implications and the report of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution.

**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.

**Congregational Statistical Reports:** The deadline for congregational statistical reports from 2025 is Friday, February 20th, 2026. Statistical Reports should receive session approval before being submitted. The Presbytery has until March 13, 2026 to submit statistical reports, so if a congregation misses the Feb. 20 deadline, please provide the statistical report information (using the form in this packet), to the Stated Clerk by March 10, 2026, and she can submit it on behalf of a congregation.

**2025 Session Minutes Review Plan:** Saturday, May 16, 2026 from 10am-12pm there will be a Presbytery-wide minutes review event online. Electronic minutes from congregations who wish to participate must be submitted to Tammy Strickland and Marilyn Tucker-Marek, by Monday, May 11, 2026. Minutes will be uploaded to basecamp, and participants will be assigned another congregation’s minutes to read and review. It is recommended that those participating in this minutes review event have two devices (or two screens) available for use, one on which to read and review minutes, and one on which to participate in the Zoom event.

Churches that wish to provide their minutes in print form to the Stated Clerk should bring those minutes to the stated Presbytery meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2026. Minutes will be reviewed and returned at the stated Presbytery meeting on Thursday, August 20, 2026. If this is a congregation’s preferred minutes review option, please do NOT provide the only copy of session minutes when submitting them for review. Please make a photocopy, provide the Stated Clerk with the copy of the session minutes, and keep the original copy for session records and reference.

Administrative Commission Report to Presbytery  
Providence AC  
February 19, 2026

The Providence Presbyterian Church Administrative Commission is winding down its work. Here is a summary of actions that have taken place since the last meeting of presbytery:

- Session requested that the AC assume Original Jurisdiction, effective January 19, 2026. The AC will remain active until the final legal paperwork regarding dissolution of Providence as a 501c3 entity in the state.
- Sale of all Providence Property to ARC of Montgomery closed mid-October. Proceeds of the sale have been deposited with The Presbyterian Foundation and a process for distribution will begin January 2026. The proceeds were set up in a sinking fund investment in order to ensure that net proceeds are delivered to recipients without incurring any fees or other reductions.
- Twelve mission partners will receive a portion of the net sale of the property. The three main recipients are The Presbyterian Home for Children, Meals on Wheels of Montgomery, and Medical Outreach Ministries. Nine other organizations will receive donations to enhance ministry, including The Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM). The Legacy Fund for Enduring Witness of Presbytery will also be a recipient.

Respectfully submitted,

Wes Padgett – Elder, Providence, Krysten Holloway – Elder, Westminster Birmingham  
Jerry Sailor – Elder, Providence, Sue Westfall – General Presbyter, PSL  
Jonathan Yarboro – Pastor, First Wetumpka

## **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.

**Committee: Finance**

**Committee Chair(s): Wendy Tucker**

**Meeting date(s) since last stated Presbytery Meeting: January 13**

**Summary of Subjects discussed and/or Actions Taken: Meeting opened with prayer.**

Discussion on a designated meeting date resulted in a decision to meet on the third Thursday of the month at 3:00 via zoom. Since Presbytery meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of February, May, August and November, we will not meet those months.

Executive Council asked for the finance committee to consider a plan for when we get more funds than we need from a request to respond to a particular need such as our solicitation for funds to respond to needs after the Pine Hill tornado. The finance committee recommends to Executive Council that we provide a secondary purpose when a solicitation is made and that the standard request would be that any unused funds be added to a Presbytery Disaster Relief Fund. We feel this will demonstrate an expectation of generosity and a plan to be good stewards of all donations.

Sue Westfall shared a request from the Search Committee for travel reimbursement for in person interviews with two General Presbyter candidates. The cost is anticipated to be \$600. Sue authorized the expenditure from the Presbytery meetings line item. Depending on the expenses for Presbytery meetings this year, the Presbytery meetings line might be over budget by the end of the year.

Meeting was closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy Tucker

Members Present:

<b>Class of 2026</b>	<b>Class of 2027</b>	<b>Class of 2028</b>
Laura Ray	Alicia Foster	Sheila Holland
John Schuler	Kevin Long	Wendy Tucker, moderator

Sue Westfall, General Presbyter  
Jean Russell, Treasurer

Actions Items to be presented for Presbytery Approval: none

Other Items about which you wish to make a verbal presentation at the next Stated Presbytery Meeting: none

The finance committee is, according to the standing rules excerpted below, a committee of the executive council. As such we typically report to the Executive Council.

**Our items of business include:**

- 1. preparation of the annual budget for approval at the November Presbytery meeting. We typically present a first draft at the August Presbytery meeting.**
- 2. a recommendation regarding per capita for PSL to be included with the presentation of the annual budget**
- 3. preparation of a brochure for use in articulating the budget and the work it supports**
- 4. other items of business requested by the executive council**

**From Standing Rules:**

**SR-6.01.01.06 Executive Council Committees shall be:**

**a. Personnel – The Personnel Committee will have the responsibility to provide oversight, evaluation, and review of the employees of Presbytery. It will recommend stipends to the Finance Committee, keep job descriptions current, establish an appropriate process for review and evaluation of the employees, and conduct an annual evaluation. The Personnel Committee shall be at least five persons. The committee will ordinarily be chaired by an elected voting member of the Executive Council. The other members of the Personnel Committee will be nominated by the Nominating Committee with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403) and will be elected for three-year terms. Members will be allowed to serve two consecutive terms or a total of six consecutive years.**

**b. Finance – The Finance committee has responsibility for oversight of the Presbytery Financials. This includes preparation of the annual budget, an annual financial review of Presbytery funds by an outside party, and oversight and maintenance of the Presbytery Financial Policy and Accounting Procedures found in Appendix II of these Standing SR Page 13 Rules. The Finance Committee membership shall be at least 5 persons. The committee will normally be chaired by an elected voting member of the Executive Council. The current Presbytery Treasurer will also be a member. The other three members will be nominated by the Nominating Committee of Presbytery with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403) and will be elected for three-year terms. Members will be allowed to serve two consecutive terms or a total of six consecutive years.**

**c. Equip, Nurture and Connect (ENC) will have the responsibility for faith formation and leadership development. Its purpose is to provide educational opportunities for strengthening faith across all age groups, in settings which may not be available to congregations on their own. Equipping persons in leadership development while strengthening connections with peer groups, with the community and with new ideas will be the primary focus of the ENC. The ENC will normally be chaired by an elected voting member of the Executive Council. Membership of ENC shall be at least 5 persons other than the chair, representing the program areas of ENC and a representative from Youth Council. With the exception of the Youth Council representative (elected by presbytery for Youth Council), they are to be nominated by the Nominating Committee of Presbytery with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403) and elected for a three-year term. Advisory**

members of the ENC may include professional staff and Living River Executive Director, with voice but without vote.

1. Presbytery Youth Council has the responsibility for planning and carrying out events, retreats and activities for the youth of the Presbytery. Membership on Youth Council will include both adults and youth. Adult membership will be six adults in three classes, elected by the Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. Youth membership will have an unspecified number of youth in two classes, Junior and Senior year of high school, elected by the Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. Total youth membership shall not normally exceed 18. The term of membership for both youth and adults follows the academic calendar (June - May), with election normally occurring at the May Presbytery meeting. The adult membership shall recommend to the Nominating Committee the slate of youth members as determined by an application process, with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity.
2. Committee Task Forces, Planning Teams, or Steering committees may be organized for events and training opportunities for the program areas of ENC (i.e. Small Church, Children, Camp scholarships, Leadership Training, Campus Ministry including UKirk Bham, etc.). These committees and teams will be selected by ENC members for specific programs to carry out the mission of the ENC.

**d. Bills and Overtures Committee**

1. Will have the responsibility of receiving all overtures and amendments which have been referred to Presbytery and providing advice to the Executive Council regarding the action on such overtures and amendments.
2. Will have the responsibility of receiving new business brought to the floor of a Presbytery meeting and make recommendations to the Presbytery.
3. The committee shall be nominated by the Moderator of Presbytery according to SR4.01.01d

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley**  
**Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - Summary**  
**January to December 2025**

**Appendix A-17**

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	\$27,087.39	\$18,789.37	\$303,238.17	\$225,472.00	\$77,766.17	\$225,472.00
Mission Giving-Income	\$3,339.87	\$1,851.88	\$24,321.09	\$22,223.00	\$2,098.09	\$22,223.00
Per Capita Income	\$9,494.33	\$15,318.63	\$181,817.16	\$183,824.00	(\$2,006.84)	\$183,824.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<u>\$39,921.59</u>	<u>\$35,959.88</u>	<u>\$509,376.42</u>	<u>\$431,519.00</u>	<u>\$77,857.42</u>	<u>\$431,519.00</u>
<b>Expenses</b>						
<b>Council</b>						
Council Expenses-Other	\$0.00	\$931.25	\$10,000.00	\$11,175.00	\$1,175.00	\$11,175.00
<b>Salaries &amp; Allowances</b>						
Executive Presbyter	\$10,581.71	\$10,146.51	\$123,221.47	\$121,759.00	(\$1,462.47)	\$121,759.00
Administrative Salaries	\$1,125.00	\$375.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	\$0.00	\$4,500.00
Staff Expenses	\$3,653.85	\$350.00	\$4,195.15	\$4,200.00	\$4.85	\$4,200.00
<b>Total Salaries &amp; Allowances</b>	<u>\$15,360.56</u>	<u>\$10,871.51</u>	<u>\$131,916.62</u>	<u>\$130,459.00</u>	<u>(\$1,457.62)</u>	<u>\$130,459.00</u>
<b>Total Council</b>	<u>\$15,360.56</u>	<u>\$11,802.76</u>	<u>\$141,916.62</u>	<u>\$141,634.00</u>	<u>(\$282.62)</u>	<u>\$141,634.00</u>
<b>Equip, Nurture, Connect</b>						
Other ENC Expenses	\$1,420.89	\$1,266.74	\$12,315.18	\$15,200.00	\$2,884.82	\$15,200.00
<b>Total Equip, Nurture, Connect</b>	<u>\$1,420.89</u>	<u>\$1,266.74</u>	<u>\$12,315.18</u>	<u>\$15,200.00</u>	<u>\$2,884.82</u>	<u>\$15,200.00</u>
Mission	\$0.00	\$12.50	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00
UKirk Birmingham	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Trustees	\$5,223.70	\$5,478.73	\$83,801.07	\$65,743.00	(\$18,058.07)	\$65,743.00
<b>Presbytery Per Capita Expenses</b>						
Stated Clerk & Moderator	\$1,906.51	\$2,546.25	\$28,634.52	\$30,555.00	\$1,920.48	\$30,555.00
Presbytery Commissions	\$0.00	\$333.48	\$2,799.06	\$4,000.00	\$1,200.94	\$4,000.00
Asst.to Stated Clerk/Ofc Mgr	\$5,435.55	\$5,435.50	\$65,268.01	\$65,226.00	(\$42.01)	\$65,226.00
<b>Total Presbytery Per Capita Expenses</b>	<u>\$7,342.06</u>	<u>\$8,315.23</u>	<u>\$96,701.59</u>	<u>\$99,781.00</u>	<u>\$3,079.41</u>	<u>\$99,781.00</u>
<b>Per Capita-Expenses</b>	<u>\$4,460.93</u>	<u>\$8,279.38</u>	<u>\$97,802.46</u>	<u>\$99,353.00</u>	<u>\$1,550.54</u>	<u>\$99,353.00</u>
Mission Giving-Expenses	\$4,197.72	\$1,851.88	\$25,178.94	\$22,223.00	(\$2,955.94)	\$22,223.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u>\$38,005.86</u>	<u>\$37,007.22</u>	<u>\$457,715.86</u>	<u>\$444,084.00</u>	<u>(\$13,631.86)</u>	<u>\$444,084.00</u>
<b>Net Operating Total</b>	\$1,915.73	(\$1,047.34)	\$51,660.56	(\$12,565.00)	\$64,225.56	(\$12,565.00)
<b>Other Revenues</b>						
Designated Income (Loss)	\$101,832.68	\$0.00	\$115,830.30	\$0.00	\$115,830.30	\$0.00
Property Contributions	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$416,448.96	\$0.00	\$416,448.96	\$0.00
<b>Total Other Revenues</b>	<u>\$101,832.68</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$559,059.43</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$559,059.43</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
<b>Other Expenses</b>						
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<u>\$2,792.89</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$33,514.68</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>(\$33,514.68)</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
<b>Net Total</b>	\$100,955.52	(\$1,047.34)	\$577,205.31	(\$12,565.00)	\$589,770.31	(\$12,565.00)

## Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

January 2026

Presbyterian Women have been involved the missions and celebrations of our beloved communities during this time of Advent and Christmas. As we look to the new year, we are exploring ways to connect and reach out to all our communities in true Presbyterian fashion. Could there be a return to Spring Gatherings, maybe in a different time and place?



Attached to this report is the January issue of Mission Haven News. We have opportunities to support and fund the mission of MH in this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Check out the Mission Haven Newsletter - they are gathering recipes from the varied people they have touched over the years. There is still time, if you wish, to donate a recipe to be included.

### Recruiting! [still!]

1. Jan Albert of Bowling Green Presbyterian Church in Kentucky is our region's representative on the PW Churchwide Search Committee. She was present during the gathering and is still looking for those interested in serving PW on a regional and national level. Her contact is: [jtalbertky@gmail.com](mailto:jtalbertky@gmail.com)
2. Coordinating Council for the PW in our Presbytery is still looking for interested women to assist in reforming PW at the presbytery level. We are looking for a place and team for our Spring gathering!

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?**

- Maintaining 2-B
- 75 Years
- Remembrances & Recipes
- Money Matters
- Volunteer Spotlight



# HAVEN HAPPENINGS

*Housing ~ Hospitality ~ Clothing ~ Prayer*



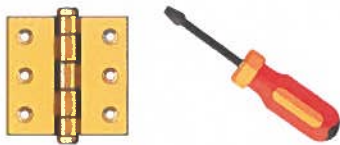
**Mission Haven Newsletter** When God's People Are In Need, Be Ready To Help Them. Always Be Eager To Practice Hospitality. – ROMANS 12:13

## Maintenance

### Apartment 2-B

A family who lived here for a year departed in December. Our local team is working diligently to "deep clean" the residence, refresh the furnishings, and perform maintenance, including:

- Install new blinds in the front bedroom
- Clean the carpet
- Purchase new sleeper sofa, new twin mattresses, and linens (with Target gift cards)
- Paint cabinet and replace hinge
- Touch up paint as needed
- Install pneumatic hinge on screen door
- Wash all linens



## Money Matters

### Annual Gatherings

Many PW groups host a gathering in later winter/early spring. As you make event plans, invite your state representative or local ambassador to attend and bring display items.

Learn more about "your" ministry and support us as you are able.

State representatives are listed on our [webpage](#).



**Housing ~ Hospitality ~ Clothing ~ Prayer**

## 75 Years: 1951-2026

### Diamond Anniversary

The first two missionary families moved into apartments in Building 1 during September 1950. At the suggestion of the seminary, we incorporated in January 1951. Since that time, we

- Built a garage
- Constructed (and expanded) a second apartment building
- Built a structure that houses the Clothes Closet, Workshop, Office, and excess inventory
- Purchased three ranch houses adjacent to the seminary property

We continue to maintain—and renovate—each of our 9 residences as well as the picnic area, exercise room, storage space, meeting room, and landscape areas.

We have hosted countless missionary families for 75 years, and despite changes within the PC(USA) structure, we plan to continue this ministry for years to come.



# Grateful



## Remembrances and Recipes

### Celebrating 75 Years

What do friends and families have in common? They have memories of shared experiences, and in most cases, they have eaten many meals together.

Our missionary workers have done likewise in the countries they served.

We are assembling a unique cookbook which also includes special stories. Stories from mission workers, from seminary alumni, from Presbyterian Women, and from Mission Haven supporters.

Contained within the pages will be cuisine from Africa, South America, Asia, the Southern U.S., and beyond.

Note: *We are experiencing unexpected publishing delays, so if you haven't submitted your recipe, there is a small grace period in which you can do so. Send your contribution to [missionhavendecatur@gmail.com](mailto:missionhavendecatur@gmail.com).*

## Volunteer Spotlight

### Welcome, Linda!

We have a new local volunteer on our Refresh Team: Linda Reimer. She was instrumental in renewing apartment 2-B (see "Maintenance" article). In the words of Alice, she is a "hard and able worker!"

Linda has a heart for mission. She and her husband are the proud parents of Holly, an ordained Presbyterian minister.

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!](#)

## PRESBYTERY CALENDAR – 2026

### FEBRUARY

- 19 Presbytery meeting at First, Talladega, 9:00 AM
- 20 Presbytery office closed – Last day for churches to enter statistics
- 23 CPM, via hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 24 Anti-Racism, via Zoom, 10:00 AM

### MARCH

- 4 Presbytery Staff meeting, via Hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 10 COM via hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 17 Executive Council, via Hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 19 Finance, via Hybrid, 3:00 PM
- 23 CPM, via hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 24 Anti-Racism, via Zoom, 10:00 AM
- 29 Palm Sunday

### APRIL

- 1 Presbytery Staff meeting, via Hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 2 Maundy Thursday
- 3 Good Friday – Presbytery office closed
- 5 Resurrection of the Lord/Easter
- 6 Presbytery office closed in recognition of Easter
- 14 COM via hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 16 Finance, via Hybrid, 3:00 PM
- 21 Executive Council, via Hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 27 CPM, via hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 28 Anti-Racism, via Zoom, 10:00 AM

### MAY

- 6 Presbytery Staff meeting, via Hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 12 COM via hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 19 Executive Council, via Hybrid, 10:00 AM
- 21 Presbytery meeting at Southminster, Birmingham, 9:00 AM
- 22 Presbytery office closed
- 25 Presbytery office closed in recognition of Memorial Day
- 26 CPM, via hybrid, 10:00 AM
- Anti-Racism, via Zoom, 10:00 AM