



“All you need is love,” the Beatles famously sang in 1967. That proposition can be either true or false, depending of course on what you mean by “love.” Our culture is obsessed with being “in love,” the emotional wave of excitement and delight we feel in the presence of our beloved. But we know all too well that kind of love typically evaporates when a relationship hits a rocky patch, or perhaps simply when the business of being together becomes routine and dry.

Yet love, properly understood, is at the heart of the gospel. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16) Paul writes, “The commandments...are summed up in this word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.’” (Romans 13:9-10) And lest we have any confusion about what this kind of love looks like, we have those familiar and beautiful words from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” If you want to honestly evaluate the quality of your love for others, hold up the mirror of this passage and see how you’re doing.

But perhaps the most remarkable statement about this kind of love is found in the words of Jesus in John 13:34-35 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

This is amazing. Jesus says that the one thing that will testify to the world that we are his disciples is the love we bear for one another. It’s not our church attendance, generous giving, Scripture memorization, or even the works of mercy, compassion, and justice we do for the wider world that reveal our relationship with Christ, but rather the authentic Christ-like love we display for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

And that’s another mirror we need to hold up for self-examination. Think about other Christians you know who drive you to the water’s edge. They may have different political views than yours, or be from a very different socio-economic background than yourself. They might hold a different understanding of human sexuality, or believe differently on everything from vaccines to climate change to which media outlet to trust. And despite all that, our Lord gives us not a suggestion, but a commandment that we demonstrate for them the same kind of love he poured out for us.

The early Christian church was incredibly diverse, ethnically, socially, and economically. There was no natural or rational explanation for why these people would voluntarily invest their lives and their resources for others who were so very different from themselves. Writing in 197AD, the church father Tertullian describes church life, speaking of how worship is carried out, and how offerings are taken to meet the needs of the poor. And then he concludes by saying, “But it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. See, they say, how they love one another.”

As those around us observe how we deal with our siblings in Christ, would they put that same brand on us? The world is desperate to see this kind of love, and the great opportunity the church has in this time of chaos and conflict is to let our love for one another bear beautiful witness to the love God in Christ has for the world. As the old hymn puts it, “And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, yes they’ll know we are Christians by our love.”

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Ed Rees
Transitional General Presbyter

NEGA PRESBYTERY STAFFING UPDATES

Members of Northeast Georgia Presbytery,

As many of you know, we were excited to welcome Brandy Lake as our new Bookkeeper. After deciding to split the bookkeeping and accounting functions of the Presbytery into its own part-time position, she seemed in many ways to be an ideal fit. Unfortunately, we have learned that Brandy will not be able to continue serving in this role. As disappointing as this is, we are nevertheless hopeful that we can find a replacement quickly. We are still in contact with several very promising candidates, and we anticipate being able to hire someone very soon. Stay tuned!

In the meantime, please pray for our Presbytery and its staff, and especially for Anita Green as she retires from her very good and very faithful work this week. We are thankful for all that she's done!

Rev. Lee Koontz
Personnel Action Team Chair

Staff Update

With gratitude for her faithful service, we share that Anita Green, Business Administrator, has officially retired as of April 29. We give thanks for her many years of dedicated work and the care she has shown to the Northeast Georgia Presbytery. Please note that Anita's email is no longer active.

During this time of transition, for any financial or business-related questions, please reach out to Libby Christiansen, who is serving as Administrative Assistant and helping to support these needs until a new bookkeeper is in place. She can be reached at comdir@negapby.org While Libby may not have quite the same encyclopedic knowledge as Anita just yet, she will gladly do her best to track down the answer and get you what you need as quickly as possible.

You may also contact Rev. Ed Rees, Transitional General Presbyter, at gp@negapby.org

We appreciate your patience and grace during this transition!

You're Invited 

We invite you to join us from 1:00–2:00 p.m. for a special

CAKE RECEPTION

honoring

Anita Green

and celebrating her **23** years of service to the
Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

Congregations are encouraged to bring a love offering, notes of appreciation or gift cards, addressed directly to Anita, in honor of her retirement.



May 19



Commerce Presbyterian Church

before the stated meeting

AROUND THE PRESBYTERY

Announcements & Opportunities

NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY STATED MEETING

May 19, 2026 | 2:00 p.m.

Location:

Commerce Presbyterian Church

CO-HOSTED BY COMMERCE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND
CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(ELBERTON)

CAKE RECEPTION AT 1:00 P.M.
HONORING ANITA GREEN



Ordination Anniversaries

We celebrate and give thanks for the NEGA clergy marking ordination anniversaries this month. The Clergy Care Committee encourages you to hold these individuals, their families, and their ministries in your prayers.

Dale Chapin
Matthew Henderson
Ryan Baer
Tom Jones
James Oudom
Glenn Doak
Robert Prim

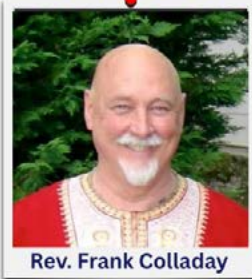
Hosted By:



William Black
LODGE

Board of Trustees
with musical guest:
David LaMotte

Join Us
to Commemorate
& Celebrate



Rev. Frank Colladay

Sunday, July 12, 2026

Dedication 4pm

Open House 5pm

329 N Carolina Terrace
Montreat, NC

The William Black Lodge Board of Trustees in partnership with The Northeast Georgia Presbytery are excited to dedicate the newly renovated Cottage named "The Colladay Cottage" in memory of Rev. Frank "Buddha" Colladay

LOOKING AHEAD TO OUR MAY STATED MEETING

Reports & Docket

All reports and written submissions are due to the Stated Clerk by May 7. The docket will be shared no later than the week before the meeting. If you need time on the floor, please be sure to request it in advance.

Coordinating Team Recommendations

Four items will come before the body for consideration:

Accepting an invitation to host the February 2027 Presbytery meeting

Designating Peace Place as a recipient of a special offering (pending confirmation)

Approving the merger of the Timpson and Wiley congregations, along with forming a five-person administrative commission to oversee the merger, the Timpson property, and the cemetery parcel

Completing the annual representation and parity reports

Anita's Retirement

After 24 years of faithful service, Anita Green is retiring. A reception in her honor will be held at 1:00 p.m. during registration. In place of gifts, congregations are invited to contribute to a love offering, and a basket will be available for notes of appreciation.

Personnel & Transitions

Libby Christiansen, now serving as Communications Coordinator, has taken on the responsibilities previously handled by the Communication Action Team, which has been dissolved at its request.

The search for a new bookkeeper has reopened, and updates will be shared as that process continues. The Personnel Committee has recommended that its members not serve on the search committee for the combined General Presbyter/Stated Clerk position. Nominations and timing for that search are expected to be finalized at a called summer meeting.

Rev. Ed Rees will conclude his service as Transitional General Presbyter on October 31. The Presbytery will also elect a new treasurer in October for a three-year term beginning in January, with a nomination coming from the Coordinating Team.

First Quarter Finances

The Presbytery ended the first quarter in the black, with \$90,636.52 in income and \$87,191.82 in expenses, for a net of \$3,444.70. Committee chairs will soon receive information for upcoming budget requests. Timely responses will help keep the process on track. Expect continued conversation around per capita and shared mission support, along with clearer communication to congregations about how these funds are used.

Around the Committees & the Table

The Clergy Care Committee plans to launch an online directory for pastors within the month and will host the next honorably retired ministers' luncheon in late May.

A full report on the Guns to Gardens event will be presented at the May meeting, including final figures; approximately \$2,000 will be returned to the Presbytery. A future proposal, to be brought after sabbatical, will explore the possibility of a by-appointment firearms disposal site on Presbytery property, pending further research.

Work also continues to bring NAMI mental health training and Healthy Congregations resources to the Presbytery, alongside ongoing support for the Matthew 25 Alliance and resource center efforts in Habersham and White counties.