

One Hundredth and Second Stated Meeting  
 Northeast Georgia Presbytery  
 Minutes of Meeting  
 May 14, 2019

Location: First Presbyterian Church, Gainesville      Pastor: Rev. Lee Koontz

Meeting format: The items of business were included in the worship service format

Topic	Discussion	Decision
Call to Order Opening Prayer and Call to Worship Welcome	The meeting was called to order by Rev. Matt Rich (moderator) at 10:00 a.m. Rev. Rich opened the meeting with the Call to Worship and Prayer. After an opening hymn, Rev. Lee Koontz (pastor) welcomed those in attendance.	
Declaration of Quorum		Rev. Stu Ritter, Stated Clerk, declared that a quorum was present.
Prayer of Confession Assurance of Grace	The prayer of confession and assurance of grace was led by Rev. Rich.	
Adoption of Docket	Opportunity was provided to those in attendance to recommend changes to the docket. There were no recommendations.	The docket (as printed) was approved by common consent.
First-time Commissioners Corresponding Members Visitors	Each first-time commissioner stood and gave name and church. Corresponding members were introduced. Visitors were introduced.	Approval was given to grant voice to Colleen Cook who will be examined later in the meeting.
Approval of minutes February 23, 2019		The minutes of the February 23, 2019 Presbytery meeting were approved as printed.
Stated Clerk's Report Rev. Stu Ritter Handbook pages 4 - 5  Handbook page 6	<p>The Proposed allocation of Ruling Elder Commissioners (August, 2019 – May, 2020) (found on pages 4 and 5 in the Handbook) was reviewed.</p> <p>Rev. Ritter reminded those in attendance that the Healthy Boundaries 101 training is mandatory for all Teaching Elders and all those ministers who are on the pulpit supply list. Several opportunities to attend training have been scheduled throughout the Presbytery. See Handbook, page 6.</p> <p>Rev. Ritter presented information regarding a request from the Ficklen Presbyterian Church to cease to be an active PC(USA) congregation.</p>	<p>Acceptance of written reports was affirmed by unanimous approval.</p> <p>Following a motion, the Proposed allocation of Ruling Elder Commissioners was approved as printed in the Handbook.</p> <p>Rev. Ritter presented the following motion:          Responding to a request from the Ficklen Presbyterian Church Session, endorsed by the Coordinating Team, I move that Northeast Georgia Presbytery appoint the following persons to an Administrative Commission to advise and assist the Ficklen congregation as they cease to be an active PC(USA) congregation, and to determine the best use of the Ficklen property and assets: Rev. Ed Rees, Rev. Ford G'Segner, Rev. Decatur Rodgers, Elder Mike Searles (Westminster), Elder Joyce Heffner (Union Point). The motion received unanimous approval.</p>

<p>General Presbyter's Report Rev. Hilary Shuford</p>	<p>Rev. Shuford shared a brief overview of the ministry opportunity that is developing for Souvanh Touralack with the Laotian community in Cornelia. She also shared a brief update regarding Rev. Cheryl Barnes preparation for mission work in Malawi</p>	
<p>Coordinating Team Report Rev, Andy Cooke Handbook, pages 8 - 12</p>	<p>Rev, Cooke provided an update on the decentralization of the Presbytery office. A detailed timeline can be found in the Handbook on page 9. Susan Ganaway and Rev, Brock Burnett presented a report from the Budget and Finance Initiative Team. The financial report was reviewed (Handbook pages 63 – 66). Rev. Burnett presented the International Mission Application form (Handbook, page 10). This fund is designated for seed money grants to enable congregations to establish international mission projects. Personnel Action Team: Rev. Cooke reported that reviews have been completed for the General Presbyter, the Stated Clerk, and the Business Administrator. An updated position description for the Business Administrator is on pages 11 and 12 of the Handbook.</p>	
<p>Bills and Overtures Committee Report Rev. Meg Jackson Clark Handbook, pages 13 – 26)</p>	<p>Vote on Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the PC(USA)</p> <p>Request from First, Elberton to submit an overture to the General Assembly proposing an amendment adding “A Declaration of Faith” to the Book of Confessions (Handbook pages 14 – 26). There was discussion on the floor, with some speaking for approval of the request and some speaking against the approval of the request.</p>	<p>Handbook, pages 13 and 14: Amendment 18A, Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons, Amendment 18: Renunciation of Jurisdiction, 18B1, 18B2, 18C: Officers, 18D: Membership of Presbytery, 18E: Pastor, Counselor, and Advisor to its Pastors and Congregations, 18F: Welcoming to the Table, 18G: Disciplinary Offense, 18H: Time limit, 18H1, 18H2 Each amendment was approved by majority vote.</p> <p>The motion to approve the submission of an overture to General Assembly proposing adding “A declaration of Faith” was not approved by a vote of 50 No and 27 Yes.</p>
<p>Scripture Lesson Choral Response Message Invitation to Generous Giving</p>	<p>Rev. Nikki Collins was the guest minister. Scripture reading: 1 Corinthians 3: 5 – 15. Sermon: The Growing Season.</p> <p>Offering received will go to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance</p>	
<p>Presbyterian Women Elaine Wiegert</p>	<p>Written report page 28 in the Handbook.</p>	

Handbook, page 28		
Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report Sylvia McDonald Handbook pages 29 - 31	Sylvia McDonald reported that Colleen Cook desires to be ordained by the Northeast Georgia Presbytery with an ordination service to be held at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens, in June 2019. Colleen has accepted a call to ministry in the Flint River Presbytery and will be installed in that Presbytery at a later date. The CPM brought a recommendation to examine Colleen Cook at this Presbytery meeting. The CPM recommended the following Administrative Commission to ordain Colleen Cook: Teaching Elders: Jeff Reynolds, Mark Harper, Beecher Mathes, Jim Bowden. Ruling Elders: Sue Rathbun (Covenant), Jim Anderson (Covenant), Sylvia McDonald (Jefferson), Marcia Noble (guest, member of Greater Atlanta Presbytery), Kathy Tessin (guest, member of Flint River Presbytery).	Examination of Colleen Cook was conducted with a unanimous vote to sustain the examination and approve the ordination of Colleen Cook in June at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens.  The motion to appoint Jeff Reynolds, Mark Harper, Beecher Mathes, Jim Bowden, Sue Rathbun, Jim Anderson, Sylvia McDonald, Marcia Noble, Kathy Tessin to the Administrative Commission to ordain Colleen Cook received unanimous approval.
Committee on Ministry Report Mark Harper Handbook pages 32 – 45.	The Committee on Ministry team recommends the approval of the dissolution of the call between Rev. Brock Burnett and Winder Presbyterian Church, effective May 1, 2019. Mark Harper reported that the congregations of Covenant (Athens) and Central Presbyterian will be joining together. Both congregations are in conversation regarding the joining of Sessions, Pastors, and facilities. Additional information will be shared as decisions are made and the congregations merge at a future date.	The motion to approve the dissolution of the call between Rev. Brock Burnett and Winder Presbyterian Church, effective May 1, 2019 received unanimous approval.
Congregational Connections Committee Doug Friesema	Doug Friesema gave a short report.	
Greetings and Update from the Synod of South Atlantic Joyce Lieberman	Joyce Lieberman gave a short report.	
Black Presbyterian Caucus Robert Patten	No report was given	
Disaster Preparedness Team Report Ed Rees Handbook pages 46 - 53	Ed Rees gave an update on the work of the committee. Resources available to churches are found on pages 48 – 54 in the Handbook. Ed Rees introduced Rev. James Kirk from the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program. After lunch, those in attendance grouped together for discussion regarding steps that can be taken by our congregations to prepare for natural or manmade disasters. Rev. Kirk was available for conversation during this time of discussion and exploration.	

Sexual Misconduct Pastoral Response Team Report Andy Chambers Handbook pages 55 - 60	Andy Chambers presented a review of the Child-Youth Protection Policy and explained that the policy has been revised to include vulnerable adults. The new title of the policy is the Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy. A copy of the new policy will be available on the Presbytery website.	
Nominating Committee Report Jan Lewis	Jan Lewis asked for assistance for the Nominating Committee through the recommendation of those who would be willing to serve on the various committees and teams of the Northeast Georgia Presbytery.	.
Closing Hymn Prayer and Adjournment	The meeting was recessed for lunch. The meeting reconvened at the end of the lunch period for table discussions on the subject of disaster preparedness.	The meeting was closed in prayer and adjourned at 1:20 p.m.
Next meeting		The next stated meeting will be on Saturday, August 17 at Madison Presbyterian Church.

Respectfully submitted: Sylvia McDonald, recorder

Date Minutes approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Moderator \_\_\_\_\_  
Rev. Matthew Rich

Recorder \_\_\_\_\_  
Sylvia McDonald

## REPORT OF ATTENDANCE

### Ministers:

Travis	Adams	Mountain	Jennifer	Horton	Lavonia
Ryan	Baer	Athens First	Meg	Jackson Clark	Greensboro First
Gary	Bagley	Honorably Retired	Sue	Jacobson	Member at Large
Don	Barber	Rabun Gap	Tom	Jones	Member at Large
Tom	Buchanan	Friendship	Heather	Koontz	Trinity
Brock	Burnett	Member at Large	Lee	Koontz	Gainesville First
Jeff	Cain	Commerce	Monty	Nelson	Member at Large
Bill	Carr	Honorably Retired	Shon	Peppers	Gainesville First
Andy	Chambers	Cornelia First	Colin	Pettigrew	Madison
Frank	Colladay	Honorably Retired	David	Powers	Madison
Karla	Conditt Daniels	Covenant Augusta	Denny	Read	Wiley
Andy	Cooke	Covenant Augusta	Ed	Rees	Saint Andrew
Evelyn	Ellis	Westminster	Matt	Rich	Moderator of Presbytery
Nadine	Ellsworth-Moran	Reid Memorial	Stu	Ritter	Stated Clerk
Paul	Evans	Jefferson	De	Rodgers	Honorably Retired
Teresa	Franklin	Mount Hermon	Holly	Shoaf-O'Kula	Aiken, SC First
Doug	Friesema	Pleasant Hill	Hilary	Shuford	General Presbyter
Katelyn	Gordon Cooke	Covenant Augusta	Carol	Strickland	Athens First
Ford	G'Segner	Honorably Retired	Mark	Tjepkema	Homer
Mark	Harper	Covenant Athens	Rindy	Trouteaud	Central
Garland	Hart	Member at Large	Alex	Williams	Honorably Retired
Matt	Henderson	Clarkesville First	Janet	Williams	New Hope

### Ruling Elder Commissioners:

DeAnn	Cox	Athens First	Melissa	Stewart	Gainesville First
Ed	Ferguson	Athens First	Jan	Brazier	Greensboro First
Leslye	Queen	Athens First	Mackie	Etris	Homer
Mixon	Robinson	Athens First	Joe	Booth	Jefferson
Judy	Scanlon	Athens First	Stanley	Miller	Lavonia
Sandra	Rouse	Belle Terrace	Jim	Malanowski	Madison
Katy	Terry	Central	Belle	Perry	Monticello
David	Inglis	Clarkesville First	Elizabeth	Strawn	Monticello
Faith	Inglis	Clarkesville First	Beth	Whitmire	Monticello
Kathy	Palmer	Clarkesville First	Judy	Maurer	Mountain
Judy	Williams	Clayton	Jim	Galerzio	Mountain
Bruce	Morgan	Cleveland First	Marie	Powell	Nacoochee
DeWayne	Nix	Cleveland First	Tom	Knecht	Nacoochee
Lindalee	Walters	Cleveland First	Marc	Galvin	Oconee
Ed	Hendricks	Cornelia First	Phyllis	Meyer	Oconee
Betsy	Pless	Covenant, Athens	Wayne	Peacock	Oconee
DeLynda	Tweedell	Covenant, Athens	Gene	Wengert	Oconee
Mary	Beachum	Covenant, Augusta	Karen	Rhodes	Reid Memorial
Judy	Grieve	Covenant, Augusta	Margaut	Hall	Reid Memorial
Aubrey	Moore	Covenant, Augusta	Gail	Beck	Timpson
Charlotte	Higginbotham	Elberton First	Phyllis	Falt	Trinity
Harry	Case	Gainesville First	Sibley	Bryan	Union Point First
Susan	Daniel	Gainesville First	Esther	Moore	Westminster
Walt	McBride	Gainesville First	Neal	Leonard, Sr.	Westminster
Ed	Rugg	Gainesville First			

### Other Ruling Elders:

Fred	DiMaio	Clayton	Jan	Lewis	Nominating Committee Chair
Susan	Gannaway	B/FIT chair	Sylvia	McDonald	Recording Clerk/CPM Chair
Richard	Holland	Belle Terrace	Elaine	Wiegert	PW Moderator

### Visitors:

Sherri	Borzadt	Thornwell	Joyce	Lieberman	Synod of South Atlantic
Nikki	Collins	PMA	Robert	Meadows	Mount Hermon
Colleen	Cook	Covenant Athens	Kay	Pitts	Timpson
Helen	Epps	Central	Helen	Robinson	Belle Terrace
Anita	Green	NEGA Presbytery	Harry	Shuford	Athens First
John	Gregg	Oconee	Souvanh	Touralack	Cornelia First
Angie	Holland	Belle Terrace	Chris	Wilson	Central
Jim	Kirk	Peace River Presbytery	Anita	York	Oconee
John	Lamsma	Retired Chaplain			

**PROPOSED DOCKET**

**AND**

**HANDBOOK**

**ONE HUNDRED AND SECOND STATED MEETING**

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY**

**MAY 14, 2019**

**HELD AT**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
800 S. ENOTA DRIVE NE  
GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA**

## Presbytery Welcome Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On behalf of the Session and the entire FPC family, I would like to extend our warmest welcome to you as you prepare to gather at FPC Gainesville. I hope and pray that each of you enjoys safe travels, and that the community of Gainesville and the congregation of First Presbyterian can feel like a “home away from home” to you on this day.

As you arrive, you’ll be greeted by a sign by the entrance that simply says, “Welcome to First Presbyterian Church”. When we say that, we mean it! We also mean what is written on the opposite side, a message for everyone as they leave the church grounds: “You are now entering the mission field.” I’ve always felt that this one small sign expresses the rhythm, the ebb and flow of daily Christian life. We are always welcomed to worship and fellowship. We are also always sent out to love and to serve as Christ’s missionaries. While our church sanctuary has been described as looking something like a spaceship (among other less cool things), I am more inclined to see it as a centrifuge of sorts. It is home, of course. It is where we are welcomed just as we are. But it’s also where we are enlivened, moved by that Spirit which continually propels us outward to be the hands, the feet, and the very heart of Jesus Christ. This is our expectation as we gather as the Northeast Georgia Presbytery as well. Who knew a little church sign could say so much?

The start time for the meeting will be 10:00 a.m. Registration begins at 9:15 a.m. in the Narthex. Greeters will be on hand to direct you to registration. Lunch will be provided by many faithful FPC staff members and volunteers, and the cost will be \$10.00 (and worth every penny). To make a reservation for lunch or childcare, please call 770-532-0136 or email Deidre Edmonds at [dedmonds@fpcga.org](mailto:dedmonds@fpcga.org). **Please have both lunch and/or child care reservations made by Thursday May 9; we would be most grateful.**

We are located at 800 South Enota Drive NE, Gainesville, GA. The church phone number is 770-532-0136. Our church website is [www.fpcga.org](http://www.fpcga.org), and you can find other helpful information there.

Again, we are blessed and so very excited to welcome each of you to FPC Gainesville. May God bless you and keep you in the days to come!

Grace and Peace,  
Rev. Lee Koontz

**Northeast Georgia Presbytery**  
**102nd Stated Meeting**  
May 14, 2019 – 10:00 a.m.  
at First Presbyterian Church, Gainesville, GA

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Call to Order Rev. Dr. Matt Rich

**Opening Prayer and Call to Worship** Dr. Rich

One: The choice is before us: life or death.

**All: Let us choose life, so that we may live.**

One: This is the hope that we proclaim:

**All: that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.**

**Hymn 265** *Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun* DUKE STREET  
(stanzas 1-3)

Welcome Rev. Dr. Lee Koontz

Declaration of Quorum Rev. Stu Ritter

**Prayer of Confession** Dr. Rich

One: Our God is a loving God. Therefore let us confess our sins  
that we may choose life and live.

**All: Holy God, we confess that we have turned our hearts away from you.**

**We are devoted to work and consumerism,  
rather than our love of you and each other.**

**Forgive us, God, and mend what is broken, that we may be one with you.**

**Assurance of Grace**

One: Sisters and brothers, sing praises with an upright heart  
as we learn the ways of God.

**All: By the mercy of Christ, our sins are forgiven.**

Adoption of Docket Dr. Rich

Seating of First-time Commissioners,  
Corresponding Members and Visitors

Approval of Minutes

Stated Clerk's Report Rev. Ritter

- Acceptance of Written Reports for the Record
- Parity Report (Number of Commissioners from each congregation)
- Reminder: Mandatory Boundaries Training
- Responding to a request from the Ficklen Presbyterian Church Session, endorsed by the Coordinating Team, I move that Northeast Georgia Presbytery appoint the following persons to an Administrative Commission to advise and assist the Ficklen congregation as they cease to be an active PC(USA) congregation, and to determine the best use of the Ficklen property and assets:

Rev. Ed Rees  
Rev. Ford G'Segner  
Rev. Decatur Rodgers  
Elder Mike Searles (Westminster)  
Elder Joyce Heffner (Union Point)

pp. 4-5

pg. 6

	General Presbyter's Report	Rev. Hilary Shuford
pp.8-12	Coordinating Team Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel Action Team</li> <li>• Budget/Finance Action Team</li> </ul>	Rev. Andy Cooke
pp. 13-26	Bills and Overtures Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vote on Proposed Amendments to the Constitution</li> <li>• Overture re: A Declaration of Faith</li> </ul>	Rev. Meg Jackson Clark
	Scripture Lesson: <i>1 Corinthians 3:5-15</i>	
	Choral Response	First Presbyterian Church Choir
pg. 27	Message <i>The Growing Season</i>	Rev. Nikki Collins
	<b>Hymn 432</b> <i>How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord</i>	REPTON
	Invitation to Generous Giving <i>Offering to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance</i> <i>Please make checks payable to Northeast Georgia Presbytery</i>	
	Offertory	
pg. 28	Presbyterian Women	Elder Elaine Wiegert
pp. 29-31	Committee on Preparation for Ministry	Elder Sylvia McDonald
pp. 32-45	Committee on Ministry Examinations Action Team	Rev. Rindy Trouteaud / Rev. Mark Harper
	Congregational Connections Committee	Rev. Doug Friesema
	Greetings and Update from the Synod of South Atlantic	Rev. Joyce Lieberman
	Black Presbyterian Caucus	Elder Robert Patten
pp. 46-53	Disaster Preparedness Team	Rev. Ed Rees
pg. 54	PDA <i>Out of Chaos, Hope</i>	Rev. Dr. James J. Kirk
	12:30 PM – ORDER OF THE DAY: LUNCH in Fellowship Hall	
	Disaster Preparedness Table Discussions	
pp. 55-60	Sexual Misconduct Pastoral Response Team Child-Youth Protection Policy	Rev. Andy Chambers
	Nominating Committee	Elder Jan Lewis
	Quick Announcements <i>(Please submit requests in advance to the Stated Clerk)</i>	
	<b>Closing Hymn 295</b> <i>Go to the World!</i>	SINE NOMINE

**Prayer and Adjournment**

**NEXT STATED MEETING:**

**Saturday, August 17 at Madison Presbyterian Church**

## Proposed Allocation of Ruling Elder Commissioners August, 2019 – May, 2020

**Voting Commissioners** at meetings of Northeast Georgia Presbytery include all Minister Members (Teaching Elders)

**PLUS:**

1. Ruling Elders serving the Presbytery in official capacities (Chairs of Ministry Teams or Commissions, and Presbytery Officers), and
2. Ruling Elders elected by their sessions to serve as Commissioners.

The latest statistics available from the PC(USA) show a total of **116 Ministers of Word and Sacrament** in Northeast Georgia as of December 31, 2018. Therefore, in order to achieve parity between Ministers and Ruling Elder Commissioners (REC), the total number of Ruling Elder Commissioners must be at least **116**. There are currently 8 Ruling Elders serving in the categories identified in (1) above. Therefore the number of **Ruling Elder Commissioners representing congregations must be at least 108**.

The chart on the following page shows the number of Ruling Elder Commissioners (REC) to be elected by each congregation, based on the following criteria:

1. Every congregation is entitled to at least **one REC** (shown as the “Base”).
2. In keeping with the policies and historic practices of Northeast Georgia Presbytery, each predominantly racial/ethnic congregation is allocated **one additional REC**.
3. To assure proportional representation of all members, additional RECs are allocated to larger congregations in numbers based on the congregation’s membership. The chart displays congregations in order of size, with the largest receiving the most additional RECs:

700 members or more:	5 additional RECs
300-699 members:	3
200-299 members:	2
47-199 members:	1

4. This brings the total number of Ruling Elder Commissioners to **116** (including those serving in official capacities).

If this report is approved by the Presbytery, the chart on the following page will be in effect through the Spring (May) meeting in 2020, when an updated proposal will be presented.

Rev. W. Stuart Ritter  
*Stated Clerk*

**Parity Proposal for N.E. Georgia Presbytery 2019-2020**

<u>Location</u>	<u>Church Name</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>% NEGP</u>	<u>Threshold</u>	<u>Mem.</u>		<u>Racial Ethnic</u>	<u>Total</u>
					<u>Base</u>	<u>Adjust</u>		
Athens	First	906	13.70%		1	5		6
Gainesville	First	789	11.93%		1	5		6
Augusta	Reid Memorial	720	10.89%	10.00%	1	5		6
Sautee	Nacoochee	355	5.37%		1	3		4
Athens	Covenant	316	4.78%		1	3		4
Madison	Madison	313	4.73%	4.00%	1	3		4
Watkinsville	Oconee	255	3.86%		1	2		3
Augusta	Covenant	242	3.66%		1	2		3
Monticello	Monticello	226	3.42%	3.00%	1	2		3
Rabun Gap	Rabun Gap	188	2.84%		1	1		2
Cornelia	First	172	2.60%		1	1		2
Clarkesville	First	160	2.42%		1	1		2
Augusta	St Andrew	144	2.18%		1	1		2
Milledgeville	First	144	2.18%		1	1		2
Jefferson	Sardis	102	1.54%		1	1	1	3
Cleveland	First	98	1.48%		1	1		2
Augusta	Belle Terrace	90	1.36%		1	1	1	3
Athens	Friendship	83	1.26%		1	1		2
Athens	Athens Korean	80	1.21%		1	1	1	3
Commerce	Commerce	79	1.19%		1	1		2
Blairsville	Mountain	77	1.16%		1	1		2
Eatonton	Eatonton	69	1.04%		1	1		2
Winder	First	65	0.98%		1	1		2
Ila	Mt Hermon	62	0.94%		1	1		2
Augusta	Augusta Korean	60	0.91%		1	1	1	3
Jefferson	Jefferson	53	0.80%		1	1		2
Greensboro	First	53	0.80%		1	1		2
Hartwell	First	49	0.74%		1	1		2
Statham	Pleasant Hill	48	0.73%	0.70%	1	1		2
Elberton	Westside	45	0.68%		1		1	2
Hephzibah	Bath	44	0.67%		1			1
Waynesboro	Westminster	41	0.62%		1		1	2
Clayton	Clayton	40	0.60%		1			1
Helen	Helen	40	0.60%		1			1
Grovetown	Clifford Memorial	40	0.60%		1			1
Dahlonega	Dahlonega	39	0.59%		1			1
Wiley	Wiley	38	0.57%		1			1
Augusta	Christ	37	0.56%		1		1	2
Athens	Central	30	0.45%		1			1
Gainesville	Trinity	28	0.42%		1			1
Homer	Homer	26	0.39%		1			1
Union Point	First	26	0.39%		1			1
Elberton	Calvary	25	0.38%		1			1
Clayton	Timpson	23	0.35%		1			1
Comer	New Hope	20	0.30%		1			1
Lavonia	Lavonia	18	0.27%		1			1
Commerce	Hebron	17	0.26%		1			1
Carnesville	Hopewell	13	0.20%		1			1
Elberton	First	11	0.17%		1			1
Carnesville	Carnesville	9	0.14%		1			1
Lexington	Ficklen	4	0.06%		1			1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>6612</b>	<b>100.00%</b>		<b>51</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>108</b>

**RETURN**

# Healthy Boundaries 101

For Clergy, Spiritual Teachers,  
and Lay Leaders

A MANDATORY training presented by the  
Sexual Misconduct Pastoral Response Team

## Locations, Dates, and Times:

**Covenant Presbyterian Church (Augusta)**  
**May 16, Noon-3 PM**

**First Presbyterian Church Milledgeville**  
**August 1, 10 AM-1 PM**

**Covenant Presbyterian Church (Athens)**  
**September 7, 10 AM-1 PM**

**First Presbyterian Church Gainesville**  
**November 2, 10 AM-1 PM**

**First Presbyterian Church Cornelia**  
**January 4, 2020, 10 AM-1 PM**

**RETURN**

**Cost: \$15 (includes workbook and LUNCH)**

**POLICY REGARDING  
TIME LIMIT FOR PERSONS SPEAKING (Debate) AT PRESBYTERY MEETINGS**

(Approved by Presbytery October 23, 2007)

(Note: Presbytery can set aside such a rule when it deems necessary.)

When speaking at a Presbytery meeting:

1. Individuals are limited to speaking once and for no more than three minutes during discussion of a matter.
2. A bell may be used to signal when the speaker is near and at the end of his/her time.
3. Moderator alternates between "pro" and "con".
4. No one may speak more than once until every person who wishes to speak has had an opportunity to do so.
5. Presbytery may set a maximum time for debating an issue.

Report of the Coordinating Team  
Andy Cooke, Chair

The Coordinating Team (CT) met on April 30, 2019. They took the following actions and are making the following recommendations to presbytery.

For Information:

1. Heard a report from the Stated Clerk regarding parity, the request for an administrative commission for the Ficklen congregation, the administrative commission for the Hopewell and Carnesville congregations, and the Session Records Action Team.
2. Heard a report from the Budget and Finance Initiative Team/Treasurer, including a full financial report and a plan to de-centralize the presbytery office (see attached).
3. Heard a report from the Personnel Action Team, who recently completed annual reviews for the Stated Clerk, General Presbyter, and the Office Manager/Business Administrator.
4. Heard reports from the Committee on Ministry, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Black Presbyterian Caucus, Presbyterian Women, and Presbyterian Campus Ministry.
5. Heard a report from the General Presbyter, including communication from the Presbyterian Mission Agency regarding the Matthew 25 initiative.
6. Discussed and developed the docket for the May 2019 stated meeting of Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

Actions:

1. Acted on the request of Christopher Goss of the Insurance Board to communicate with congregations.
2. Voted to begin the process of terminating the lease on the presbytery office.
3. Approved the expenditure of up to \$7500 from undesignated reserves to facilitate the transition to a de-centralized office.
4. Approved the application for international mission funds (see attached).
5. Approved contract for presbytery financial review with Smith Adcock and Co., LLP.
6. Voted to establish online giving for the presbytery through the Presbyterian Foundation.
7. Approved new job title of "Business Administrator" for Anita Green.
8. Approved amended job description for Business Administrator (see attached).
9. Voted to direct the offering at the May 2019 stated meeting of Northeast Georgia Presbytery be given to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Recommendations:

1. none

Status Update: De-Centralizing Office  
April 30, 2019

The staff are continuing to develop strategies for de-centralizing the presbytery office from the Bogart location to three satellite offices (Stated Clerk: Augusta, General Presbyter: Athens, Business Administrator: Winder). The following is a working timeline:

- March 1: Business Administrator established office presence at First PC Winder and is working from that location Wednesdays and Fridays
- May 1: Upgrade copier and have new copier delivered to Winder office
- May 14: PW Cross and NEGAP quilt gifted to First PC Gainesville
- June 1:
  - Give vacate notice to landlord (no later than September 30)
  - Migrate shared electronic files from office server to Cloud
  - Records for archiving delivered to Columbia Theological Seminary
- July 1 – August 1:
  - Bookshelf, books, chairs, and file cabinet to be moved to Presbyterian Student Center for GP use
  - Small desk and files to be moved to GP home (main office location)
  - File cabinet, storage cabinets, files, and office supplies moved to Winder location for BA use
  - Conference table and chairs, metal shelving donated to Winder PC
  - Establish Post Office Box in Bogart for mail delivery **(completed)**
- September 30:
  - Other equipment and furniture that is no longer needed sold or donated
  - Utilities disconnected

In order to facilitate the transition to a de-centralized office environment, the staff has made a request to the Budget/Finance Action Team to recommend that the Coordinating Team make available funds from Undesignated Reserves for:

1. Hiring professional movers:	\$1,000
2. Upgrade copier:	\$3,900
3. iPad Pro for GP:	\$2,000
4. Increased travel expense for Business Administrator:	<u>\$ 600</u>
TOTAL:	\$7,500

(Note that the presbytery will save \$2,430 - \$4,050 on office lease expense, depending on date of move out agreed upon with landlord, with an additional \$1,400 – 2,200 for utilities.)

NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY, INC.

INTERNATIONAL MISSION APPLICATION



The International Mission Fund is designated for seed money grants to enable congregations to establish international mission projects. Grants are awarded once each year. Depending on the number of applications received by the June 30, 2019, deadline, grants are limited to \$300 - \$600 each. Applications are to be submitted to the Budget/Finance Action Team, reviewed by the Coordinating Team, and approved by presbytery.

Church name:	
Contact name:	
Contact email:	
Contact phone:	
Grant amount requested:	Total mission project budget:

Complete a Grant Request and attach to this form. Requests should be written in a concise, narrative format according to the following outline:

I. Description

- A. Provide an overview of the international mission project, including name of project and a brief description of the mission work to be accomplished.
- B. What are your goals for this mission project?
- C. What other organizations are funding the mission project? What portion?

II. Evaluation

- A. Provide a description of your plan to evaluate the mission project for effectiveness and meeting your goals.

III. Changes

- A. Any funds not spent for purposes specified in the grant must be returned.

Please submit your application to Northeast Georgia Presbytery  
P.O. Box 365  
Bogart, GA 30622-0365  
or email [anita@negapby.org](mailto:anita@negapby.org)

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT GRANT APPLICATION IS JUNE 30, 2019

## Position Description - Business Administrator

### PRESBYTERY OF NORTHEAST GEORGIA ("the Presbytery")

**Title:** Business Administrator (non-exempt)

**Purpose:** To coordinate all administrative functions, ensure the smooth operation of the presbytery office, and to maintain all financial and legal records of the Presbytery

**Accountability:** This person is accountable to the General Presbyter (Head of Staff), and to the Treasurer, for the performance of assigned responsibilities, and to the Presbytery through the Personnel Action Team and the Coordinating Team, for overall functioning in this position

**Evaluation:** The General Presbyter and Personnel Action Team will conduct an annual performance review. As Head of Staff, the GP will be the initial reference for ongoing feedback, support, and appeal; if necessary, concerns shall be referred to the PAT. In concert with the GP, the PAT will make appropriate recommendations to the Presbytery via the Coordinating Team.

#### Qualifications

- Computer experience and comfort with current word processing, database, and financial software
- Willingness to learn new technology skills
- Proficient in generally-accepted accounting standards
- Willingness to work as a member of a team with shifting work responsibilities, and varying schedules and workloads
- Commitment and devotion to God as a confessing Christian [knowledge and/or experience within the Presbyterian Church (USA) is preferred]
- Commitment to continued personal, professional, and spiritual growth

#### Responsibilities:

- Work in close cooperation with the General Presbyter, the Stated Clerk, chair of Coordinating Team, and the Treasurer, to coordinate all administrative functions and ensure the smooth operation of the presbytery office
- Work in close cooperation with the General Presbyter, chair of the Budget/Finance Initiative Team, and the Treasurer to maintain all financial records of the Presbytery
- Work to maintain a supportive and collegial working relationship with all presbytery staff and volunteers
- Handle all contractual matters, such as insurance, repair and maintenance, technology, office lease, online giving, and equipment in dialog with the General Presbyter
- Maintain up-to-date files of such contractual matters
- Develop and maintain a security plan for the office and communicate such plan to other staff and volunteers
- Answer phone calls
- Open and sort mail
- Receive, record, and deposit into accounts all monies received by the Presbytery and, with appropriate authorization, pay all bills, and maintain an accurate accounting of such
- Track all shared mission and per capita payments from churches, and generate quarterly statements
- Track all loan payments for Georgia Domestic Missionary Society loans, and follow up on late payments
- Prepare financial reports for committees, Coordinating Team, and the Budget/Finance Initiative Team, monthly or as requested
- Prepare payroll, tax reports, and benefits deductions for presbytery staff
- Assist the Treasurer, the chair of Budget/Finance Initiative Team, and General Presbyter in financial planning for the Presbytery
- Serve as recording clerk for the Budget/Finance Initiative Team
- Maintain the Presbytery website, including the presbytery calendar
- Gather and report to Committee on Ministry data on ministers' terms of call, contracts, and covenants
- Gather data for and draft the annual Minimum Salary Standards Form for Committee on Ministry
- Prepare and provide annually to the Office of General Assembly (OGA) "Governing Body Costs" and "Per Capita Apportionment" reports
- Serve as the Presbytery's liaison with the Board of Pensions
- Maintain adequate inventory of office supplies

- Provide requested documentation to CPA for the annual financial review
- Maintain contact database using CitySoft client management software, develop and update directory lists, and upload to website
- Publish monthly newsletter and any other broadly distributed communications
- Compile the Handbook for presbytery meetings, upload to website, and communicate the document's availability to presbytery members
- Prepare name tags, registration sheets, and other relevant documents and supplies for presbytery meetings
- Serve as registrar at presbytery meetings
- Prepare attendance report of presbytery meetings, combine with minutes and handbook, and upload to website
- Assist Stated Clerk as needed
- Prepare meeting supplies and organize lunch arrangements for Coordinating Team meetings, and other meetings as needed
- Plan and implement annual event for support staff of member churches
- Supervise office volunteer(s)

**RETURN**

## **Report of the Bills & Overtures Committee (BOC)**

Committee Members: Meg Jackson Clark, Charles Grant, Rindy Trouteau, Savannah McGinnis

Below are our recommendations along with a brief rationale.

### **Amendment 18A** – Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons

#### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) that the amendment provides helpful clarification.

### **Amendment 18: Renunciation of Jurisdiction**

#### **Amendment 18B1**

#### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the rationale provided by the Presbytery of Central Florida that G-20509 as it stands creates a situation in which the administration of justice is impossible to carry out. A former minister of the Word and Sacrament who has renounced jurisdiction is no longer a member of the presbytery, so in any complaint, the Rules of Discipline would apply to the congregation or other entity which employed that former minister.

#### **Amendment 18B2**

#### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the rationale provided by the Presbytery of Central Florida that requiring the disciplinary process to resume only when the former Minister of the Word and Sacrament chooses to come forward in self-accusation is inconsistent with the purposes of the Rules of Discipline. The amendment ensures the process will resume when the former Minister rejoins the church. Although there is a Task Force working on this and related issues, it seems important to clarify this in a timely fashion.

### **Amendment 18C** – Officers

#### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the rationale provided by the Presbytery of Western North Carolina that this amendment gives needed guidance regarding endorsing or opposing candidates running for political office. The amendment precludes such activity while still allowing for churches and leaders to actively engage with secular issues that touch on the life of faith, to work towards bringing God's reign of justice and peace ever closer to reality.

### **Amendment 18D** – Membership of Presbytery

#### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the Presbytery of Tropical Florida that this amendment provides needed clarity with regard to the seeking of permission for a minister member of a presbytery to labor within the geographic boundaries of a presbytery beyond that of the Minister of the Word and Sacrament's membership.

## **Amendment 18E** – Pastor, Counselor, and Advisor to Its Pastors and Congregations

### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the ACC that this amendment will restore constitutional access to the committee on ministry or its equivalent to all minister members of the presbytery and also deal with the issue of repetitive wording in this section with language that is clear and concise.

## **Amendment 18F** –Welcoming to the Table

### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the ACC that this amendment clarifies that when children receive the Lord's Supper for the first time, the Directory for Worship is not suggesting a service such as "first communion."

## **Amendment 18G** – Disciplinary Offense

### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the Presbytery of North Alabama that the amendment shows that the PC(USA) takes an unequivocal stand for justice by specifying the sin of sexual abuse as a violation of scriptural norms and constitutional ordination vows.

## **Amendment 18H** – Time Limit

### **Amendment 18H1**

#### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the ACC that this amendment imposes a needed negligence standard for failure to respond to situations involving a reasonable risk of sexual misconduct.

### **Amendment 18H2**

#### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: The BOC concurs with the ACC that the amendment recognizes that minor persons cannot consent, and that sexual abuse includes persons who lack the capacity to consent for any reason whatsoever.

You may access the Proposed Amendments booklet which includes a note from the Stated Clerk, a list of the proposed amendments with advice from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, and an index via this site:

[http://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/proposed\\_amendments\\_to\\_the\\_constitution2018\\_121018.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/proposed_amendments_to_the_constitution2018_121018.pdf)

## **Request from First, Elberton to submit an overture to General Assembly proposing an amendment adding "A Declaration of Faith" to the Book of Confessions**

### **Recommend Approval**

Rationale: "A Declaration of Faith" has been used by congregations and pastors for study and worship since its publication in 1977. In the view of the BOC, it is a solid theological document which can still speak today, even though it came to be in a cultural context different from our own.

"A Declaration of Faith" was approved for use and study by the former PC(US) in 1977, and by the then recently formed PC(USA) in 1985. Although both of those bodies declined to add it to the Book of Confessions, the discussion took place in the midst of the chaos leading up to and following reunion. A fresh hearing is appropriate at this point in time.

**RETURN**

**A DECLARATION OF FAITH** <sup>(a)</sup>  
(Presbyterian Church in the United States)

**CHAPTER ONE  
THE LIVING GOD**

(1) We believe in one true and living God.	1
We acknowledge one God alone,	2
whose demands on us are absolute,	3
whose help for us is sufficient.	4
That One is the Lord,	5
whom we worship, serve, and love.	6
(2) God is greater than our understanding.	7
We do not fully comprehend who God is or how he works.	8
God's reality far exceeds all our words can say.	9
The Lord's requirements are not always what we think is best.	10
The Lord's care for us is not always what we want.	11
God comes to us on his own terms	12
and is able to do far more than we ask or think.	13
(3) God makes himself known in Jesus Christ.	14
Jesus' involvement in the human condition is God's involvement.	15
His compassion for all kinds of people is God's compassion.	16
His demand for justice, truth, and faithfulness is God's demand.	17
His willingness to suffer rejection is God's willingness.	18
Jesus' love for the very people who reject him is God's love.	19
(4) God moves in history with his people.	20
Jesus Christ stands at the center of the biblical record.	21
It is the account of God's word and action in history,	22
together with his people's response in faith.	23
It tells how the Lord has moved with Israel and the church	24
toward the kingdom of God,	25
his just and loving rule over all.	26
It is the story of the one God,	27
who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.	28
That story is still unfolding	29
and in faith we make it our own.	30
It forms our memory and our hope.	31
It tells us who we are and what are are to do.	32
To retell it is to declare what we believe.	33
(5) God is at work beyond our story.	34
We know that God is not confined to the story we can tell.	35
The story itself tells us God works his sovereign will	36
among all peoples of the earth.	37
We believe God works beyond our imagining	38
throughout the universe.	39

(6) We acknowledge no other God.	40
We must not set our ultimate reliance on any other help.	41
We must not yield unconditional obedience to any other power.	42
We must not love anyone or anything more than we love God.	43
(7) We praise and enjoy God.	44
To worship God is highest joy.	45
To serve God is perfect freedom.	46

**CHAPTER TWO  
THE MAKER AND RULER OF ALL**

(1) God created and rules in love.	1
God created all the worlds that are	2
and upholds and rules everything.	3
We affirm that the universe exists	4
by the power of God's Word and Spirit.	5
God has chosen to give it reality	6
out of the love we have come to know in Christ.	7
God still works	8
through the processes that shape and change the earth	9
and the living things upon it.	10
We acknowledge God's care and control	11
in the regularity of the universe	12
as well as in apparently random happenings.	13
There is no event from which God is absent	14
and his ultimate purpose in all events is just and loving.	15
That purpose embraces our choices	16
and will surely be accomplished.	17
The Creator works in all things	18
toward the new creation that is promised in Christ.	19
(2) God sustains the goodness of creation.	20
God called all he had made good.	21
We declare that the universe of matter, energy, and life	22
is God's good creation in all its parts.	23
Even though evil has emerged within it,	24
we may work and play in it	25
and explore it with wonder and joy.	26
Evil is whatever works against the loving purpose of God	27
for human beings and all creation.	28
Natural forces may have evil effects.	29
Sinful human choices produce evil results.	30
Evil may become institutionalized in our social structures.	31
The power of evil to hurt and destroy,	32
to cut off the possibilities of full human life,	33
calls into question the power and goodness of God.	34
Whether we understand evil personally or impersonally,	35
we cannot explain how it originated in a world made good.	36
But we can affirm that evil is God's enemy as well as ours.	37

<sup>(a)</sup>This Declaration is cross indexed to the other confessions and to Scripture on pages 199-205.

A DECLARATION OF FAITH	151
In Christ, God shared our agony over it	38
and broke the back of its power	39
by bearing the worst it could do.	40
God works continually to overcome it.	41
In the end evil will be utterly defeated.	42
Therefore we have courage to endure evil,	43
to learn from it, and combat it.	44
<b>(3) God made us to care for other created things.</b>	45
God made human beings along with all the other creatures	46
and charged them to care for the earth	47
and all that lives on it.	48
We acknowledge we share in the interdependence	49
that binds together all God's creation.	50
Yet God gives us power to rule and tame,	51
to order and reshape the world.	52
We hold the earth in trust	53
for future generations of living things.	54
The Lord forbids us to plunder, foul, and destroy it.	55
The Lord expects us to produce, to consume, to reproduce	56
in ways that make earth's goodness available to all people	57
and reflect God's love for all creatures.	58
The Lord bids us use our technical skills	59
for beauty, order, health, and peace.	60
<b>(4) God made us for life in community.</b>	61
God created human beings with a need for community	62
and with freedom to enter into it	63
by responding to their Maker with grateful obedience	64
and to one another with love and helpfulness.	65
We believe that we have been created	66
to relate to God and each other	67
in freedom and responsibility.	68
We may misuse our freedom and deny our responsibility	69
by trying to live without God and other people	70
or against God and other people.	71
Yet we are still bound to them for our life and well-being,	72
and intended for free and responsible fellowship with them.	73
Since every human being is made	74
for communion with God and others,	75
we must treat no one with contempt.	76
We are to respect and love all other people	77
and ourselves as well.	78
<b>(5) God made us male and female.</b>	79
God made human beings male and female	80
for their mutual help and comfort and joy.	81
We recognize that our creation as sexual beings	82
is part of God's loving purpose for us.	83
God intends all people—	84

whether children, youth, or adults,	85
single, divorced, married, or widowed—	86
to affirm each other as males and females	87
with joy, freedom, and responsibility.	88
We confess the value of love and faithfulness	89
and the disaster of lust and faithlessness	90
in all our associations as women and men.	91
Our creation as males and females must not serve as a pretext	92
for dominating, hurting, betraying, or using each other,	93
for denying anyone's rights or rewards	94
or opportunities to develop potential to the full.	95
We believe that marriage is a good gift of God.	96
The covenant of wife and husband	97
to love and serve one another faithfully	98
is intended to reflect the faithfulness of God.	99
God gives us the gift of sexual union	100
to be the sign of that mutual and lasting covenant	101
and a means whereby we may share in creating new life.	102
If married partners become parents,	103
their care for their children	104
is intended to reflect God's love and discipline.	105
When we fail each other as parents or partners,	106
we are called to forgive each other as God forgives us	107
and to accept the possibilities for renewal	108
that God offers us in his grace.	109
<b>(6) The human race has rejected its Maker.</b>	110
Though they were made to be like God,	111
man and woman broke community with God,	112
refusing to trust and obey him.	113
Their community with each other was broken	114
by shame and murder, lust and pride.	115
We confess that in all generations	116
men and women have rejected God again and again.	117
At times we seek in pride to become gods,	118
denying the good limits that define us as creatures.	119
At other times we draw back in apathy,	120
refusing to fulfill our human responsibilities.	121
The antagonisms between races, nations, and neighbors,	122
between women and men, children and parents,	123
between human beings and the natural order,	124
are manifestations of our sin against God.	125
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b>	
<b>GOD AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL</b>	
<b>(1) God chose one people for the sake of all.</b>	1
To the world in its rebellion and alienation	2
God promised blessing and restoration.	3
The Lord chose Abraham and his descendants	4
as bearers of that promise for all peoples.	5

A DECLARATION OF FAITH		153
They had done nothing more than others	6	
to deserve the Lord's favor,	7	
but God loved them and made them his own.	8	
We acknowledge God's freedom and grace.	9	
Though we are unworthy,	10	
the Lord has made us his own in Christ.	11	
God has chosen us as his servants for the sake of the world	12	
and destined us to be his daughters and sons,	13	
giving us love and life,	14	
calling us to worship and honor him.	15	
<b>(2) God delivered his people.</b>	16	
When Abraham's descendants were slaves in Egypt,	17	
God heard their cries and prayers.	18	
God remembered his promise	19	
and sent Moses to free them from bondage.	20	
We declare God's steadfast love and sovereign power.	21	
The Lord can be trusted to keep promises.	22	
The Lord still acts in the affairs of individuals and nations	23	
to set oppressed and persecuted people free.	24	
<b>(3) God bound his people to himself in covenant.</b>	25	
Freed slaves became the people of God	26	
when they accepted the Lord's covenant.	27	
God charged them to respond to his rescuing love	28	
by obeying his commandments.	29	
Their life together was to express	30	
the justice and compassion of their holy God.	31	
Since we, too, are the Lord's covenant people,	32	
we know we must be holy as the Lord is holy.	33	
We must keep God's commandments,	34	
not in order to earn or compel the Lord's favor,	35	
but to reflect the character of God	36	
and to be his grateful and loving people.	37	
<b>(4) God blessed and judged his people.</b>	38	
The Lord's care sustained the people of Israel.	39	
God gave them a land where they could celebrate his goodness.	40	
The Lord established their kingdom under David	41	
and promised a ruler from his line	42	
to reign in justice and peace.	43	
When they worshipped the gods of the land,	44	
when they put their trust in military alliances,	45	
when they failed to do justice and oppressed the poor,	46	
God sent the prophets to condemn their sins	47	
and to call the people back to obedience.	48	
There were times of repentance and reform,	49	
but in the end their kingdoms fell.	50	
We declare God's goodness and justice.	51	
God has blessed us beyond our deserving.	52	

When we forget the Lord and worship our possessions,	53
when we fail to deal justly with the poor,	54
when we seek security no matter what it costs others,	55
we can expect God's judgment upon us.	56
<b>(5) God did not forsake his people.</b>	57
God restored some of the people to their land	58
and left others scattered over the earth.	59
In a time of exile and alien rule,	60
the Jews survived and multiplied.	61
They enriched the whole world:	62
they compiled the Scriptures, preserving God's Word to them;	63
they sang their songs of praise and lamentation;	64
they sought wisdom, examining God's ways in the world;	65
they searched the mysteries of rising and falling kingdoms	66
and set their hope on the kingdom of God.	67
We testify that God is faithful.	68
Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful.	69
The Lord still brings from oppressed and uprooted peoples	70
riches of insight and daring visions	71
that can judge and bless the world.	72
We can have confidence in God's coming kingdom	73
even in the darkest times.	74

#### CHAPTER FOUR GOD IN CHRIST

<b>(1) God sent the promised Deliverer to his people.</b>	1
Jesus, the long expected Savior,	2
came into the world as a child,	3
descended from David,	4
conceived by the Holy Spirit,	5
born of Mary, a virgin.	6
He lived as a Jew among Jews.	7
He announced to his people	8
the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace on earth.	9
We affirm that Jesus was born of woman	10
as is every child,	11
yet born of God's power	12
as was no other child.	13
In the person and work of Jesus,	14
God himself and a human life	15
are united but not confused,	16
distinguished but not separated.	17
The coming of Jesus was itself	18
the coming of God's promised rule.	19
Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection,	20
he brings about the relationship between God and humanity	
that God always intended.	

A DECLARATION OF FAITH	155		
(2) <b>Jesus lived a truly human life.</b>	23	(4) <b>Jesus died for sinners.</b>	73
Jesus was what we are.	24	Religious leaders hated Jesus	74
He grew up in a family and a society	25	because he criticized their hypocrisy	75
troubled by the common problems of the world.	26	and reproved their neglect of justice and mercy.	76
His knowledge was limited	27	When he claimed to speak and act with God's authority,	77
by his time and place in history.	28	they charged him with blasphemy and sedition.	78
He felt deeply the joy of friendship	29	One of Jesus' followers betrayed him.	79
and the hurt of being rejected.	30	Others abandoned and denied him	80
Jesus prayed,	31	because they were afraid to stand with him.	81
struggled with temptation,	32	Civil authorities condemned him	82
knew anger,	33	because he provoked unrest among the people.	83
and was subject to suffering and death.	34	He was sentenced, mocked, beaten,	84
He was like us in every way except sin.	35	and crucified as a common criminal.	85
Jesus was also what we should be.	36	We confess that in the execution of Jesus	86
He served his Father with complete trust	37	the sin of the human race reached its depths.	87
and unwavering obedience.	38	The only innocent One was condemned and put to death,	88
He loved all kinds of people	39	not by the sinfulness of one nation,	89
and accepted their love.	40	but by the sinfulness of us all.	90
In constant dependence upon the Holy Spirit,	41	In the presence of Jesus,	91
Jesus allowed no temptation or threat to keep him	42	who lived out what God wants us all to be,	92
from loving God with his whole being	43	we were threatened beyond endurance.	93
and his neighbor as himself.	44	Blinded by our rebellion against our Creator,	94
We recognize in Jesus what God created us to be.	45	we killed his Son when we met him face to face.	95
He exposes our failure to live as he lived.	46	We believe that in the death of Jesus on the cross	96
He demonstrates the new humanity	47	God achieved and demonstrated once for all	97
God promises to give us through him.	48	the costly forgiveness of our sins.	98
		Jesus Christ is the Reconciler between God and the world.	99
(3) <b>Jesus was God in the flesh.</b>	49	He acted on behalf of sinners as one of us,	100
Jesus Christ overthrew evil powers	50	fulfilling the obedience God demands of us,	101
that enslaved and degraded people,	51	accepting God's condemnation of our sinfulness.	102
yet he made no use of power to protect himself.	52	In his lonely agony on the cross	103
He healed those who were sick in body and mind,	53	Jesus felt forsaken by God	104
yet he did not avoid pain and suffering for himself.	54	and thus experienced hell itself for us.	105
He commanded his followers to place loyalty to him	55	Yet the Son was never more in accord with the Father's will.	106
above loyalty to family and country,	56	He was acting on behalf of God,	107
yet he lived among them as a servant.	57	manifesting the Father's love that takes on itself	108
Jesus taught with authority,	58	the loneliness, pain, and death	109
challenging many time-honored customs and ideas,	59	that result from our waywardness.	110
yet he submitted to humiliation and death	60	In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself,	111
without a word on his own behalf.	61	not holding our sins against us.	112
He forgave sinners,	62	Each of us beholds on the cross	113
yet he was counted among sinners.	63	the Savior who died in our place,	114
We recognize the work of God in Jesus' power and authority.	64	so that we may no longer live for ourselves,	115
He did what only God can do.	65	but for him.	116
We also recognize the work of God in Jesus' lowliness.	66	(5) <b>Jesus is our living Lord.</b>	117
When he lived as a servant	67	Jesus was dead and buried,	118
and went humbly to his death	68	but God raised him from the dead.	119
the greatness that belongs only to God was manifest.	69	The risen Lord appeared to his followers.	120
In both his majesty and lowliness	70	They recognized him as their Master	121
Jesus is the eternal Son of God,	71		
God himself with us.	72		

## A DECLARATION OF FAITH

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who had been crucified.	122
Before Jesus left them,	123
he commissioned them to proclaim to all people	124
the good news of his victory over death,	125
and promised to be with them always.	126
We are certain that Jesus lives.	127
He lives as God with us,	128
touching all of human life with the presence of God.	129
He lives as one of us with God.	130
Because he shares our humanity	131
and has bound us to himself in love,	132
we have an advocate in the innermost life of God.	133
We declare that Jesus is Lord.	134
His resurrection is a decisive victory	135
over the powers that deform and destroy human life.	136
His lordship is hidden.	137
The world appears to be dominated by people and systems	138
that do not acknowledge his rule.	139
But his lordship is real.	140
It demands our loyalty and sets us free	141
from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us.	142
We maintain that ultimate sovereignty	143
now belongs to Jesus Christ	144
in every sphere of life.	145
Jesus is Lord!	146
He has been Lord from the beginning.	147
He will be Lord at the end.	148
Even now he is Lord.	149

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT**

<b>(1) The Holy Spirit is God active in the world.</b>	1
By the Spirit God raised up leaders and prophets in Israel.	2
By the Spirit Jesus was conceived, baptized, and empowered.	3
By the Spirit the risen Christ is present with his church.	4
We affirm that the Holy Spirit is the Lord and Giver of life,	5
the Renewer and Perfecter of God's people,	6
the One who makes real in us what God has done for us.	7
<b>(2) The Holy Spirit renews the community of faith.</b>	8
Israel did not cease to be God's people.	9
Yet out of Israel a new people was formed.	10
The Spirit came with power to the followers of Jesus.	11
Led by the apostles they began to proclaim with boldness	12
the new thing God had done in Christ.	13
They began to experience in their fellowship	14
a new quality of common life.	15
We believe that by the power of the same Spirit	16
the church can be set on its way again,	17

even when it seems beyond hope of renewal.	18
We are grateful heirs of reformations and awakenings.	19
We are faithful to the reformers of the past	20
when we hold ourselves open in the present	21
to the reforming and renewing work of the Spirit.	22
<b>(3) The Spirit enables people to become believers.</b>	23
The Spirit enabled people of all races, classes, and nations	24
to accept the good news of what God had done in Christ,	25
repent of their sins,	26
and enter the community of faith.	27
We testify that today this same Holy Spirit	28
makes us able to respond in faith to the gospel	29
and leads us into the Christian community.	30
The Spirit brings us out of death into life,	31
out of separation into fellowship.	32
The Spirit makes us aware of our sinfulness and need,	33
moves us to abandon our old way of life,	34
persuades us to trust in Christ and adopt his way.	35
In all these things we are responsible for our decisions.	36
But after we have trusted and repented	37
we recognize that the Spirit enabled us to hear and act.	38
It is not our faith but God's grace in Jesus Christ	39
that justifies us and reconciles us to God.	40
Yet it is only by faith that we accept God's grace	41
and live by it.	42
<b>(4) The Spirit helps believers grow in the new life.</b>	43
The Christian fellowship was not a society of perfect people.	44
The struggle between the old way of life and the new was severe.	45
Yet the Spirit produced among them	46
love, joy, peace, and victories in the battle against evil.	47
We believe the Holy Spirit works today	48
whenever believers grow toward maturity in Christ.	49
As long as we live we struggle with sin,	50
but the Spirit's presence assures us	51
God will complete what he has begun in us.	52
<b>(5) The Holy Spirit equips the Christian community.</b>	53
The early Christians recognized	54
a diversity of abilities and functions	55
as gifts of the Spirit.	56
Some were tempted to use these gifts	57
to serve their own needs and ambitions,	58
to form elite groups who looked down on others.	59
But the gifts were given for the common good,	60
to build up the community in love	61
and to equip it for its mission in the world.	62

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We are convinced that the Holy Spirit still calls people to various offices in the church and gives diverse gifts to believers.	63 64 65		
We are to use them to speak and embody plainly the gospel of Christ in the world.	66 67		
No gift is of value without love.	68		
<b>(6) The Holy Spirit unifies the Christian church.</b>	69		
The diversity in the early church caused tension and conflict.	70 71		
Yet the Spirit bound them into one body, enriched by their differences.	72 73		
We know that the same Spirit gives us a unity we cannot create or destroy.	74 75		
The Spirit moves among us not to end diversity or compel uniformity, but to overcome divisiveness and bitterness.	76 77 78		
The Spirit leads us to struggle against the lines of race and class, the ambitions of competing parties, the loyalties to individuals and traditions, that divide us.	79 80 81 82 83		
The Spirit impels us to make the unity of Christians visible to a divided world, and assures us that we shall be one.	84 85 86 87		
<b>(7) The Holy Spirit is free.</b>	88		
The Spirit created readiness for the gospel where the first Christians least expected it.	89 90		
The Spirit often thwarted their plans and led them in new directions.	91 92		
They could not coerce or restrict the Spirit.	93		
We affirm the Spirit's freedom.	94		
The Holy Spirit works in the church but not on our terms or under our control.	95 96		
The Holy Spirit works beyond the church even among those we suspect or scorn.	97 98		
<b>(8) The Spirit is one with the Father and the Son.</b>	99		
In the presence of the Holy Spirit the first Christians experienced God's own presence, not a power different from God or less than God.	100 101 102		
In Jesus Christ they met God himself, not a second God or one who is only like God.	103 104		
Yet they worshiped with the people of Israel one God alone.	105 106		
Reflecting on this mystery, the ancient church formulated the doctrine of the Trinity.	107 108		
		We believe with the church through the centuries that God is what he has shown himself to be in his story with his people: One God who is the Creator and Sustainer, the Savior and Lord, the Giver of life within, among, and beyond us.	109 110 111 112 113 114
		We affirm the unity of God's being and work. We may not separate the work of God as Creator from the work of God as Redeemer.	115 116 117
		We may not set the Son's love against the Father's justice. We may not value the Holy Spirit's work above the work of the Father and Son.	118 119 120
		The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God.	121
		We affirm richness and variety in God's being and work. We may not deny the real distinctions in God's unity.	122 123
		In his eternal being and in all his activity, the one God is always and at the same time the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.	124 125 126
		<b>CHAPTER SIX</b> <b>THE WORD OF GOD</b>	
		<b>(1) God makes himself known through his Word.</b>	1
		God has not waited to be discovered.	2
		The Lord has taken the initiative and addressed his Word to humankind in many ways.	3 4
		Through the Word of God the world was created. The Word became flesh in Jesus Christ.	5 6
		Through the Word of God the New Creation is being formed.	7
		We believe God's Word is God's communication to us. Although God is free to speak to us in unexpected ways, we confidently listen for his Word in Jesus Christ, in holy Scripture, in preaching and the sacraments.	8 9 10 11 12 13
		<b>(2) Jesus Christ is the living Word of God.</b>	14
		The Word which was with God from the beginning was embodied in Jesus Christ.	15 16
		We hold that what God says to us and does for us centers in Jesus Christ our living Lord as he is remembered, known, and expected.	17 18 19
		In Christ God's Word of acceptance takes flesh: by grace through faith we are set right with God, adopted as children of God, not because of anything we have done, but because of what Christ has done.	20 21 22 23 24 25
		In Christ God's Word of demand is lived out:	26

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to love God and neighbor as he did	27		
is what God requires of us.	28		
The Spirit adds no different Word from God,	29		
but leads us deeper	30		
into the truth of God uttered in Jesus Christ.	31		
<b>(3) The Bible is the written Word of God.</b>	32	<b>(4) Preaching communicates the Word of God</b>	74
Led by the Spirit of God	33	In different styles and ways,	75
the people of Israel and of the early church	34	believers have related Scripture	76
preserved and handed on the story	35	to the situations in which they lived.	77
of what God had said and done in their midst	36	The Spirit has given them power and boldness	78
and how they had responded to him.	37	to speak God's Word through their words.	79
These traditions were often shaped and reshaped	38	We believe that the preaching of the Word	80
by the uses to which the community put them.	39	is an event in which God himself confronts us.	81
They were cherished, written down, and collected	40	As the gathered community speaks to God in worship	82
as the holy literature of the people of God.	41	we expect God to speak to us in preaching.	83
Through the inward witness of the same Spirit	42	Preaching can take a variety of forms.	84
we acknowledge the authority of the Bible.	43	When it is faithful and obedient	85
We accept the Old and New Testaments as the canon,	44	the Holy Spirit uses it	86
or authoritative standard of faith and life,	45	to convert unbelievers,	87
to which no further Scripture need be added.	46	to strengthen believers,	88
They are necessary, sufficient, and reliable	47	to form and reform the church.	89
as witnesses to Jesus Christ, the living Word.	48	We hold that teaching goes hand in hand with preaching.	90
We must test any word that comes to us	49	It prepares people to hear the Word of God	91
from church, world, or inner experience	50	and enables them to reflect and act on it.	92
by the Word of God in Scripture.	51	<b>(5) The sacraments confirm the Word of God.</b>	
We subject to its judgment	52	In his history with his people in the world,	94
all our understanding of doctrine and practice,	53	God has often made material things	95
including this Declaration of Faith.	54	channels through which his grace is understood	96
We believe the Bible to be the Word of God	55	and powerfully experienced.	97
as no other word written by human beings.	56	Out of the life and ministry of Jesus,	98
Relying on the Holy Spirit,	57	the church received baptism and the Lord's supper	99
who opens our eyes and hearts,	58	as special sacraments of God's saving action.	100
we affirm our freedom to interpret Scripture responsibly.	59	We believe that in the washing with water	101
God has chosen to address his inspired Word to us	60	and in the eating of bread and drinking of wine	102
through diverse and varied human writings.	61	the Holy Spirit demonstrates and confirms the promises	103
Therefore we use the best available methods	62	of the embodied, written, and preached Word	104
to understand them in their historical and cultural settings	63	with vividness and power.	105
and the literary forms in which they are cast.	64	In these concrete human actions	106
When we encounter apparent tensions and conflicts	65	believers declare their acceptance of the promises.	107
in what Scripture teaches us to believe and do,	66	As the Word is acted out in the sacraments	108
the final appeal must be to the authority of Christ.	67	so the sacraments are to be accompanied by the Word.	109
Acknowledging that authority,	68	We believe that in baptism	110
comparing Scripture with Scripture,	69	the Spirit demonstrates and confirms God's promise	111
listening with respect to fellow-believers past and present,	70	to include us and our children in his gracious covenant,	112
we anticipate that the Holy Spirit	71	cleansing us from sin,	113
will enable us to interpret faithfully	72	and giving us newness of life,	114
God's Word for our time and place.	73	as participants in Christ's death and resurrection.	115
		Baptism sets us in the visible community of Christ's people	116
		and joins us to all other believers by a powerful bond.	117
		In baptism we give ourselves up in faith and repentance	118
		to be the Lord's.	119
		For both children and adults, baptism is a reminder	120
		that God loves us long before we can love him.	121

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For both, God's grace and our response to it	122
are not tied to the moment of baptism,	123
but continue and deepen throughout life.	124
We believe that at the Lord's supper	125
the community of believers is renewed	126
by the memory of Christ's life and death,	127
by his real presence in the power of the Holy Spirit,	128
and by the promise of his coming again.	129
He makes himself known to us in the breaking of bread.	130
He offers us his body broken for our sake	131
and his blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins.	132
We accept his promises and gifts	133
and depend on his life to sustain ours.	134
In turn we offer ourselves in thanksgiving	135
to the risen Lord who has conquered death.	136
So we celebrate his victory here and now	137
and anticipate the joyous feast in his coming kingdom.	138
Reunited around one loaf and cup,	139
we receive strength and courage	140
to continue our pilgrimage with God in the world.	141

**CHAPTER SEVEN**  
**THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

<b>(1) The church is founded on Jesus Christ.</b>	1
Gathered around the Word and sacraments,	2
those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,	3
together with their children,	4
have formed a corporate, visible body	5
in pilgrimage with God across the centuries.	6
The church has sought to order its life and ministry	7
in obedience to the teaching of the first apostles.	8
It has attempted to carry out Christ's commission	9
in various institutional forms and structures	10
that demonstrate both continuity and change.	11
We acknowledge that Christ chooses to be known in the world	12
through this community of ordinary people,	13
therefore we dare not despise or abandon the church.	14
Christ is the head of the church,	15
therefore we are responsible to Christ	16
when we make policy and decisions in the church.	17
Christ is the foundation of the church,	18
therefore it will not fall despite our weakness.	19
We are confident that the Lord of the church	20
will judge and defeat our sinful intentions and actions,	21
help us in our weakness and blindness,	22
and use the church to accomplish his purposes.	23
<b>(2) The church is marked by the Holy Spirit.</b>	24
Across the centuries since the church was founded,	25
the Spirit has formed and identified it.	26

We recognize the true church of Jesus Christ	27
wherever the work of the Spirit is evident:	28
in preaching and sacraments,	29
in the new life and continuous growth of believers,	30
in the sharing of spiritual gifts and material things,	31
in mission and service to the world.	32
The boundaries of the church are not clearly known to us,	33
but God knows those who are his.	34
<b>(3) The Christian church arose within Israel.</b>	35
The followers of Jesus	36
remained at first within the people of Israel.	37
As persons from all nations joined them,	38
they were separated from the Jewish community.	39
Yet they continued to accept Israel's story as their own	40
and to consider themselves part of the people of God.	41
We can never lay exclusive claim to being God's people,	42
as though we had replaced those	43
to whom the covenant, the law, and the promises belong.	44
We affirm that God has not rejected his people the Jews.	45
The Lord does not take back his promises.	46
We Christians have often rejected Jews throughout our history	47
with shameful prejudice and cruelty.	48
God calls us to dialogue and cooperation	49
that do not ignore our real disagreements,	50
yet proceed in mutual respect and love.	51
We are bound together with them in the single story	52
of those chosen to serve and proclaim the living God.	53
<b>(4) The church encounters other faiths.</b>	54
The church has often lived and worked	55
among those who do not share the Christian faith.	56
It has sometimes been corrupted and sometimes helped	57
by other religions, and by secular faiths and ideologies.	58
In turn it has affected them for good or ill.	59
We do not fully comprehend God's way with other faiths.	60
We need to listen to them with openness and respect,	61
testing their words to us by God's Word.	62
We should be loving and unafraid in our dealings with them.	63
We know God calls us to share the gift of Christ	64
with all who will receive it.	65
We are confident God judges all faiths, including our own.	66
<b>(5) The church exists within political communities.</b>	67
Throughout its history the church has struggled	68
to be faithful to God in political situations:	69
under persecution,	70
or as an established arm of the state,	71
or in separation from it.	72

God rules over both political and religious institutions.	73
We must confuse neither with the kingdom of God.	74
We must not equate the Christian faith	75
with any nation's way of life	76
or with opposition to the ideologies of other nations.	77
We hold Christians are to be law-abiding citizens	78
unless the state commands them to disobey God,	79
or claims authority that belongs only to God.	80
We should not expect governments	81
to impose Christian faith by legislation,	82
nor should we demand undue advantages for the church.	83
The church must be free to speak to civil authorities,	84
neither claiming expert knowledge it does not have,	85
nor remaining silent when God's Word is clear.	86
<b>(6) The church has its ongoing story with God.</b>	87
The church's story with God did not end	88
with the latest events recorded in Scripture.	89
Across the centuries the company of believers	90
has continued its pilgrimage with the Lord of history.	91
It is a record of faith and faithlessness, glory and shame.	92
The church has been persecuted by hostile societies,	93
but it has also known times of privilege and power	94
when it joined forces with dominant cultures.	95
It has sought holiness	96
through separation from society,	97
as well as through involvement in the world's affairs.	98
It has experienced life-giving reformations.	99
It has known missionary expansion throughout the world,	100
but also periods of dwindling resources and influence.	101
It has divided into rival orders, sects and denominations,	102
but it has also labored for cooperation and union.	103
We confess we are heirs of this whole story.	104
We are charged to remember our past,	105
to be warned and encouraged by it,	106
but not to live it again.	107
Now is the time of our testing	108
as God's story with the church moves forward through us.	109
We are called to live now as God's servants	110
in the service of people everywhere.	111

## CHAPTER EIGHT THE CHRISTIAN MISSION

<b>(1) God sends the church into the world.</b>	1
God has not taken his people out of the world,	2
but has sent them into the world	3
to worship him there and serve all humankind.	4
We worship God in the world	5
by standing before the Lord in behalf of all people.	6

Our cries for help and our songs of praise	7
are never for ourselves alone.	8
Worship is no retreat from the world;	9
it is part of our mission.	10
We serve humankind	11
by discerning what God is doing in the world	12
and joining him in His work.	13
We risk disagreement and error	14
when we try to say what God is doing here and now.	15
But we find guidance in God's deeds in the past	16
and his promises for the future,	17
as they are witnessed to in Scripture.	18
We affirm that the Lord is at work,	19
especially in events and movements	20
that liberate people by the gospel	21
and advance justice, compassion and peace.	22
<b>(2) God sends us to proclaim the gospel.</b>	23
God sent his Son	24
to proclaim release to those who are bound,	25
to announce that God's promised kingdom is at hand,	26
to urge everyone to repent and believe the good news.	27
The Lord is moving toward the time	28
when the glorious liberty of the children of God	29
will be manifest throughout the whole creation.	30
We testify God is at work here and now	31
when people obey Christ's commission	32
to witness to him and make disciples of all nations,	33
when they spread the good news by their words	34
and embody it in their lives.	35
We believe that God sends us	36
to tell all nations	37
that Christ calls everyone to repentance and faith.	38
We are to proclaim by word and deed	39
that Christ gave himself to set people free	40
from sin and self-hatred,	41
from ignorance and disease,	42
from all forms of oppression,	43
and even from death.	44
We are to offer them in Christ's name	45
fullness of life now and forever.	46
We must not distort the gospel	47
by weakening its promises or demands,	48
by identifying it with oppressive structures,	49
by pointing to ourselves instead of Christ.	50
We must not restrict our proclamation	51
to persons just like ourselves.	52
We invite people everywhere	53
to believe in Christ and become his followers.	54

We urge them to join us in telling others the good news and in struggling for justice, compassion, and peace.	55 56
<b>(3) God sends us to strive for justice.</b>	57
God has reached out to those who suffer injustice and defended the excluded, the poor, and the hungry.	58 59
The Lord is moving toward the time when justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.	60 61 62
We are persuaded God is at work here and now when people deal fairly with each other and labor to change customs and structures that enslave and oppress human beings.	63 64 65 66
We believe God sends us to work with others to correct the growing disparity between rich and poor nations, to achieve fair legislation justly administered and enforced, to make the operation of courts and penal institutions more just and humane.	67 68 69 70 71 72
We are charged to root out prejudice and racism from our hearts and institutions.	73 74
We are commissioned to stand with women and men of all ages, races, and classes as they struggle for dignity and respect and the chance to exercise power for the common good.	75 76 77 78
We must not countenance in the church and its institutions the inequities we seek to correct in the world.	79 80
We must be willing to make such amends as we can for centuries of injustice which the church condoned.	81 82
<b>(4) God sends us to exercise compassion.</b>	83
In his concern for justice in the social order God has never forgotten the needs of individuals.	84 85
In the end the Lord will judge all persons by the simple, unremembered acts of kindness they did or failed to do for the least of their sisters and brothers.	86 87 88 89
We acknowledge God is at work here and now when people show personal concern for each other and work to make helping agencies, including the church itself, more compassionate.	90 91 92 93 94
We believe God sends us to risk our own peace and comfort in compassion for our neighbors.	95 96 97
We are to give to them and receive from them, accepting everyone we meet as a person; to be sensitive to those who suffer in body or mind; to help and accept help	98 99 100 101

in ways that affirm dignity and responsibility.	102
We must not limit our compassion to those we judge deserving, for we ourselves do not deserve the compassion of God.	103 104
<b>(5) God sends us to work for peace.</b>	105
God has brought out of the horrors of warfare the judgment and deliverance of nations.	106 107
Yet the Lord has condemned the atrocities of war and warned his people not to trust in military might.	108 109
The Prince of Peace does not bring in his rule by force. The Lord is moving toward the time when nations will not learn war any more.	110 111 112
We affirm God is at work here and now when people are ashamed of the inhumanity of war, perceive the threat of annihilation that hangs over the human race, and seek other ways of settling international disputes.	113 114 115 116 117
We believe God sends us to minister to people on all sides of wars: the victims, the participants, and those who in conscience refuse to participate.	118 119 120 121 122
It is our duty to attack the causes and roots of war, to unmask the idolatry that places national security above all else, to urge all nations to devote to making peace the resources, intelligence, and energy that have gone to making war.	123 124 125 126 127 128
<b>CHAPTER NINE</b>	
<b>CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP</b>	
<b>(1) Christ calls us to be disciples.</b>	1
In forming his people and sending them into the world Jesus called individuals to be disciples.	2 3
They were to share the joy of his companionship, to understand and obey his teachings, and to follow him in life and death.	4 5 6
We confess that Christians today are called to discipleship. Life shared with Christ and shaped by Christ is God's undeserved gift to each of us.	7 8 9
It is also God's demand upon every one of us, never perfectly fulfilled by any of us. Forgiven by God and supported by brothers and sisters, we strive to become more faithful and effective in our daily practice of the Christian life.	10 11 12 13 14
<b>(2) Christ calls us to live in disciplined freedom.</b>	15
Jesus came to set people free by the power of the gospel.	16 17

In so doing he did not abolish, but fulfilled the law and the prophets.	18 19
Through his teaching and the teaching of the apostles he showed what it is to be free and obedient.	20 21
We declare Christ has freed us from trying to save ourselves by obeying the law.	22 23
He restores to us God's law as a gift and delight.	24
It describes concretely the shape of our freedom.	25
When we accept its discipline, it keeps our personal lives from being chaotic and increases our effectiveness in the church's mission.	26 27 28
<b>(3) Christ calls us to live in the presence of God.</b>	29
Jesus lived with a constant sense of his Father's presence.	30
He put God's claim on his life above all else.	31
He joined others in God's worship and praise.	32
He drew strength from the Scriptures.	33
He prayed and taught his disciples to pray.	34
We believe Christ gives us and demands of us personal lives that are centered in God and open to God's reality and rule.	35 36 37
Christ teaches us to put obedience to God above the interests of self, family, race or nation; to offer God joyously our money, ability, and time.	38 39 40 41 42
It is part of our discipline to observe a day of worship and rest, setting aside our own working to enjoy God's work, celebrating with sisters and brothers the Lord's goodness.	43 44 45 46
We need constantly to search out God's way in Scripture, not expecting detailed directions for every decision, but relying on the Word to tell us who God is, to press God's present claim on us, and to assure us of God's grace and comfort.	47 48 49 50 51
We are charged to pray for ourselves and others with gratitude, boldness, and persistence, confident that God hears and answers our prayers in ways best for us all.	52 53 54 55
Life in God's presence issues in life for others, for if we do not love sisters and brothers whom we see, we cannot love God whom we do not see.	56 57 58
<b>(4) Christ calls us to live for our neighbors.</b>	59
Jesus broadened the definition of neighbor to include those ordinarily despised and excluded.	60 61
His life in behalf of others led to persecution and death.	62 63
He commanded his disciples to live the same way.	64

We believe Christ gives us and demands of us lives that recognize all people in all cultures as our neighbors on this planet.	65 66 67
Christ teaches us to go beyond legal requirements in serving and helping our neighbor, to treat our neighbor's needs as our own, to care passionately for the other's good, to share what we have.	68 69 70 71 72 73
It is part of our discipline to live in simplicity, avoiding greed and luxury that threaten our neighbor's survival.	74 75 76 77
We are obligated to speak the truth in love, to listen with patience and openness, to love our enemies, to accept the risk and pain which love involves.	78 79 80 81 82
<b>(5) Christ calls us to pilgrimage toward the kingdom.</b>	83
Jesus announced the coming of God's kingdom and its hidden presence in the midst of the world's kingdoms. He taught his disciples to seek God's kingdom first.	84 85 86
We believe Christ gives us and demands of us lives in pilgrimage toward God's kingdom. Like Christ we may enjoy on our journey all that sustains life and makes it pleasant and beautiful.	87 88 89 90
No more than Christ are we spared the darkness, ambiguity, and threat of life in the world.	91 92
We are in the world, but not of the world.	93
Our confidence and hope for ourselves and other people do not rest in the powers and achievements of this world, but in the coming and hidden presence of God's kingdom.	94 95 96
Christ calls each of us to a life appropriate to that kingdom: to serve as he has served us; to take up our cross, risking the consequences of faithful discipleship; to walk by faith, not by sight, to hope for what we have not seen.	97 98 99 100 101 102
<b>CHAPTER TEN HOPE IN GOD</b>	
<b>(1) God keeps his promises and gives us hope.</b>	1
In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus	2
God kept His promises.	3
All that we can ever hope for was present in Christ.	4 5
But the work of God in Christ is not over. God calls us to hope for more than we have yet seen.	6 7

The hope God gives us is ultimate confidence that supports us when lesser hopes fail us.	8
In Christ God gives hope for a new heaven and earth, certainty of victory over death, assurance of mercy and judgment beyond death.	9 10 11 12
This hope gives us courage for the present struggle.	13
<b>(2) All things will be renewed in Christ.</b>	14
In Christ God gave us a glimpse of the new creation he has already begun and will surely finish.	15 16
We do not know when the final day will come. In our time we see only broken and scattered signs that the renewal of all things is under way.	17 18 19
We do not yet see the end of cruelty and suffering in the world, the church, or our own lives. But we see Jesus as Lord.	20 21 22
As he stands at the center of our history, we are confident he will stand at its end.	23 24
He will judge all people and nations. Evil will be condemned and rooted out of God's good creation.	25 26 27
There will be no more tears or pain. All things will be made new. The fellowship of human beings with God and each other will be perfected.	28 29 30 31
<b>(3) Death will be destroyed.</b>	32
In the death of Jesus Christ God's way in the world seemed finally defeated. But death was no match for God. The resurrection of Jesus was God's victory over death.	33 34 35 36
Death often seems to prove that life is not worth living, that our best efforts and deepest affections go for nothing. We do not yet see the end of death. But Christ has been raised from the dead, transformed and yet the same person. In his resurrection is the promise of ours. We are convinced the life God wills for each of us is stronger than the death that destroys us. The glory of that life exceeds our imagination but we know we shall be with Christ. So we treat death as a broken power. Its ultimate defeat is certain. In the face of death we celebrate life. No life ends so tragically that its meaning and value are destroyed. Nothing, not even death, can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.	37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53
<b>(4) God's mercy and judgment await us all.</b>	54
In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus	55

God has already demonstrated his judging and saving work.	56
We are warned that rejecting God's love and not caring for others whom God loves results in eternal separation from him and them.	57 58 59
Yet we are also told that God loves the whole world and wills the salvation of all humankind in Christ.	60 61
We live in tension between God's warnings and promises. Knowing the righteous judgment of God in Christ, we urge all people to be reconciled to God, not exempting ourselves from the warnings.	62 63 64 65
Constrained by God's love in Christ, we have good hope for all people, not exempting the most unlikely from the promises.	66 67 68
Judgment belongs to God and not to us. We are sure that God's future for every person will be both merciful and just.	69 70 71
<b>(5) Hope in God gives us courage for the struggle.</b>	72
The people of God have often misused God's promises as excuses for doing nothing about present evils. But in Christ the new world has already broken in and the old can no longer be tolerated.	73 74 75 76
We know our efforts cannot bring in God's kingdom. But hope plunges us into the struggle for victories over evil that are possible now in the world, the church, and our individual lives.	77 78 79 80
Hope gives us courage and energy to contend against all opposition, however invincible it may seem, for the new world and the new humanity that are surely coming.	81 82 83 84 85
Jesus is Lord! He has been Lord from the beginning. He will be Lord at the end. Even now he is Lord.	86 87 88 89





## **Nikki Collins**

Phone: 502.693.4653

E-mail: [Nikki.Collins@pcusa.org](mailto:Nikki.Collins@pcusa.org)

Nikki Collins began serving as the Coordinator for 1001 New Worshiping Communities in June 2018. Previously she served Cherokee Presbytery as Stated Clerk and Mission Coordinator and, before that, as the founder of Bare Bulb Coffee, a rich brew of full-service coffee shop, music and arts venue, and home to a diverse group of disciples committed to shedding light in the world.

She graduated with a degree in psychology and religion from Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia and earned her M.Div at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia.

Nikki makes her home in Chattanooga, TN and is the mother of two teenaged sons and the shepherd of a herd of spirited dogs and a lazy cat. She loves to plan a great college football tailgate, paddle a kayak, swing a tennis racket, and dig in the dirt.

**RETURN**

Northeast Georgia Presbyterian Women  
May 14, 2019  
Elaine Wiegert, Moderator

On Saturday, March 16, 2019 the Presbyterian Women of Northeast Georgia Presbytery met for the Annual Gathering at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Augusta. Attendees enjoyed a continental breakfast beginning at 9:00 a.m. The worship service was led by the Rev. Katelyn Gordon Cooke, Covenant Presbyterian Church Augusta. Rev. Nadine Ellsworth-Moran, Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, Augusta, assisted Rev. Cooke.

During the Business Meeting at the Annual Gathering the following officers for 2019 - 2020 were elected and installed by General Presbyter Hilary Shuford:

- Moderator: Elaine Wiegert (First Presbyterian Cleveland)
- Vice Moderator: Linda Spencer (First Presbyterian Gainesville)
- Secretary: Betty Royds (First Presbyterian Cleveland)
- Treasurer: Lindalee Walters (First Presbyterian Cleveland)
- Moderator of Search: Rachel Romfo (First Presbyterian Cleveland)
- Spiritual Growth: Linda Snowden (First Presbyterian Gainesville)
- Justice and Peace: Joyce Dejoie (Belle Terrace Presbyterian Church)
- Service Together: Bernice Rogers (First Presbyterian Cleveland)
- Mountain Mission Community Leader: Jan Barton (First Presbyterian Cornelia)
- North Central Mission Community Leader: Brenda Vail (First Presbyterian Hartwell)
- South Central Mission Community Leader: VACANT
- Greater Athens Community Mission Leader: Marcia Verbruegge (Covenant Presbyterian Athens)
- Greater Augusta Community Mission Leader: Cindy Wallerich (Covenant Presbyterian Augusta)

Judy Grieve will continue to serve on the Presbyterian Women of Northeast Georgia Coordinating Team as Past Moderator.

On Saturday, May 18, 2019 Presbyterian Women will gather at First Presbyterian Church Gainesville for a FUN, FELLOWSHIP and FOOD Day. This is a day for fellowship and learning together. Ladies will be able choose from several workshops – flower arranging, knitting, crocheting, banner making (a Christmas Banner), Insta-Pot cooking, liturgical movement, and awareness bracelet making. All attendees should be able to attend two workshops and enjoy lunch together. For more information, please contact Julie Usry at [jusry@comcsast.net](mailto:jusry@comcsast.net).

On August 24, 2019 the annual workshop for the Horizons Bible Study and officer training will be held at Covenant Presbyterian in Athens.

The Triennial Gathering of Presbyterian Women from the Synod of South Atlantic will be held at Epworth by the Sea, St. Simons Island October 25-27, 2019. Georgia is the host state this year. Judy Grieve is in charge of the workshops. All Presbyterian Women are encouraged to attend. Those Presbyterian Women from our Presbytery who attend will be reimbursed \$250 from the Beth Duncan Fund. This reimbursement includes the \$100 registration fee and \$150 toward travel and lodging.

As I begin my term as Moderator of Northeast Georgia Presbyterian Women, I look forward to working with each of you.

**RETURN**

Report from the Committee on Preparation for Ministry  
Prepared for the May 14, 2019 Meeting of the Northeast Georgia Presbytery  
Sylvia McDonald, Chair

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry met on April 9, 2019 at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens. Information was shared in the form of updates on the progress of those individuals in our care. We were blessed to participate in the Final Assessment for Isaac Toney. Isaac will be graduating from Candler Theological Seminary in May and the CPM affirmed his readiness for ministry. Isaac received permission from the CPM to circulate his personal information form and seek a call. Our prayers continue for Isaac at this exciting time in his life.

The committee met with Souvanh Touralack and Rev. Andy Chambers. Souvanh continues under the care of the CPM because he has not received a call. Souvanh graduated from Columbia Theological Seminary in 2014. He completed his ordination exams and a final assessment was completed in 2014. Since that time, Souvanh has served the Lord faithfully in Cornelia with a group of Laotian Christians. He continues to feel a sense of call to ministry with that body of believers. Rev. Chambers shared with the CPM that there is potential for future validated ministry with the Laotian Christians that would require that Souvanh be ordained. We were blessed by Souvanh's determination to serve the Lord and we were moved by his persistence. For these reasons, the CPM took the following action:

- The Committee on Preparation for Ministry voted unanimously to endorse and commend to the Committee on Ministry the establishment of the Laotian ministry in Cornelia and the future ordination of Souvanh Touralack in that context.

We were delighted to learn that Colleen Cook, who will graduate from Columbia Theological Seminary in May, has received and accepted a call to ministry in the Flint River Presbytery. Colleen will be ordained in June at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens. Colleen will be installed in her new pastorate in the Flint River Presbytery at a later date.

Recommendation from the CPM to the Presbytery:

- The CPM recommends that the following individuals be approved to serve on an Administrative Commission to oversee the ordination of Colleen Cook as a Minister of the Word and Sacraments:
  - Teaching Elders
    - Jeff Reynolds
    - Mark Harper
    - Beecher Mathes
    - Jim Bowden
  - Ruling Elders
    - Sue Rathbun
    - Jim Anderson
    - Sylvia McDonald
    - Marcia Noble (guest, member of Greater Atlanta Presbytery)
    - Kathy Tessin (guest, member of Flint River Presbytery)

I believe that God sang the world into being, a world that God recognized as good in all its intricate beauty. God created humans in God's image, beings who could themselves birth and sing and create. But God made the risky choice of creating us with our own wills, able to hate or love, nurture or neglect, kill or heal. In life and in death, we belong to God. The work of the people of God is to worship, praise, and love God and to tend the garden God created.

I believe in a triune God, present from the beginning. I believe in the goodness of God, the mighty power and creative awe-fulness of the one Jesus called Father, in the mercy and saving grace of Christ and his solidarity with humanity, and in the holy presence, guidance, and joy of the Holy Spirit. I believe these three natures of the one living God dance together and reveal Godself to us in an endless variety of loving encounter. Though God is ineffable, utterly surpassing our categories of race, gender, sexuality, physicality and spirituality, God is nonetheless knowable. God reveals Godself to us in order to enter our story in spirit, flesh, and relationship. I believe that we meet God in the least of these: the stranger, the child, the shunned, and the abused, in those who we regard as the other and wholly different from us. When we offer hospitality to these, we welcome Christ.

I believe that God came to us in Christ to renew the fallen landscape, to till the soil and expose diseased roots, and to plant the seeds of God's kingdom, wait for harvest, and weep over our growth with both joy and sorrow. We too are called to pull out the weeds of systems and ideologies that choke justice.

In Christ, God defied death and pushed us off the path of human destruction to the way of the kingdom, a treacherous, beautiful, and redeeming path. On this path we enter into the misery of our siblings, those disenfranchised by the economy of earthly empires and labor into existence the paradoxical economy of God, a system where the last shall be first, where no one is hungry, and we no longer perpetuate the myth of scarcity to justify our greed, an economy where those who neither toil nor spin are arrayed more gloriously than Solomon.

I believe that the Word made flesh is still writing God's story among us; is not yet finished with all that might be said or revealed to us. I believe that the Bible, though beloved, formative, and revelatory, is a lens through which we view God, a cradle that holds our understanding of God. I believe it is both inspired and humanly realized. It is the story of God's dance with us, formed in a crucible of culture and time. While worthy of struggling to understand and be transformed by, it is not in itself a god.

I believe in the mystery and power of the sacraments as sign and seal of God's work with us. I believe in baptism as God's claim on us, an unearned gift of vocation and entry into the family of the God's people. I believe in an open table of the Eucharist, where some meet God for the first time. Our story at its end as its beginning is always about grace. Every time we believe we are drawing nearer, refining ourselves spiritually, and choosing God, it is always God coming closer, God claiming us, and washing us over and over in the death/life waters of baptism and feeding us at an abundant table with all the saints.

I believe that even though God made us and knows our flaws, limits, and failures, God is madly and desperately in love with us. I believe that God throws that love around recklessly, with a lover's abandon. I believe that God's love is both universal and deeply personal, that God knows and loves even me. I believe that forgiveness is the great theme of the gospel, a gift born of a yearning for completeness. We receive it asked and unasked for, and we are called to give it in our own feeble way. God always sings us into love, bathes us in grace, and wastes nothing.

Although when ordained I will be the fourth generation of Presbyterian ministers in my family, I was raised with a variety of faith influences outside of the denomination. As a child and teenager I attended Southern Baptist churches, a Methodist church, and my family was very involved in Charismatic fellowships and conferences. We also listened to Word of Faith preachers on TV. This eclectic exposure was confusing to say the least, and I reject great swathes of the teachings I learned, but they certainly had an effect on my faith formation. As a student at Maryville College, I continued to have varied worship experiences as I was part of a black gospel choir and frequently sang at Missionary Baptist and AME churches. But it was at Maryville College that I first spent significant time in the Presbyterian church, and at last I felt that I had found my home.

I experienced a call to ministry as a teenager, but my only experience with women in the pulpit were when foreign missionaries on furlough returned and did slide shows and talks about their ministries abroad. Because of this, I interpreted the call as one into foreign missions. I knew music missionaries in the Southern Baptist church from my summers in Youth Music Camp and was fascinated with Japan at the time, so I began to prepare for a call in that direction, becoming a music major and studying Japanese in college. Soul searching, and meeting brick walls, I realized I was neither a traveler, nor talented in the way that added up to a career in music. I looked for another way to serve God, and changed my major to elementary education, eventually transferring to UGA.

I taught fifth grade and Pre-K, which I really enjoyed. I enjoyed the creative aspects of teaching and loved watching children blossom. During this time I got interested in the hurdles many of my students had with speech and language deficits. I went back to school and got a Masters degree in Speech-Language Pathology. Doing my clinical work in school, I especially enjoyed working with adult stroke survivors. I got a job in a hospital where I could work with both children and adults. As speech-language pathologist I worked in both schools and hospitals for about 12 years. It was challenging and rewarding work.

Teaching and rehab are God's work. I didn't and still don't believe I was running from my call at the time, and I believe that my work and experiences prepared me for what has come next. I had found a wonderful church home at Covenant Presbyterian in Athens and became more and more involved there, eventually leading the Wednesday night children's program. The work of the church and the study of the Bible became even more compelling than what I was doing at work. The cancer battle and death of a beloved friend and church member brought into focus what the church could and should be and I wanted to be part of that work. God was calling me to seminary and it was absolutely irresistible despite the challenges presented by leaving my job and going to seminary as a single mother and caregiver for my disabled mother.

At Columbia I found a wonderful supportive community for me and my family and incredible teachers. At times I have felt that I was drinking from a fire hose, there has been so much to absorb and learn and do. I have had wonderful growing experiences in congregational supervised ministry as well as an internship in the Office of Worship Life on campus, and have just completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at the VA hospital where I learned a great deal about pastoral care.

The classes I loved the most were in the areas of preaching, worship, and New Testament. I will be earning a dual degree with an MDiv and a Masters of Arts in Practical Theology with a concentration in Worship. I love to preach and write liturgy and have found my voice while at seminary. I am formed by and aspire to prophetic and pastoral preaching using poetic language. I am excited to be going into parish ministry where I will have many opportunities to proclaim the good news.

My ecumenical experiences have uniquely prepared me to minister to those who are disenfranchised by the church or wounded by the excesses of fundamentalism and the prosperity gospel. I feel a particular call to welcoming LGBTQ people into the full embrace of the church. I am excited about living in the rhythms of the church year, creating opportunities for study with ecumenical groups of ministers, and involving the congregation in leadership roles in worship and mission. I am immensely grateful to the leadership and members of Covenant Presbyterian, to the CPM, and to the Presbytery as a whole for supporting me on my path.

**RETURN**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY TEAM**  
**Mark Harper and Rindy Trouteaud, Co-chairs**

The Committee on Ministry Team met on March 14 and April 11, 2019 at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens, Georgia.

**INFORMATION:**

The Committee on Ministry Team:

1. Received the updated *Terms of Call and Contracts to Ministers List*.
2. Received report from the Ficklen Presbyterian Church regarding viability and referred it to the Stated Clerk of the Northeast Georgia Presbytery for further action.
3. Heard a report on the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Vital Congregations program administered by Rev. Kathryn Threadgill (pdf)

**ACTIONS:**

The Committee on Ministry Team:

1. Approved the Interim Pastor Covenant Agreement between Rev. Dr. Percy Johnson and the Sardis Presbyterian Church, Jefferson, effective April 14, 2019.
2. Approved the Mission Information Form of the Belle Terrace Presbyterian Church, Augusta for uploading on the denomination's Church Leadership Connection website.
3. Approved the revised Mission Information Form of the First Presbyterian Church, Cleveland for uploading on the denomination's Church Leadership Connection website.
4. Approved the Mission Information Form of the Athens Korean Presbyterian Church, Athens for uploading on the denomination's Church Leadership Connection website.
5. Approved the request of the session of Sardis Presbyterian Church, Jefferson to allow Rev. Dr. Percy Johnson to labor within the bounds of the Northeast Georgia Presbytery, effective March 17, 2019.
6. Approved the appointment of Rev. Janet Williams as moderator of the Winder Presbyterian Church session, effective May 1, 2019.
7. Endorsed with enthusiasm, the recommendation of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry to support the request of the First Presbyterian Church, Cornelia to collaborate with interested parties in establishing a 1001 Worshiping Community serving the Laotian community in the area surrounding Cornelia and, further, to support the efforts of Souvanh Touralack as he seeks ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament called to a validated ministry.
8. Recommended that the NEGA Presbytery Coordinating Team invite Rev. Nikki Collins, 1001 Worshiping Communities, to preach at the May 14, 2019 Stated Meeting of the NEGA Presbytery.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Committee on Ministry Team recommends Northeast Georgia Presbytery approval of:

1. The dissolution of the call between Rev. Brock Burnett and Winder Presbyterian Church, effective May 1, 2019.

**RETURN**



# **Vital Congregations Initiative**

## Basic Information

- 1 **Vision of Vital Congregations Initiative**
- 2 **7 Marks of Vital Congregations**
- 3 **Presbytery Letter of Interest Application**
- 4 **2018–20 Important Dates**
- 5 **Facilitator Role**
- 6 **Revitalization Facilitators**
- 7 **Cost Estimate Template**

## Vital Congregations Vision

*I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?  
See, the home of God is among mortals. ... See, I am making all things new.*

*Isaiah 43:19  
1 Corinthians 3:16  
Revelation 21:3-5*

### Vision:

**By the power of the Holy Spirit, and in authentic relationships with mid councils, we seek to equip, nurture and support church leaders to empower their congregations to renew, recover and live more fully into faithful discipleship to Jesus Christ.**

### Purpose:

*The purpose of the Vital Congregations Initiative is to work alongside mid council leadership, and leaders of existing congregations, in a process that seeks to help assess, discern and live into transformative actions that increase vitality. Through intentional spiritual practices and relational connections, this two-year process takes us deeper into following Jesus Christ, making disciples and being the vital community of Christ throughout particular communities and the world.*

### Values:

- **Courage, conviction and commitment to faithful discipleship**
- **Prayerful discernment**
- **Reliance upon Scripture**
- **Persistence — emboldened/enacted faith**
- **Honest assessment**
- **Resilience**
- **Intentional pursuits of reconciliation**
- **Hopefulness in change**

### What we believe:

- **A re-turn to God and re-forming of God's people is necessary.**
- **This is a crucial time of awakening throughout our neighborhoods, nation and world.**
- **The Holy Spirit's power is changing, re-forming and revitalizing the Church.**
- **It is necessary to rediscover faithful discipleship in a 21st-century context.**
- **God is calling the Church to transform and transcend cultures and contexts.**
- **We must move from inward institutions to neighborhood relationships and mission.**

**What this initiative is:**

The hope is this is the beginning of intentional, authentic relationships between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Mission Agency and mid council leaders and pastors to:

- Come together as the people of God
- Pray: re-turn to faithfulness in God
- Inspire openness to the Holy Spirit's transformation/change
- Honestly assess, discern and act
- Resource, equip and support leaders and pastors
- Practice missional evangelism and faithful discipleship
- Equip vital congregations and develop a praxis of sustainability and ongoing assessment
- Capture congregational stories and develop new measurements of vitality

**What this initiative is NOT:**

- A universal program instructing churches and assuring vitality and sustainable life
- Another plan that promises an immediate fix
- A guarantee of revitalization for every congregation
- An attempt for the PC(USA) to tell churches what to do
- An institutional survival guide for membership numbers and buildings
- An encouragement to tweak, yet remain the same
- A return to glory days gone by
- A guidebook on calling the young pastor

**Overview:** The Vital Congregations Initiative is a two-year covenant relationship between presbyteries and the PC(USA) to prayerfully walk with pastors and existing congregations in intentional efforts of revitalization. Year 1 seeks to (re)build authentic relationships of faith. Churches will embark on an honest assessment, capturing their unique stories, confessing their realities and discerning the Spirit's call to action. From 7 Marks of Vital Congregations, churches will determine a course between 3 Actions: *1) Re-forming churches — re-envision and change how we are church together through the 7 Marks of Congregational Vitality; 2) Missional Clustering churches — revitalization by clustering congregations into new communities of worship & ministry; 3) Death and Resurrection churches — revitalizing by grace and gratitude in the death and legacy of a congregation, in witness to the resurrection.* Year 2 is about joining Christ in the new thing taking place, allowing the wonder of God to transform, and faithfully living into change. Through 7 Marks and 3 Actions, we pray that God will revitalize the church in missional action and faithful discipleship in Jesus Christ throughout our neighborhoods, our nation and the world.

- **Year 1: Relational: Authentic Relationships and The Honest Assessment and Discernment of Congregations**
- **Year 2: Incarnational: Revitalizing Church in 3 Actions: Re-forming, Missional Clustering, Death and Resurrection**

## 7 Marks of Vital Congregations

- LIFELONG Discipleship Formation** vs. *Complacent "Christian" piety, simply teaching good morals, or offering the latest programs.*
  - "The righteousness that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God based on faith." Philippians 3:9b
  - From the cradle to the grave seeking to be formed for right living with God and with all people.
  - Faith – seeking understanding, cultivating wisdom and actively following Christ; not an extra-curricular or merely head-knowledge.
  - Discipleship awakened and engaged in issues facing today's culture: injustice, inequality, divisive segregation, oppression, suffering, abuse of creation.
  - Discipleship formed and strengthened in the community of Christ and permeates daily practices and daily living.
- Intentional Authentic Evangelism** vs. *"Jesus freaks"; "Christian" hypocrisy; A committee.*
  - "We have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God." 2 Corinthians 4:7
  - Intentionally sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, not just acts of kindness.
  - Authentically sharing Christ because it is intrinsic to self-identity; overflow of Christ in our life.
  - Relational, not programmatic or systematic
- Outward Incarnational Focus** vs. *Inward institutional survival; closed communities of assimilation/exclusion.*
  - "The gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it." Matthew 7:14
  - Outward exploration, awareness, and focus on neighbors and neighborhood.
  - Beyond relationship with those who are like us, the incarnate Christ dwells among the lowly and least, the stranger and the suffering, the marginalized and majority.
  - Missional focus on where Christ is already living and present, and calling us to dwell.
- Empower Servant Leadership** vs. *the pastor's job; monopolized leadership; hiring the young energetic pastor; burning out good volunteers.*
  - "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers." Matthew 9:37–38.
  - Identify, nurture and support the use of spiritual gifts of all people to serve; not monopolized cliques of power.
  - All voices and people are necessary, and it is noticeable when people are absent/missing.
  - Nurture and encourage those specifically called and gifted for pastoral ministry.
- Spirit-Inspired Worship** vs. *Self-gratifying worship, stale ritual divorced of meaning, or consumer entertainment worship*
  - "These people draw near with their mouths and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their worship of me is a human commandment learned by rote." Isaiah 29:13
  - Worship is about God. We get to come on holy ground, encounter God and experience wonder.
  - Worship is active participation in the living relationship of the triune God, thus *all* should feel welcome just as they are to come.
  - Worship challenges, teaches, transforms, encounters, convicts and sends people out different.
- Caring Relationships** vs. *Any other Social Club; façades, hypocrisy, and judgment of "church" and "religion."*
  - "By this everyone will know that you are disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35
  - Sharing in God's true agape moves us beyond half-hearted programmatic participation, lukewarm faith and pretending.
  - Instead of a closed, judgmental community, people find freedom to share stories, encounter the Savior and ask for help.
  - Welcome and hospitality are not left to a committee, but, imperfectly, we strive for *all* people find identity, purpose and belonging in the household of God.
  - Confront conflict, seek reconciliation in all divisions, find ways to embrace all diversity, seek to be peacemakers and bridge-builders together.
- Ecclesial Health** vs. *Unhealthy dysfunction; toxic environments; obsolete and irrelevant buildings*

- “The body does not consist of one member but of many. God has so arranged the body that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another.” 1 Corinthians 12:14, 24b–25
- Understanding of: Why are we a church community? How are we a church community in practice? Prayer permeates all life together.
- Clarity in mission, core values to ministry, passion and joy in being the church. Our budget reflects these values, vision and ministries.
- Fiscally responsible: Stewardship and tithing are taught, transparency in spending, continual assessment/discernment of a sustainable budget.
- All are aware of how decisions are made, stakeholders in the process and procedures, valued voices in the envisioning, open to changes, continual assessment of the “why” and “how” we are church together.
- Nurturing and supporting the health of pastor(s), staff, and all called to lead; fighting against burnout.

**PC(USA) PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY  
THE VITAL CONGREGATIONS INITIATIVE**

**PRESBYTERY LETTER OF INTEREST**

**INVITATION**

An invitation for all presbyteries interested in engaging in covenant relationship to God and to one another, as we share in the vision for Vital Congregations: *By the power of the Holy Spirit, and in authentic relationships with mid councils, we seek to equip, nurture and support church leaders to empower their congregations to renew, recover and live more fully into faithful discipleship to Jesus Christ.* The Office of Vital Congregations for the PC(USA) invites you to share your interest in joining with other presbyteries in the Two-Year Vital Congregations Initiative.

*The purpose of the Vital Congregations Initiative is to work alongside mid council leadership, and leaders of existing congregations, in a process that seeks to help assess, discern and live into transformative actions that increase vitality. Through intentional spiritual practices and relational connections, this two-year process takes us deeper into following Jesus Christ, making disciples and being the vital community of Christ throughout particular communities and the world.*

We invite you to review the information, share the vision among your presbytery leadership and pastors, and prayerfully fill out the Letter of Interest Form. All letters need to be submitted by Nov. 1, 2018. The office of Vital Congregations, in consultation with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Staff Team and the Vital Congregations Team, will prayerfully discern a maximum of 20 presbyteries to begin this journey. *Please note:* The maximum of 20 presbyteries ensures honoring intentional covenantal relationships and the needs of each particular presbytery. Discernment of presbytery selections will be based upon the established relationships between mid council leadership and the PC(USA) Staff and/or Vital Congregations Team, as well as the preparedness of each presbytery indicated in the Letter of Interest.

The First Wave of Presbyteries selected will be contacted by Feb. 1, 2019. We will begin the Preparation and Vision Sharing Year together. All important dates and special Vital Congregations events are included in this information packet. *Please note: we will inform and continue to build relationships with all presbyteries who submit a Letter of Interest, as we plan to launch a new wave through the process annually.*

We hope this process together will strengthen the people of God, in the mission of God, so that all might know vital life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. We look forward to receiving your letter, and to growing in relationship together.

IN Christ,

**The office of Vital Congregations (Theology, Formation & Evangelism Department, PMA).**

## Letter of Interest

### Application Checklist

- ✓ Letter of interest, including:
  - What attracts you to this initiative?
  - What do you hope to gain out of this experience?
- ✓ Completed application

Application deadline to be considered for the First Wave – 2020 is Nov. 1, 2018. Selection is in February 2019.

**Vital Congregations Initiative, PC(USA)  
Interest Application**

Name of Presbytery \_\_\_\_\_

Presbytery Leader(s) name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Presbytery Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Office Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Email of Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) Preparing Letter of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Congregations: \_\_\_\_\_ Pastors: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions. Each answer should not exceed 300 words.**

1. What attracts you to the Vital Congregations Initiative? What would the "Vital" conclusion to the initiative look like for you?
2. What is the level of interest from church pastors, committees and congregations in participation? Describe hopes, expectations, questions or concerns people have.
3. Is your presbytery willing to invest human and financial resources for two years in this initiative? Will you be willing/able to provide and support a minimum of two candidates to be trained as facilitators?
4. What do you consider the top two to three largest obstacles/issues in your presbytery? How do you think the vision of Vital Congregations will help address these?
5. What steps have you already taken to share the vision of vitality and the work of revitalization in your presbytery?
6. What existing ways do your pastors currently gather?

**Cover Letter**

**Please submit a cover letter with your application that includes a brief description of your presbytery: leadership, churches, mission, geographical makeup, all diversity, strengths, weaknesses, existing relationships with the Presbyterian Mission Agency and any other information you feel is helpful.**

Signature of person(s) preparing Letter of Interest application: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of presbytery leadership: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Application deadline to be considered for the First Wave – 2020 is Nov. 1, 2018. Selection is February 2019. Email your completed application and cover letter to:**

Rev. Dr. Kathryn Threadgill  
Associate, Vital Congregations  
502-569-5085  
[kathryn.threadgill@pcusa.org](mailto:kathryn.threadgill@pcusa.org)

## Vital Congregations, PC (USA)

### 2018 Important Dates

1. Oct. 15–19, 2018 – Evangelism Conference on Sabbath
  - Community Group for Vital Congregations, which will include leadership and pastors from the five pilot presbyteries.
  - Explore more about Vital Congregations and the importance of Sabbath as leaders.



2. Nov. 1, 2018: All Presbytery Letters of Interest are due.

### 2019 Important Dates

3. Feb. 1, 2019: First Wave of 20 Presbyteries (max.) are determined.
4. April 1, 2019: Presbytery information due to the office of Vital Congregations.
  - List of churches participating
  - Facilitators named
  - Covenant: Presbytery with Vital Congregations Office
5. May 2019: East Coast and West Coast Planning Gatherings. *(All tentative plans in the works.)*
  - West Coast: Denver – May 6–9, 2019
  - East Coast: Atlanta – May 13–16, 2019
  - Regional gatherings for the presbyteries preparing to walk through the initiative. Event is for pastors, presbytery leadership, and clerks of session to: learn about the two-year initiative, plan for their particular churches and contexts, and get ideas and training on the two-year initiative. The theme will center around Wonder and the Word — God as the transforming refuge of the Church, and the connectional gift of the community of faith.
6. June 2019: Facilitator Training Pre-Big Tent\*
  - Baltimore. *(Please note the location is subject to change for Facilitator Training based on whether or not Big Tent takes place.)*
  - A minimum of 2 facilitators identified by presbyteries will gather for training in their role as facilitator with other presbytery facilitators preparing for the Vital Congregations Initiative. This gathering will take place prior to the Big Tent event in Baltimore. Facilitators should be identified, agree to serve and names turned in to the office of Vital Congregations by April 1, 2019.

7. Fall 2019: First Wave Presbyteries: Continue Planning Year

- All presbyteries will receive a Planning Year Handbook to assist with: forming pastor cohorts; sharing the vision of vital congregations with pastors, sessions, staff and churches; monthly planning; worship liturgies and more.

8. October 2019: National Vital Congregations and 1001 Conference (*Optional Event*)

- Location: Austin, Texas
- Dates: Oct. 14–17, 2019
- TFE hosts a Vital Congregations and 1001 Conference together. This is open to all of the PC(USA)
- Theme centers around marks of vitality and how to make disciples in 21st-century America.

9. Nov. 25, 2019: Christ the King Sunday/Advent of Vital Congregations

- Individual Presbyteries
- Event to check in with pastors; marks the end of planning year; pray together for the initiative.

## 2020 Important Dates

- Presbyteries will determine whether to begin work in January 2020 or Fall 2020 (church calendar). General Assembly (June 2020, Baltimore) will offer an official celebration to the initiative launch.

## **Vital Congregations Facilitators**

*Facilitator — “to make easy” or “ease a process.” What a facilitator does is plan, guide and manage a group event to ensure that the group's objectives are met effectively, with clear thinking, good participation and full buy-in from everyone who is involved. Your key responsibility as a facilitator is to cultivate this group process and an environment in which it can flourish.*

**Objective:**

Presbyteries should identify and elect a minimum of two members to be trained by the PC(USA) for the role of *Vital Congregations Facilitator*. These facilitators should be trusted leaders among the presbytery with gifts for helping congregations. Facilitators should be objective — without conflict of interest in assisting churches. They will be trained, by the Office of Vital Congregations, and utilized at the discretion of presbyteries in consultation with pastors, or a session for churches without a pastor. They will also be supported/mentored by a liaison from the PC (USA) Vital Congregations Team, and have quarterly video meetings with other facilitators around the country.

**Rationale:**

In order to support congregations who are walking through the Vital Congregations Initiative, presbyteries should have trained leaders who can help congregations in the assessment, discernment and planning stages. These leaders should not be “sent in” from the PC(USA), but should be called from the contexts in which they live. These leaders should be equipped to support congregations and pastors in faithful and difficult conversations and help them navigate the challenging and hope-filled work of being a more vital congregation. They will serve as trained support to presbyteries, pastors and congregations long after the two-year initiative.

**Facilitators should be able to help:**

- Share the vision of Vital Congregations
- Assist pastors and/or session of church
- Ask good, sometimes difficult, questions
- Mediate conflict resolution and reconciliation
- Facilitate assessment dialogues for churches
- Facilitate the process of discernment and decision-making
- Engage in problem-solving, visioning and planning

**Gifts:**

- Faithful
- Positive attitude; encouraging
- Lead and navigate group dynamics
- Relational and trustworthy
- Good communication skills; honesty
- Adaptive leadership: assertive/visionary/democratic/inspiring
- Pastoral/peacemaker
- Emotional intelligence

**Calling upon facilitators:**

We envision that facilitators will be used for two key points in the two-year initiative:

- 1) *Year I – during the Assessment Review and Discernment stage for congregations*
- 2) *Year II – as congregations envision and map a plan for action.*

These facilitators will be deployed at the discretion of the presbytery in consultation with pastors (if a pastor is present) and the PC(USA) office of Vital Congregations. Examples:

- Facilitators gather with pastors and session members of congregations discerning a plan to do missional clustering in various ways.
- Facilitators walk with a congregation without a pastor who needs assistance with conflict resolution and reconciliation.
- Pastors and congregations want assistance from a facilitator in looking at the mark of vitality — Outward Incarnational Focus — and discern ways they can engage their neighborhoods.
- Facilitators gather with pastors and sessions of congregations faced with difficult discernment and pray together, and walk them through the challenging questions and conversations.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

1. *Q: How many facilitators are needed?*

A: Presbyteries should have a minimum of two facilitators for the Vital Congregations Initiative. However, Presbyteries may elect more than two depending on presbytery size, the number of churches without pastors, ethnic-cultural diversity and languages.

2. *Q: What do facilitators cost?*

A: Presbyteries should cover all costs associated with the Facilitator Training Conference by the PC(USA). In addition, presbyteries may elect to pay their facilitators a stipend for the two-year initiative. Finally, we encourage the reimbursement of mileage and meals as these facilitators serve.

3. *Q: What is the time commitment of a facilitator?*

A: For each presbytery the demands of a facilitator's time will be dependent on how and when they are utilized. Facilitators will spend four days being trained by the Vital Congregations Office of the PC(USA). Facilitators will be given quarterly video meetings, lasting approximately one hour, as an opportunity to check in with facilitators around the country, to share ideas, discuss case studies and pray together.

## VITAL CONGREGATIONS ESTIMATED COST SHEET

**Note\*\*\* The following estimate is based on current available information and could change based on final cost for production of resources, and travel expenses at the time of events. The total estimated budget of \$13,177.00 is based on one (1) Presbytery with two (2) Facilitators, and 15 churches with 200 members.**

### Estimated Survey Cost:

		No. of Participants Per Church	No. of Churches
		200	15
		Cost Per Church	Cost Per Presbytery
Cost/Survey: Printing & Scoring	\$ 3.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 9,000.00
Shipping Cost/Congregation	\$ 17.00	\$ 17.00	\$ 255.00
		<b>\$ 617.00</b>	<b>\$ 9,255.00</b>
<p><i>Research &amp; Development estimated cost to print and score surveys for one (1) congregation with 200 members: \$600.00</i></p> <p><i>Estimated shipping cost of surveys to one (1) congregation: \$17.00</i></p> <p><i>Estimated total survey cost for one (1) congregation: \$617.00</i></p>			
<b>Estimated total cost of surveys for 15 churches in one (1) Presbytery: \$9,255.00</b>			

### Estimated Facilitator Training Cost (Per event):

No. of Facilitators Per Presbytery	2		
Estimated Travel	550.00	1,100. 00	
Estimated lodging for 4 nights	640.00	1,280. 00	
Estimated Meals	276.00	552.00	
	<b>\$ 1,466. 00</b>	<b>\$ 2,932. 00</b>	<b>\$ 2,932.00</b>

**Estimated Resource Cost:**

Estimated resource cost for one (1) church - 4 items per church	62.00	930.00
Resource: Facilitator Manual - two (2) per Presbytery	12.00	24.00
Estimated resource cost for Presbytery - 1 item	12.00	12.00
	86.00	966.00

**\$  
966.00**

**Total estimated cost for training &  
resources**

**\$  
3,922.00**

**Grand Total Estimated Budget**

**\$  
13,177.00**

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Report of the Northeast Georgia Presbytery  
Disaster Preparedness Team  
May, 2019

In response to growing concerns over both natural and human-created disasters, the Disaster Preparedness Team was formed in November, 2018. The purpose of this team is to collaborate with the churches of Northeast Georgia Presbytery in assessing congregational readiness, and to partner in equipping our churches for disaster preparedness. A critical element of this planning is the recognition that for the people of God, disaster preparation and response are primarily spiritual in nature.

The members of this team are: Anita York (Elder, Oconee); Sam McCowan (Elder, Monticello); Sylvia McDonald (Elder, Jefferson); Sue Rathbun (Elder, Covenant Athens); Harry Shuford (Elder, Athens First); Lindalee Walters (Elder, Cleveland); Don Barber (Pastor, Rabun Gap); Ford G'Segner (Pastor, Union Point, Ficklin); Craig Topple (Pastor, Chaplain); Ed Rees (Pastor, St. Andrew). The team is supported by Hilary Shuford, General Presbyter, and Anita Green, Presbytery Office Manager. An annual budget of \$1000.00 was approved for the work of this team.

The team has worked diligently since November to review available resources from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, FEMA, GEMA, as well as from the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD), a nation-wide coalition of organizations involved in disaster mitigation. We are also thankful for hands-on input from Doug Macdonald, a member of the PDA National Response Team.

As an initial proposal, we envision this assessment and preparedness task as taking the form of a tri-level pyramid (see attached diagram). The base of the pyramid, and the first priority, is at the congregational level: our goal is for each of our churches to have a sound and practical disaster plan in place, with resources and responsibilities clearly outlined to maximize the safety of people, and the ability to swiftly assess damage and respond appropriately. This process begins with a congregational self-assessment to ascertain current readiness and outline areas that need to be fleshed out. We recognize that a number of our churches are already well-equipped in this area, and we anticipate a collaborative sharing of best practices among our congregations. **Our objective is for all the churches of Northeast Georgia Presbytery to complete their self-assessment by the Fall of 2019.** The development and implementation of congregational preparedness plans would then build upon these assessments.

The second level of the pyramid pertains to equipping our churches to serve as resource centers for their own communities in the wake of disaster. Some could offer shelter and/or food and water, while others could provide volunteers to assist with existing disaster mitigation efforts. As each congregation has differing skills and assets, no two churches will have the same capacities for providing community assistance. It is conceivable that our churches could coordinate their work through our existing Presbytery Mission Clusters.

The final level of the pyramid would be the formation of a Presbytery-wide Crisis Response Team that would be available to travel where needed, under the direction of the leadership of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. The development and training of this team could take place concurrently with ongoing disaster preparedness efforts in our individual churches.

Your prayers and input are requested; resource links are included with the attached diagram.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Ed Rees, Chair

[RETURN](#)

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Northeast Georgia Presbytery:

I am writing on behalf of the newly-formed Disaster Preparedness Team for our Presbytery. Our purpose is simple: to assist our congregations in becoming as prepared as possible for disaster, whether of natural causes or human ones.

In March of this year, a tornado ripped through Talbotton, Georgia, completely destroying St. Mark Church. One thing was left standing – the pulpit. That ruined church, with its remaining pulpit, is emblematic of our work, which is first and foremost spiritual in nature. Psalm 46 reminds us: *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea...* Our task therefore is two-fold, to help not only with the practical work of preparing for the catastrophes that will inevitably come, but to be prepared to provide spiritual care in the wake of destruction.

At our upcoming Presbytery meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup>, this topic will be a major focus. We are pleased that Rev. Dr. James J. Kirk, our PDA Associate for Disaster Response, will be with us to share his insights. Following lunch, we anticipate breaking into groups centered on our Mission Communities to exchange ideas and best practices. Attached you will find two Disaster Preparation Checklists, one for congregations, and one for households. We hope these will be useful as you evaluate your own level of readiness. In all these things we are striving towards fulfilling the motto of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: Out of Chaos, Hope.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this initiative; your input, questions, and comments are always welcome.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Ed Rees

Disaster Preparedness Team Members: Sylvia McDonald, Don Barber, Anita York, Craig Topple, Sue Rathbun, Lindalee Walters, Sam McCowan, Ford G'Segner, Harry Shuford, Ed Rees

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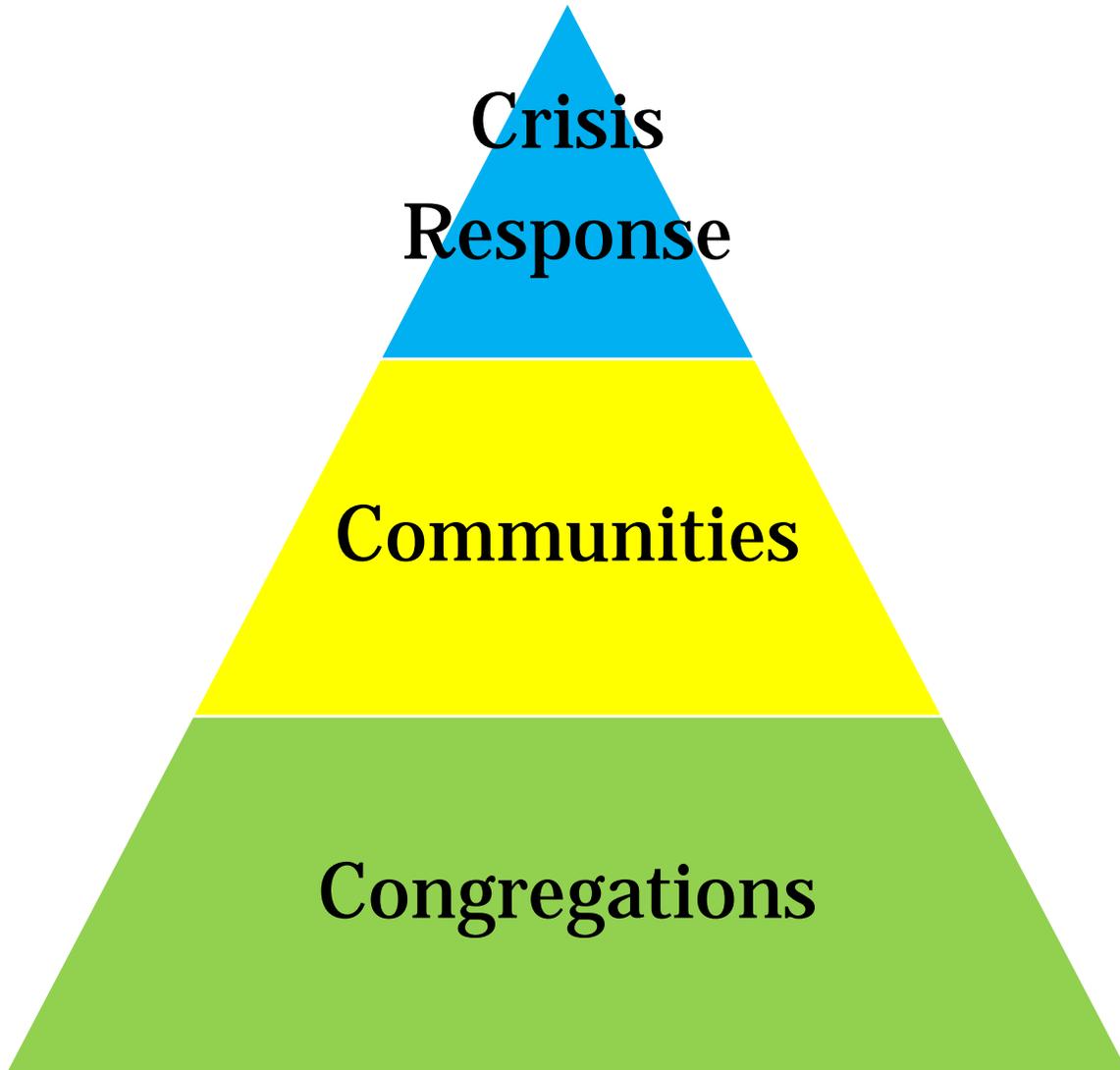
## Disaster Preparation Checklist for the Local Congregation

- 1. Congregational Disaster Response Coordinator(s) selected and trained. (3 year term)
- 2. Congregational Directory updated at least quarterly. (Including e-mail addresses.)
- 3. List of congregational members with special needs noted and updated annually
- 4. Insurance Policies reviewed annually and saved in multiple locations.
- 5. Financial and Session records saved electronically and stored in multiple locations monthly.
- 6. Inventory of physical plant made and updated annually. Video record recommended.
- 7. Consultation with local ARC and EMA re: possible shelters in the area.
- 8. Consultation with local EMA re: possible disaster scenarios. Develop plans for each.
- 9. Share emergency kit information with congregation. Kits can be assembled and distributed by groups within the church to elderly and special needs congregation.
- 10. Coordinate with local/state VOADs to ascertain response partners and roles of each.
- 11. Determine if the physical plant can be used as an emergency shelter, point of distribution, etc.
- 12. Develop a communication system within the congregation (i.e. phone tree, Shepherds, etc.)
- 13. Familiarize the congregation with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and the Disaster Response Ministry of your presbytery.
- 14. Subscribe to Mission Mosaic (free) from PDA.
- 15. Help create a network of response throughout the Presbytery.

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## Disaster Checklist for the Family

- Become aware of household hazards and secure dangerous substances.
- Consult local Fire & Rescue as to the proper placement of fire extinguishers and CO monitors.
- Train for CPR/AED and First Aid. Renew certification as mandated.
- Purchase or prepare a First Aid Kit, keeping special needs in mind. Inspect every six months.
- Develop an exit plan from the house and familiarize everyone with it.
- Establish rally points outside of the house. (At least 2.)
- Post emergency numbers in a conspicuous location. Include out of town contacts.
- Keep medical records (including prescription information) in a convenient, marked place for First Responders.
- Prepare an Evacuation Kit (See handout.)
- Initiate or participate in a Neighborhood Watch program.
- Know of local shelters in the area and how to get to them.
- Maintain at least 72 hours' worth of non-perishable food and water.
- Purchase an all-hazards radio and test monthly. Replace batteries every six months or as needed.
- Keep multiple copies of birth certificates, social security records, insurance policies. Scan electronically and save in multiple, secure locations. Keep one copy in Evacuation Kit.
- Keep at least \$200 per person in a secure location. (i.e. Evacuation Kit, etc.)
- Purchase power failure lights for home. Can be used as flashlights in an emergency.
- Maintain auxiliary lighting in home and car. Replace batteries every six months.
- If you purchase a generator, be sure to operate it only outside and test monthly.
- Encourage all of the above to the local congregation and assist in the development of a Disaster Response Ministry.



Key Links:

[www.pcusa.org/pda](http://www.pcusa.org/pda)

[www.gavoad.communityos.org/cms/home](http://www.gavoad.communityos.org/cms/home)

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## PDA Services & Resources

### Personnel

#### National Response Team (NRT) and National Volunteer Team (NVT)

The NRT is PDA's primary response unit. NRT members are specially trained volunteers who can be deployed in small teams to cover initial disaster responses, and long-term training and support to mid councils, congregations and communities with recovery efforts. More NRT specifics are covered in the NRT Overview document (in the Initial Response section of the NRT and Mid Council Web Pages). These team members can assist mid councils in:

- Assessment of needs (Mid Council, Congregations, Community)
- Spiritual and pastoral support to mid council leadership, congregations and community faith leaders.
- Connecting the Presbytery to the many resources and services from government, as well as other faith partners and voluntary agencies
- Specialized disaster response in:
  - Emotional and spiritual care
  - Resilience and renewal for responders
  - Hosting volunteer work teams. PDA NRT members can deploy to churches that are interested in hosting volunteer work groups in support of the long-term recovery (Contact Eden Roberts, [PDA.CallCenter@pcusa.org](mailto:PDA.CallCenter@pcusa.org); 866/732-6121)
  - Long-term recovery organizing
  - Disaster preparation (PDA collaborates with Presbyterian Women to lead these trainings)
  - Pastoral trauma, respite care (Contact Jim Kirk, [Jim.Kirk@pcusa.org](mailto:Jim.Kirk@pcusa.org); 502/569-8800)
  - Burned/damaged church leadership support
  - Human-caused disaster support
  - Healing camps for children affected by mass shootings or disasters
  - Refugee issues
  - Other - Recognizing that each disaster and disaster response is different, PDA has the ability to be flexible.

## Equipment

PDA no longer owns any equipment but has connections to national equipment resources such as portable shower buildings and trailers. PDA can also provide consultation about options for showers, tool storage, and bunk bed construction, among other issues.

## Web-based Resources

### PDA Website

The newly revised PDA website contains a vast array of resources to guide Presbyterians in how to respond to disaster. The website includes information about the current national and international responses; how to *Stand in the GAP* – Give, Act, & Pray; and many resource links for individuals and congregations including Stories of Hope and videos. The address is: <http://pda.pcusa.org>

### Mid Council Web Page

PDA has developed a special web page for mid councils and community leaders that contain resources categorized by the major areas of disaster preparedness and response. NRT teams specializing in each topic area created this content. This includes general disaster response and long-term recovery information, as well as sample disaster plans. The address is: <http://pda.pcusa.org/page/midcouncil-epda/>

## Funding

There is a suite of grants for Mid Councils that include:

- Initial Grants to allow broad disaster response support for congregations and communities
- Church Damage Assistance Grant for continuity of ministry
- Special Project Grants to assist with long-term recovery group organization and recovery needs, as well as volunteer host site support
- For information on PDA's grant program, contact Beth Snyder, [beth.snyder@pcusa.org](mailto:beth.snyder@pcusa.org); (502) 569-5806

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## Other PDA Resources

Several other miscellaneous resources are available from PDA that include:

- *Light Our Way* – A manual for emotional and spiritual care in times of disaster  
<https://www.nvoad.org/mdocs-posts/light-our-way/>
- PDA Blue T-shirts for volunteers working in the field
- *Mission Mosaic* magazine
- Interpretive videos about volunteer work team experiences in long-term recovery, visit <https://vimeo.com/pdacares>
- Daily Devotional guide for volunteer work teams
- For resource information, contact PDA staff at [disaster@pcusa.org](mailto:disaster@pcusa.org); (502) 569-5806

## Other Agencies of the Church

### Board of Pensions

Resources include Emergency Shared Grants up to \$1000 for members of the Board of Pensions Plans. This is shared grant between the mid council and the Board of Pensions. Contact the regional Board of Pensions representative for further information.

### Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) works with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) to offer free replacement resources for those congregations that have experienced property damage and loss. PPC offers each grant recipient a \$1,500 credit toward the following: Westminster John Knox Press books, Geneva Press books, These Days subscriptions, and Thoughtful Christian Download subscriptions. For more information contact Monty Anderson at [manderson@presbypub.com](mailto:manderson@presbypub.com) or 502-569-5067.

### Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program

This program has a special distressed churches fund with loans available at below their normal interest rates. Contact PILP directly for further information.

**Questions** can be answered by Rev. Dr. Jim Kirk, PDA's Associate for Disaster Response in the U.S., at [pda.help@pcusa.org](mailto:pda.help@pcusa.org); 502/569-8800 or Beth Snyder at [beth.snyder@pcusa.org](mailto:beth.snyder@pcusa.org); (502) 569-5806.

**RETURN**



## **PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

The Rev. Dr. James J. Kirk is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in August of 2016 accepted the position of Associate for Disaster Response (U.S.) for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. This position is responsible for coordinating the denominations domestic response to the many disasters that impact our congregations, Presbyteries and communities. The mission of PDA is to bring, "Out of Chaos, Hope".

Prior to this position Jim served congregations in Sparta, NJ and Naples, FL. He graduated from Moravian College with a BA in 1977 and from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, VA with a D.Min. in 1981.

Jim is a Certified Compassion Fatigue Professional (CCFP) through the International Association of Trauma Professionals and a member of the International Critical Stress Foundation (ICSF). Jim was a volunteer with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for over 20 years. In that role Jim has responded to a variety of disaster including natural and public violence.

Jim is a past chair of the National VOAD Emotional and Spiritual Care Committee and has been on the committee for nine years. He has been a National and Local Volunteer with Red Cross since 2008. Jim was a part of a team that developed the Disaster Spiritual Care program that is currently being integrated into Red Cross Chapters around the country.

[\*\*RETURN\*\*](#)

# **Child-Youth Protection Policy**

## ***Policies for the Safety of Children***

Northeast Georgia Presbytery

### **Table of Contents**

- Introduction and Purpose
- Scope and Applicability
- Guidelines for Interacting with Children and Youth
  - Code of Conduct
  - Two-Adult Policy
  - Specific Situations
    - Transportation
    - Pastoral Care and Mentoring
    - Bathroom Guidelines
    - Overnight Trips
- Screening and Education for Volunteers and Staff
  - General Volunteers
  - Overnight and One-on-One Volunteers
  - Staff and Interns

#### Reporting and Responding

- Policy Regarding Known Sex Offenders

### **Section 1: Introduction and Purpose**

As people who seek to live the commandment to “let the children come” (Matthew 19:14), the member churches of Northeast Georgia Presbytery (NEGA Pby) take seriously the importance of providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children and youth participating in the activities and programs of Northeast Georgia Presbytery. With the establishment of this Child-Youth Protection Policy, NEGA Pby is setting an example and taking a stand against the child abuse, neglect and exploitation that breaks the relationships and trust to which our Church is committed.

The Child-Youth Protection Policy is intended to protect the children in our Church community, the adult volunteers and employees who work with them, and the Church itself. The Policy establishes standards and procedures for:

- Supervision of and interaction with children and youth
- Screening and training volunteers and staff
- Reporting of and responding to suspicious or inappropriate activity

This Policy seeks to be practical and reasonable – relying upon sound judgment and good sense – while at the same time ensuring that necessary safeguards are in place to protect our children and youth.

### **Section 2: Scope and Applicability**

The Child-Youth Protection Policy applies to all NEGA Pby staff and any Church member or nonmember volunteer working with children or youth. Covered activities and programs – both on and off church premises – include but are not limited to: Sunday School classes, Youth fellowship programs, nursery, Vacation Bible School, music camp, children and youth choirs, church-sponsored retreats and mission trips, and confirmation mentoring.

### **Section 3: Guidelines for Interacting with Children and Youth**

#### Code of Conduct

NEGA Pby expects that all staff and volunteers with children and youth will exemplify Christ’s love of children in all that they do and will offer a healthy and positive Christian role model. Employees and volunteers:

1. Will support and promote spiritual and emotional growth and development in their interactions with children and youth.
2. Will provide proper supervision and exercise sound judgment in maintaining a safe environment at all times.
3. Will observe the Two-Adult Policy as documented in the Child-Youth Protection Policy and will avoid one-on-one situations with a child or youth except in emergency or pre-approved situations.
4. Will respect the rights of children and youth not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and will discourage children from touching one another in an inappropriate or unwelcome manner.
5. Will be alert to possible signs of abuse to children participating in church programs and immediately report any suspicions to the staff person responsible for the program.
6. Will not verbally, emotionally, physically or sexually abuse children.
7. Will not discipline children by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
8. Will use physical restraint only when necessary to protect the child or others from harm and will report circumstances to the child’s parent or guardian or the staff person responsible for the program.
9. Will release children only to adults authorized by the child’s parent or guardian.
10. Will not possess or use illegal drugs or alcohol or smoke/vape or use tobacco during church programs for children and youth.
11. Will not supervise children or youth in the event judgment and ability is impaired by legally prescribed medication.
12. Will not engage in profanity, inappropriate language or jokes, or any kind of harassment in the presence of children, youth or parents.
13. Will not share inappropriate details of their personal life or ask children or youth to share inappropriate details through written, verbal or electronic communication.
14. Will not date youth program participants.
15. Will give gifts only on a group basis or for specific occasions (e.g., baptism, confirmation, birthday, graduation). Giving gifts to individual children or youth should be done only with the knowledge and permission of parents.

#### **Two-Adult Policy**

At least two adults, as defined below, should supervise all church-sponsored programs and activities involving children and youth whether on or off campus. Adults should make every reasonable effort to remain in sight of one another at all times except in emergency situations and when circumstances demand otherwise.

One adult in any program for children and youth at NEGAPby must be at least 21 years of age and at least five years older than the oldest program participant. The second adult present in these situations may be 18 years old and a high school graduate. In any one-on-one situation outlined in this policy, the adult must be at least 21 years old.

Adults should make every reasonable effort to avoid being in a one-child, one adult situation. When one-on-one interactions between children and youth and employee/volunteers are necessary (e.g. in emergency situations or occasions of pastoral care or mentoring as described under Specific Situations below), care must be taken to conduct the meeting in an environment that provides visibility by other adults. Another adult must have knowledge of the employee/volunteer's whereabouts and with whom they are meeting.

With youth in Sunday School, two adults should be present whenever possible. However, one adult may teach 6th grade or above as long as there is more than one youth present in the class. If only one youth is present, the class should combine with another group.

### **Specific Situations**

#### **1. Transportation**

Adult leaders should make every reasonable effort to avoid being alone in a vehicle with a child or youth. However, it is permissible for one adult driver to transport several children and youth in a vehicle in a convoy of vehicles traveling to or from an event. If it is necessary for a child to get home after an event and circumstances dictate that a volunteer, staff member, or intern take the child home, an effort should be made to contact the family and inform them of the situation before transporting the child. If the parents cannot be reached, another adult should be made aware of the transportation plans and should be contacted once the child is safely home.

#### **2. Pastoral Care and Mentoring**

Sound discretion should be exercised by adult staff and volunteers in one-on-one pastoral care or mentoring situations with children or youth. To avoid the appearance of impropriety, such meetings may take place privately but with others nearby and not isolated from view. Examples include meeting in a public place, meeting with an open or cracked door, or meeting in a room or office with a clear glass window in the door. Under no circumstances should a door be locked when one adult and one child or youth are alone.

#### **3. Bathroom Guidelines**

##### Infants and Toddlers

- Diaper changing must always take place in line of sight of another adult.

##### Kindergarten and Younger

- No child should be sent to the restroom alone.
- When a group of children goes to the restroom together, two adults will escort the children.
- If only one child needs to go to the restroom, one adult caregiver may escort the child to the restroom after informing another adult. The caregiver will wait outside the door and escort the child back to the group. The adult will call the child's name if he or she is taking longer than seems necessary.
- Generally, an adult should not be alone with a child in a restroom. If, however, this is not possible because a child needs assistance, the caregiver should inform another adult of the assistance needed and provided.
- An adult should never go into a stall with a child and shut the door.
- In any circumstances where the bathroom is isolated from the group, when reasonable and practical two adults should escort a child to the restroom.

##### Elementary School Children

- When a child in this age group needs to use the restroom, an adult should monitor his or her whereabouts.
- If the restroom is isolated from the group, two same sex children may be sent inside together.

#### **4. Overnight Trips**

On overnight trips with children or youth, reasonable boundaries must be in place to respect the privacy of each person. Males and females must sleep in separate rooms. An adult may sleep in a room with two or more youth of the same sex. An adult shall not share a bed with a youth or sleep alone in a room with only one youth.

Under no circumstances can one adult alone take or accompany children or youth on an overnight outing. In addition, two adults who are married to each other should not be the only adult chaperones on any overnight trip.

### **Section 4: Screening and Education for Volunteers and Staff**

Volunteers and staff will be screened and educated as described below. Results of background checks and self-disclosure statements will be kept strictly confidential.

### **General Volunteers**

General Volunteers include individuals volunteering in situations where there will be two or more adults present in the company of children, such as Sunday School Teachers, Vacation Bible School, nursery volunteers and others. All general volunteers:

1. Will have been regularly attending their home church for at least 6 months before volunteering with children and youth. Exceptions will be granted only by the approval of the assigned Presbytery staff person.
2. Will complete an interview with a program staff person or volunteer designated by a staff person. During this interview, the volunteer may be asked to provide background information and references.
3. Will complete a Child Protection training (Recommended: Darkness to Light Stewards of Children) prior to beginning to work with children or youth.
4. Will acknowledge in writing that they have reviewed, understand, and will comply with the Child and Youth Protection Policy and will verify that they have never been the subject of a formal complaint to governmental authorities such as the police or the Department of Family and Child Services or convicted of a crime against children or a violent crime. The supervising staff person will use his or her best judgment in determining how disclosed information will affect the person's ability to volunteer.
5. Will be checked to ensure that he/she is not listed on the sex offender registry. (low cost online or through police)

### **Overnight and One-on-One Volunteers**

Overnight and One-on-One Volunteers include individuals volunteering in a position that may include the following situations: any overnight activity with children (e.g., chaperoning camping trips, ski trips, conferences or retreats) and any potential one-on-one activities with a child (e.g., counseling, tutoring, mentoring). All overnight and one-on-one volunteers:

All requirements for General Volunteers plus

1. Will agree to a national criminal records check and any other background checks that are deemed necessary by the church. Background check information will be reviewed by the direct supervisor and a file maintained by either the Head of Staff or Minister of Faith Development. The supervising staff person will use his or her best judgment in determining how disclosed information will affect the person's ability to volunteer.
2. Will provide a copy of a valid driver's license

### **Staff and Interns**

Staff and Interns include all current and prospective employees of the Church and First Presbyterian Children's Community. All interns and paid employees of the Church and Children's Community:

1. All requirements for Overnight and One-on-One Volunteers plus

Will complete a written application and provide personal references.

### **Section 5: Reporting and Responding**

Every employee and volunteer of Northeast Georgia Presbytery must report any situation that presents a suspicion that child abuse may have occurred. Such report shall be made within 24 hours to a Minister of Word and Sacrament or the Clerk of Session/Stated Clerk. They will make sure that policy is followed as outlined in this document.

In the event of an allegation of child abuse, the following procedures shall be followed by Northeast Georgia Presbytery:

1. Every allegation of abuse shall be taken seriously. Adequate care, respect, and confidentiality shall be offered to alleged victims and perpetrators until the allegation is substantiated or cleared.
2. The mandatory reporter who has been notified within 24 hours must report allegations of child abuse to the police department that has jurisdiction and to DFACS as required or necessary. If the allegation involves a report of abuse by a church employee or volunteer or on church property, the Pastor should make a report to the church's liability insurance provider and may wish to consult with an attorney.
3. If a report is made, parents will be notified unless parents are the alleged abuser or it would pose a risk to the child to inform the parent. Staff members will use their best judgment in revealing the identity of the alleged abuser to parents.
4. The Minister or Clerk will report the incident to the Presbytery to activate and make available the resources of the Presbytery Sexual Misconduct Pastoral Response Team (SMPRT.)
5. Written documentation relating to the matter shall be kept in a confidential file. The protection of the child is of primary importance. The Pastor will use his or her best judgment in terminating or suspending accused staff members and in the separating of alleged victim and alleged abuser.

6. All church employees and volunteers will refer any inquiries regarding the situation to the Pastor. The Pastor, or his/her designee, shall be the only person authorized to release any information regarding an allegation except where the law requires others to release information, such as to a protective services investigator or a police officer.

**Section 6: Policy Regarding Known Sex Offenders**

In accordance with the Reformed tradition and guided by Holy Scripture, the member churches of Northeast Georgia Presbytery affirm the need of all people to come to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We are committed to being a religious community open to all who present themselves to worship here, especially in times of serious personal troubles. Recognizing the reality of more than 800,000 sex offenders currently registered in the United States, and understanding that the majority of these are currently involved in some form of community supervision that often includes faith-based guidance, we assume that registered sex offenders will attend worship or church functions at some point. While affirming that the church is a place of hospitality, we embrace the gospel's mandate to protect "the least of these," particularly children, youth, and any who are at risk. For this reason, the Presbytery establishes the following policy regarding known sex offenders and their inclusion into the life of the church. It is the expectation that registered sex offenders will disclose his/her status to a member of the pastoral staff of the church prior to attending the church. Should an individual with a past sex offending history become known, the following steps shall be taken:

- The Session shall be informed that a known sex offender wishes to participate in the life of the church.
- The Session and staff of First Presbyterian Church will pray with and pray for the offender and any victims who have suffered. The staff of First Presbyterian Church will maintain a pastoral relationship with the offender with the goal of rehabilitation in mind, and in coordination with the relevant legal authorities (e.g. probation officer).
- The Session shall appoint a task force charged to investigate the nature and facts of the sex offense and potential risks to church members, employees, attendees, and children present on church property, to draft a covenant between the Session and the sex offender, and to submit this covenant to the Session for approval. The content of this covenant may include the possibility of a session-approved chaperone, prohibiting access to certain areas of the church by the offender, restrictions on when the offender will be allowed on the church grounds, retrieval of directories and other published documents containing personal information of minors, restriction of access to such materials, and any other restrictions that the task force feels are necessary to ensure the safety of children, youth, and those who may be at risk.
- This covenant shall be submitted to the Session for approval, then signed by the Clerk of Session and Moderator. The covenant shall then be presented to the offender and signed by the offender. A copy of the signed covenant shall be kept in the church office, and a separate copy shall be given to the offender. It is recommended that a copy of this Policy Regarding Known Sex Offenders also be provided to the offender with the acknowledgement to the offender that the church and its leaders are mandated to adhere to it.
- A failure to accept and to comply with the terms of the covenant agreement, approved by the Session, shall result in sanctions against the known sex offender including but not limited to: further restriction or exclusion of access to church services, programs, and property, removal from church membership, and immediate removal from church grounds.

**Section 7: Acceptance and Affirmation**

I have reviewed, understand and will comply with the Child-Youth Protection Policy of Northeast Georgia Presbytery. \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

I have never been the subject of a formal complaint to governmental authorities such as the police or the Department of Family and Child Services or convicted of a crime against children or a violent crime. \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**1/16/2019**

**RETURN**

# Campus Ministry Report, Rev. Will Norman

## Ministry & Program (Looking Back, Looking Forward)

### Highlights

- **Fall Retreat** - great success, but came too late in the semester. Will move up to an earlier date next year, in the hopes of solidifying community bonding quicker.
- **Montreat College Conference**
- **Coffee & Queeries** (inter-religious, twice monthly meeting for LGBTQ+ Students who's religious identity and practice is important to them. Seeing upwards of 25 students by the end of the semester)
- **Waddel Fellowship** Retreat @ Columbia Seminary
- **Bridge to Campus** w/ Athens area Youth Ministries (4 congregations, 45 students introduced to campus ministry. I hope to expand this to more congregations next year)
- **Student Preachers** in the Holy Hashtags sermon series
- **Student Minister Applications** for 2019/20 - 10 students applied (four current student ministers, and six new applicants) and all will serve.

### Room for Growth

- **Waddel Fellowship** application process - why is it so hard to get students to sign up for this?
- **Bridge to Campus** outside of NEGA Presbytery. Visit to Atlanta was good, but needs more lead time in planning with congregations / youth ministries that will participate.
- We're looking for a **larger house (preferably a lake house) for our Fall Retreat** (Sept. 27-29, 2019). Ideally would be able to sleep 15. If anyone knows of a family willing to donate or rent us their house for a weekend, please let me know.
- **GradMin (Graduate Ministry)** - planning to develop a more distinct identity for this group next year.

Next year, the weekly combo of Tuesday Worship + Sunday Dinner is going to be collapsed into **one weekly program night (Tuesday only)**, combining these ministries into "**Word & Table.**" We'll eat dinner at 7pm, and begin worship at 8pm. Students as well as groups who have been providing dinners on Sundays were polled about their thoughts on this, and most were unconcerned by or supportive of the change. My hope is that by asking for one less night from students per week, we will see increased participation, and that by moving regular programming away from Sunday night, we'll have a better shot of engaging our Waddel Fellows in the core elements of the PSC's ministry. This will function as a trial year and we'll adjust in the future if necessary.

### Financial

- 2018 Fiscal Year ended in the black
- Budget for 2019 increased by almost \$35,000 (187K to 222K) - some of this is on faith, other has been pledged by new congregations who are supporting the ministry out of their annual mission budget, or who have increased support this year. We also made adjustments to our parking ministry and rental agreements, which contribute to the increase.
- Capital Campaign committee has been formed and met twice. We are looking into foundations to apply for grants, and compiling a list of names to become lead givers.

## **Board of Directors**

### **Membership Update**

Jackie Bishoff (Commerce Presbyterian) has decided, for personal/family reasons, to resign from the board of Directors. We have decided not to replace her for the remainder of this calendar year, as her term will be up in December anyway, and will refill the spot with a full three year term, beginning in Jan. 2019

### **Student Representatives**

- 2018/19 student representatives Will Drosos Robin Smith will both be graduating in May, and concluding their terms on the board. They will be thanked for their service at the May board meeting.
- Student representatives for the 2019/20 school year will be Emmaline Michael, a senior from Roswell Presbyterian Church, and the president of our Campus Student Organization (CSO), and Clark Henderson, a sophomore from First Presbyterian Church of Statesboro, and the Vice President of the CSO.

**NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY  
GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET  
MARCH 2019**

	<b>JAN-MAR 2019</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>OVER (UNDER) BUDGET</b>	<b>% OF BUDGET</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
SHARED MISSION - CURRENT YEAR	71,007.07	272,300	-201,292.93	26.08%
PER CAPITA	47,799.71	130,392	-82,592.29	36.66%
INVESTMENT INCOME	673.16	2,500	-1,826.84	26.93%
TRANSFER FROM UNDESIGNATED RESERVES		5,000	-5,000.00	0.0%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>119,479.94</b>	<b>410,192</b>	<b>-290,712.06</b>	<b>29.13%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
BILLS & OVERTURES		500	-500.00	0.0%
CAMPUS MINISTRY AT UGA - Annual Support	4,500.00	18,000	-13,500.00	25.0%
Campus Ministry - Montreat College Conference		2,600	-2,600.00	0.0%
CLERGY CARE		12,000	-12,000.00	0.0%
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY	915.61	9,000	-8,084.39	10.17%
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY	3,471.38	11,375	-7,903.62	30.52%
COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION		175	-175.00	0.0%
CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS		3,500	-3,500.00	0.0%
COORDINATING TEAM	8,493.08	47,225	-38,731.92	17.98%
DISASTER PREPAREDNESS TEAM	61.34	1,000	-938.66	6.13%
GENERAL ASSEMBLY PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT	15,461.13	61,845	-46,383.87	25.0%
GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHARED MISSION	1,250.01	5,000	-3,749.99	25.0%
GEORGIA LODGE AT MONTREAT		500	-500.00	0.0%
INTERNATIONAL MISSION		1,727	-1,727.00	0.0%
PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION		1,000	-1,000.00	0.0%
NOMINATING COMMITTEE	294.35	1,000	-705.65	29.44%
PROPERTY COMMISSION		100	-100.00	0.0%
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PASTORAL RESPONSE		1,000	-1,000.00	0.0%
STAFF SALARIES	53,178.08	219,274	-166,095.92	24.25%
SYNOD PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT	2,592.75	10,371	-7,778.25	25.0%
SYNOD SHARED MISSION	750.00	3,000	-2,250.00	25.0%
<b>TOTAL PRESBYTERY EXPENSES</b>	<b>90,967.73</b>	<b>410,192</b>	<b>-319,224.27</b>	<b>22.18%</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>28,512.21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28,512.21</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY  
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY  
March 2019

	Jan-Mar 2019	Budget	Over (Under) Budget	% of Budget
Background Checks	43.00	500	(457.00)	8.6%
Committee Meeting Expense	872.61	7,500	(6,627.39)	11.64%
A/C & Other Expense		1,000	(1,000.00)	0.0%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>915.61</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>(8,084.39)</b>	<b>10.17%</b>

NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY  
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY  
March 2019

	Jan-Mar 2019	Budget	Over (Under) Budget	% of Budget
Aid to Candidates	3,000.00	9,375	(6,375.00)	32.00%
Career Assessment	320.00	1,200	(880.00)	26.67%
Committee Meeting Expense	151.38	800	(648.62)	18.92%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>3,471.38</b>	<b>11,375</b>	<b>(7,903.62)</b>	<b>30.52%</b>

NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY  
CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE  
March 2019

	Jan-Mar 2019	Budget	Over (Under) Budget	% of Budget
Workshops/Events		950	(950.00)	0.00%
Committee Meeting Expense		550	(550.00)	0.00%
Youth Triennium Scholarships		2,000	(2,000.00)	0.00%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>(3,500.00)</b>	<b>0.00%</b>

Northeast Georgia Presbytery  
Coordinating Team  
March 2019

	Jan-Mar 2019	Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	% of Budget
Banking Expenses		100	-100.00	0.00%
Committee Meeting Expenses	628.82	4,000	-3,371.18	15.72%
Copier Support	29.84	200	-170.16	14.92%
Electricity	225.49	1,000	-774.51	22.55%
Financial Review (CPA)		11,000	-11,000.00	0.00%
Gas	237.95	500	-262.05	47.59%
GP Discretionary Fund		1,000	-1,000.00	0.00%
Insurance	1,067.00	2,200	-1,133.00	48.50%
Internet Service	225.00	950	-725.00	23.68%
IT Support/Software	698.39	4,000	-3,301.61	17.46%
Janitorial Services	540.00	2,400	-1,860.00	22.50%
Miscellaneous	151.50	500	-348.50	30.30%
Moderator Expenses	10.00	1,800	-1,790.00	0.56%
Office Equipment		1,000	-1,000.00	0.00%
Office Lease	2,430.00	9,720	-7,290.00	25.00%
Office Supplies	308.38	1,400	-1,091.62	22.03%
Postage	101.90	300	-198.10	33.97%
Presbytery Meeting Expenses	10.00	900	-890.00	1.11%
Recording Clerk Expenses	134.41	400	-265.59	33.60%
Recording Clerk Stipend	200.00	900	-700.00	22.22%
Telephone	463.05	1,900	-1,436.95	24.37%
Water	157.35	275	-117.65	57.22%
Workers' Compensation Insurance	874.00	780	94.00	112.05%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>8,493.08</b>	<b>47,225</b>	<b>-38,731.92</b>	<b>17.98%</b>

Staff Salaries  
March 2019

	Jan-Mar 2019	Budget	Over/(Under) Budget	% of Budget
Medicare-Employer Portion	139.58	558	-418.42	25.01%
Social Security-Employer Portion	596.84	2,387	-1,790.16	25.0%
Stated Clerk				
Travel/Professional Expenses	10.00	2,500	-2,490.00	0.4%
Social Security & Medicare	377.22	1,509	-1,131.78	25.0%
Salary	4,931.28	19,725	-14,793.72	25.0%
Total Stated Clerk	5,318.50	23,734	-18,415.50	22.41%
General Presbyter				
Travel/Professional Expenses	2,656.46	13,000	-10,343.54	20.43%
Pension, Health, D&D	7,999.86	31,444	-23,444.14	25.44%
Continuing Education	30.00	1,500	-1,470.00	2.0%
Social Security & Medicare	1,595.46	6,382	-4,786.54	25.0%
Salary	13,345.16	53,440	-40,094.84	24.97%
Housing Allowance	7,565.23	30,000	-22,434.77	25.22%
Total General Presbyter	33,192.17	135,766	-102,573.83	24.45%
Office Manager/Bookkeeper				
Travel/Professional Expenses	161.29	750	-588.71	21.51%
Continuing Education		1,000	-1,000.00	0.0%
Pension, Health, D&D	3,468.18	13,873	-10,404.82	25.0%
Gross Wages	10,301.52	41,206	-30,904.48	25.0%
Total Office Manager/Bookkeeper	13,930.99	56,829	-42,898.01	24.51%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>53,178.08</b>	<b>219,274</b>	<b>-166,095.92</b>	<b>24.25%</b>

Northeast Georgia Presbytery

Balance Sheet

As of March 31, 2019

**ASSETS**

**Current Assets**

Cash-Athens First Bank & Trust	96,820.33
First American Money Market	210,847.42
New Covenant Balanced Income Fund	101,653.31

<b>Total Current Assets</b>	409,321.06
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**Fixed Assets**

Land (1250 Lumpkin St.)	71,492.66
Student Center Building	191,199.41
Computer Equipment	3,346.85
Other Fixed Assets	13,598.61
Accumulated Depreciation	-55,156.61

<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	224,480.92
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**Other Assets**

Deposits-Office Utilities	975.00
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<b>Total Other Assets</b>	975.00
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<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>634,776.98</b>
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**LIABILITIES & EQUITY**

**Liabilities**

Accounts Payable	180.00
Credit Cards	461.80
Payroll Liabilities	-243.00

<b>Total Liabilities</b>	398.80
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**Equity**

**Temporarily Restricted Net Assets**

Assistance Superfund	15,027.69
Beth Duncan Fund (PW)	38,801.05
Connectional Events Superfund	8,586.62
Georgia Domestic Missionary Society Fund	71,663.47
GP Continuing Ed Carryover	1,095.22
Justice & Peacemaking Fund	11,391.89
Property Protection & Defense Fund	71,565.38
Synod Transformation/Digital Networking Fund	25,630.04

<b>Total Temporarily Restricted Net Assets</b>	243,761.36
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**Unrestricted Net Assets**

Undesignated Reserves	111,357.97
Other Unrestricted Net Assets	250,746.64

<b>Total Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	362,104.61
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Net Ordinary Income	28,512.21
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Unrealized Gains/Losses	0.00
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<b>Total Equity</b>	634,378.18
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<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>634,776.98</b>
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