



Two hundred and fifty years ago this week, the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia to resume debate on a previous motion which proclaimed that “these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States...” Sentiment favoring independence had been growing, although not unanimously, and following more debate that motion was adopted on July 1st. A committee of five members, which included Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Ben Franklin, had previously been assigned the task of preparing a declaration which would lay out the case for American independence. That declaration was now presented, and on July 4th, 1776, it was formally adopted.

It’s worth noting the role that Presbyterians played in the formation of this new nation. Presbyterian clergy were prominent in preaching in favor of independence, so much so that King George III referred to the conflict as the “Presbyterian Revolt”. Twelve of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence were Presbyterians, including the clergyman John Witherspoon, who at the time was the president of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University). It is also possible to make a sound case that the form of our government is based on a Presbyterian model.

Acknowledging all that in no way supports the idea that America was founded as a “Christian nation,” although it seems clear that certain Judeo-Christian themes run through the founding framework of the country. Indeed, it’s worth pondering the question of whether a democratic republic such as ours is even feasible apart from a broad-based agreement that “all men are created equal, and are endowed by the Creator with certain unalienable rights...” Even though we must confess that the Founders were glaringly blind to the full implications of that phrase, they spoke better than they knew, and 250 years on, we are still striving to form “a more perfect union.”

The potential danger in celebrating our national heritage is the ever-present risk that love of our American citizenship might supersede our love for the citizenship we hold in the kingdom of heaven, or somehow be confused with it. When we look to political figures or movements as worthy of our highest allegiance, we have gotten very mixed up about what we owe to Caesar and what we owe to God.

Ultimately we must remember the words Daniel spoke to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon:

“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings...” (Daniel 2:20-21). Earthly kings and kingdoms come and go, but we look toward the day when we see the fulfillment of the vision given to John in Revelation 11:15 “Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

As we long for that day, our calling is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, regardless of which country we live in, and conduct ourselves with such humility, compassion, and love that our true citizenship is revealed, to the glory of God.

Yours in Christ,

Ed

Building a More Caring World
Stephen Ministries
Regional Learning Event

Saturday, September 12, 2026
9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

(Check-in begins at 8:00 a.m.)

Cathedral of Christ the King • Atlanta, GA

Join Stephen Ministries as they celebrate 50 years of ministry with a regional learning event featuring founder Dr. Kenneth C. Haugk and other Stephen Ministries faculty.

Topics include:

Grief and hope

Caring for caregivers

Mental health ministry

Building compassionate congregations

Expanding congregational care through Stephen Ministry

Cost: \$15 per person

Optional Box Lunch: \$12

Space is limited.

Register at: stephenministries.org/celebrateATL

Dear NEGA Pastors,

We ask so very much of our pastors emotionally, spiritually, and physically. The Clergy Care Committee seeks to offer respite. We are exploring the possibility of providing a retreat, funded by the committee, for our pastors. We seek your input, so that we can offer the best experience. Please take a few moments from your busy schedule to respond to the questions below.

Please do NOT “reply” directly to the email you receive. Instead, please email your responses to Ross Brown - ross@rossb.net.

- 1) What time of year would be best for you?
- 2) Which days of the week would work best for you?
- 3) Where should we hold the retreat? Is geographical proximity or quality of venue more important?
- 4) What kind of program or speaker would be most interesting or beneficial to you?



Transition Update

At a special called meeting of Northeast Georgia Presbytery held via Zoom on June 18, the Nominating Committee presented a slate of nominees to serve on the Search Team that will lead the search for our next General Presbyter/Stated Clerk. The slate was unanimously approved and includes four Ruling Elders: Ross Brown (Oconee), Elaine Fields (Sardis), Roy Martin (Dahlonega), and John Stork (Monticello), along with three Teaching Elders: Rev. Burnetta Armour (Cleveland), Rev. Don Barber (Rabun Gap), and Rev. Sunjae Jung (Athens Korean).

Please keep these faithful leaders in your prayers as they seek God's guidance in discerning whom the Lord is calling to serve as the next General Presbyter/Stated Clerk of Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

If you would like to recommend someone for the Search Team's consideration, please send the individual's name and any supporting information to Communications Director Libby Christiansen at comdir@negapby.org.



On Saturday, August 22, Northeast Georgia Presbytery will host its August Leadership Event at Friendship Presbyterian Church in Athens. Registration is \$20 per participant, and lunch is included.

Workshop details are still being finalized, but we're excited to offer the following opportunities:

"I Signed Up for What?"

Rev. Steven Barnes will lead a thoughtful review of the ordination vows taken by elders and deacons. By exploring these vows together, participants will gain a deeper understanding of the calling and responsibilities of church officers. This is an excellent opportunity for both new and experienced elders and deacons to learn alongside peers from across the Presbytery.

School of the Laity

Martie Susie, Director of Mission & Program Advancement for Savannah Presbytery, will introduce the School of the Laity, a ministry offering courses on Scripture, Reformed theology, worship, Presbyterian history and polity, and other topics for those seeking to grow in their faith. She will also share information about the School's three-year program for Ruling Elders discerning a call to become Commissioned Lay Pastors.

Resources from the Presbyterian Foundation

The Presbyterian Foundation partners with congregations by providing stewardship resources, investment services, and consulting. Rev. Dana Waters, formerly Interim Pastor at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens, will introduce Project Regeneration, a program that helps congregations evaluate their financial health, operational practices, and future ministry opportunities through skilled consultation and planning.

Session Minute Review

Our Stated Clerk, Rev. Jacob Douylliez, will be available to review Session minutes with Clerks of Session who would like to complete this important annual responsibility.

Mark your calendar now and plan to join us for a day of learning, fellowship, and practical resources for church leaders. Registration information and a complete schedule will be announced soon.



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
 &

Open House 4pm

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

Hamilton Mill Presbyterian Church Seeks Contract Call Pastor

Hamilton Mill Presbyterian Church in Hoschton is seeking a part-time Contract Call Pastor to help lead the congregation through a season of growth, renewal, and community engagement. The church is looking for an ordained PC(USA) pastor, or someone in the final stages of preparation for ministry, who has strong preaching and communication skills, a heart for pastoral care, and a passion for sharing God's love with all people. The position is approximately 25 hours per week and includes a salary of \$34,000, Board of Pensions Covenant Package, and additional compensation for ministry expenses and continuing education.

Hamilton Mill Presbyterian Church is a welcoming, diverse congregation committed to serving its growing community through worship, outreach, and ministries such as its twice-weekly food pantry. Those interested in learning more or submitting a résumé should contact Anne Marie Shapiro at gapeach_71@yahoo.com.



Covenant Presbyterian Church in Augusta, GA is searching for a

Director of Music & Organist

To direct choir and handbell ensembles, lead worship on the organ and piano, and oversee the maintenance of our instruments (31-rank W. Zimmer & Sons organ, pianos, carillon, handbells, and handchimes)

This position is part-time (20-30 hours), and the search committee is open to tailoring the position for the right candidate. To learn more, please visit www.covenantaugusta.org/dmus

