

**The 22nd Stated Meeting of
The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey
September 9th, 2025**

*(to be approved at the 23rd Stated Meeting of
The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey)*

The Body of Christ, A Call to Gather

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey of the Presbyterian Church (USA) held its 22nd Stated Meeting on September 9th, 2025, at Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center and on the ZOOM platform.

The Moderator, Teaching Elder Chad Rodgers (Validated), called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM and led the opening prayer.

Elise Bates Russell, Executive Director, Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center, welcomed and offered introductory comments to the Presbytery.

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

The Moderator introduced the Hybrid Meeting Process. Voting process will be explained at the time voting takes place.

FORMATION OF THE ROLL

The roll was formed as Commissioners signed the registration forms and as online ZOOM participants logged onto the meeting. Resource Staff/Stated Clerk, Rev. Dr. Steve H. Shussett, certified that a quorum was present.

Congregation	Teaching Elder		Ruling Elder	
Allamuchy, Panther Valley	James Vespoli	A		A
Alpha	Rev. Scott DeCaro	A		A
Andover	Rev. Pamela Osborne	P	Sandra Wozniak	P
Basking Ridge (3)	Rev. Dennis Jones	P		A
	Rev. Dr. Maureen Paterson	A		A
				A
Bedminster, Lamington	Vacant	V	Bisham Singh	P
Belvidere	Rev. Dr. Pamela Szurek	E		A
Blairstown	Rev. David Harvey	P	Deborah Albrecht	P
Boonton	Vacant	V	Meg Meyer	P
Bound Brook (2)		V	Doug Boleyn	P
				A
Branchville	Rev. Dr. Nancy Young	E	Patrick Murphy	P
	Rev. David Young	P		

Califon, Fairmount	Rev. Mike Atzert	A	Carol Murphy	P
Califon, Lower Valley	Rev. Tex Culton	E		A
Cedar Knolls, Hildale Park	Rev. Ross Lang	P		A
Chatham Township (3)	Rev. Thomas Brown	P	George Shepherd	P A A
Chatham, Ogden Memorial	Rev. Kathi Heath	A	Donn Mansfield	P
Chester	Rev. Christopher Scrivens	P	Jeanne Perry	P
Clinton	Rev. Tracey Henry	P	Colleen Duerr	P
Delaware	Vacant	V	Victoria Steven	P
Delaware, 1st Oxford	Vacant	V	Sue Marsh	P
Denville, Union Hill	Rev. Timothy Clarkson	P	John Ware	P
Dover, First Memorial	Rev. Alan Schaefer (HR)	P	Jeanette Felch	P
East Hanover, Kitchell	Rev. Hannah Allred	A		A
Flanders (2)	Rev. Cliff Acklam	P		A A
Flemington (3)	Rev. Amy Lincoln	P	Jamie Evans	P A A
Florham Park, Calvary	Rev. Carie Stanley	P	Diane Himics	P
Franklin (2)	Rev. Julie Raffety	P		A A
Frenchtown (2)	Rev. Emily McCachren	P		A A
Gillette, Meyersville	Rev. Stefanie Muntzel	P		A
Hackettstown (2)	Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook	P	Sharon Heil	P A
Hampton, Musconetcong Valley	Stephanie Farley, CRE	A		A
Hillsborough, TAFPC	Rev. Eric Lai	A		A
Lambertville	Vacant	V	Phillip McCloughan	P
Lambertville, 2nd English	Vacant	V		A
Long Valley	Rev. Heather Morrison Yaden	P	Tricia Hayes	P
Long Valley, Highlands	Rev. Robin Burton Palmer	P		A
Madison (2)	Rev. Carol Howard	P	Becky Moody	P A
Martinsville, Seed & Sanctuary	Rev. Lissette Gonzalez-Sosa	P		A
Mendham	Rev. Scot McCachren	P	Van Buchanan	P
Milford	Rev. Dr. Linda Erkert-Bullock	A		A
Milford, Alexandria	Rev. Nicholas Hatch	A		A

Milford, Holland Bible	Rev. Geoff Stanley	A		A
Mine Hill	Vacant	V	Jane Smith	P
Morris Plains	Rev. Donald Brown	P	Susan Vigilante	P
Morristown (3)	Rev. Daniel Vigilante Rev. Audrey Webber	P P	Craig Barth	P A A
New Vernon	Rev. William Stone	P	Donna Miller	P
Newton	Rev. Michael Cuppett	A	Gerald Chandler	P
Newton, Yellow Frame	Rev. Michael Nelms	A		A
Oak Ridge (2)	Rev. Dr. Christopher Doyle	A		A A
Parsippany	Rev. Donald Bragg	A		A
Phillipsburg, Harmony	Rev. Scott Bohr	A		A
Phillipsburg, Pilgrim	Vacant	V		A
Pittstown, Bethlehem	Rev. Linda Gaden	P	Kevin Klein	P
Pluckemin	Rev. Ian Rankine	A		A
Port Murray, Rockport	Vacant	V	Betty Baggerly	P
Ringoes, 1st Amwell	Vacant	V		A
Ringoes, Kirkpatrick	Rev. Dr. Barbara Booth-Jarmon	P		A
Ringwood (2)	Rev. Arlene Romaine	P		A A
Rockaway (2)	Rev. Ryon Herin	P		A A
Somerset	Rev. Nancy Nalepa-Skibo	A		A
Sparta (2)	Vacant	A	Don Keck	P A
Stanhope	Rev. Pamela Osborne	P	Carol Barry	P
Stewartsville (2)	Rev. Stephen Choi	E		A A
Stewartsville, Old Greenwich	Rev. Mary Beth Mardis-Lecroy	P		A
Stirling	Rev. Stefanie Muntzel	P		A
Stockton	Rev. David Snyder	P		A
Succasunna (2)	Rev. Timothy Clarkson	P		A A
Sussex	Rev. Barry Young	E		A
Titusville	Vacant	V		A
Wantage, Beemerville	Rev. Barry Young	E		A
Warren, Trinity United	Rev. Amy Sandlin	P	Kay Hurd	P
Washington	Rev. James Scovell	A	Dot Decker	P
West Milford	Rev. Dr. Christopher Doyle	A	Betsy Engelhardt	P
Wharton	Rev. Sarah Green	P		A
Wharton, Berkshire Valley	Vacant	V		A

Wharton, Hungarian	Vacant	V	Karen Lance	P
Whippany	Rev. Sarah Cairatti	A		A

Teaching Elders Engaged in a Validated Ministry

Rev. Edwin Aponte (dean at Drew University)	P
Rev. Robin Curras	P
Rev. Christine Davies	P
Rev. John C. Kile	P
Rev. Joanne Miller	E
Rev. Jeanne Radak (Presbytery Leader – Highlands Presbytery)	P
Rev. Chad Rodgers (Director of Activities - Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center)	P
Rev. Dr. Steven Shussett, Stated Clerk (Highlands Presbytery)	P
Rev. Angella Son (Professor – Drew University)	E
Rev. Caroline Unzaga	P

Members at Large

Rev. Peter Billings	A
Rev. M. Elizabeth Blythe	E
Rev. Justin Choi	A
Rev. Courtney Cromie	A
Rev. Dan Dorrow	A
Rev. Jin Hee Han	E
Rev. Merideth Mueller-Bolton	A
Rev. Hayley O'Connor	A
Rev. Gail Pendleton	A
Rev. Annie Tsai	A

Honorably Retired

Rev. Peter Amerman	E
Rev. Janice Ammon	E
Rev. Jeff Archer	E
Rev. Nancy Asbury	E
Rev. Barbara Aspinall	E
Rev. Charles Baier	E
Rev. Joicy Becker-Richards	E
Rev. Robert Beringer	E
Rev. George Blank	E
Rev. Sally Campbell	E
Rev. Cynthia Crowner	E
Rev. William Culton	E
Rev. James D'Angelo	E
Rev. William Davis	E
Rev. Judith Dean	E
Rev. Ron deGroot	E

Rev. Richard Dole	E
Rev. Birda Ferguson	E
Rev. Guy Ferguson	E
Rev. Dr. Janet Fishburn	E
Rev. Mervin Fry	E
Rev. Peter Gregory	E
Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Hall	E
Rev. Dr. Edward Halldorson	E
Rev. David Hengerer	E
Rev. Dr. Jefferson Hatch	E
Rev. Kathryn Henry	E
Rev. Jean Holmes	E
Rev. Herbert Huffmon	E
Rev. Alden Johnson	E
Rev. Harold Johnson	E
Rev. Eugenia Johnston	E
Rev. Philip Jones	E
Rev. Steven Kengeter	E
Rev. Heup Young Kim	E
Rev. Dr. David Lawrence	E
Rev. Unzu Lee	E
Rev. Tony MacNaughton	P
Rev. Peter Magnan	E
Rev. Donna McDaid	E
Rev. Fred Milligan	E
Rev. James Morris	E
Rev. Elizabeth Morrison	E
Rev. Szabolcs Nagy	E
Rev. Barbara Peters	E
Rev. John Potter	P
Rev. Donald Prytherch	P
Rev. Bronc Radak	P
Rev. Jack Roan	E
Rev. Lorrie Rowland-Skinner	E
Rev. Diane Ruffle	E
Rev. Alan Schaefer (serving Dover)	E
Rev. Bruce Schundler	E
Rev. Donald Scott	E
Rev. Sherman Skinner	E
Rev. Sarah Taylor	E
Rev. Charles Thompson	E
Rev. Alfred Tisdale	E
Rev. Jacquelynn Van Vliet	P
Rev. John Verser	E
Rev. Deirdre Greenwood White	E

Rev. David Young	E
Rev. Dr. Nancy Young	E

Ruling Elders by Virtue of Office

Paula Benson, Past Presbytery Moderator, Highlands Presbyterian Church, Long Valley	P
Lisa Gray, Past Presbytery Moderator, Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church, Stewartsville	P
Jane McDonald, Presbyterian Women, First Presbyterian Church of Newton	P
Rich Rubin, ACT Member, Presbyterian Church in Morristown	P
Alan Ford, Past Presbytery Moderator, Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Pittstown	P
Sue Cail, Past Presbytery Moderator, Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood	P
Joe Martinoni, Past Presbytery Moderator, First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway	P
Pete Peterson, ACT Co-Moderator, Clinton Presbyterian Church	P
Mel Prestamo, Past Presbytery Moderator, Long Valley Presbyterian Church	P
Donna Rahmann, CPM Co-Moderator, Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon	P

Others in Attendance

Sonja Gaertner, Office Manager & Attendance Clerk, Presbytery of the Highlands	P
Frank Gaden, Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Pittstown	P
Melissa Watters, Rockport Presbyterian Church, Port Murray	P
Mae Martell	P
Scott Stolte	P
Elise Russell Bates	P
	P
	P

Total in Attendance – 97

~ Sonja Gaertner, Attendance Clerk – The Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ

ENROLLMENT OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS AND GUESTS

The following persons were introduced as guests to the Presbytery:

- Peter Curran, Headmaster, Blair Academy
- Deacon Carol Morris (Fairmount)

EXPLANATION OF UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Stated Clerk Steve Shussett explained Unanimous Consent before the Moderator presented the following:

ITEMS FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT:

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS AND GUESTS

The seating of guests was adopted by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Agenda was adopted by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda was adopted by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**.

CONSENT AGENDA

SC-1

Approve the minutes of the Presbytery meeting held May 13, 2025.

SC-2

Approve excuses for the Presbytery meeting of September 9, 2025.

SC-3

Receive the report of the Administration and Coordinating Team.

SC-4

Receive the report of the Church Development Team.

SC-5

Receive the report of the Commission on Ministry.

SC-6

Receive the report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

SC-7

Receive the report of the Nominating Committee.

SC-8

Receive the report of the Property and Insurance Team.

SC-9

Receive the report of the Young Leader Formation Team.

SC-10

Receive the final report of the Administrative Commission for the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover.

ACT-1

The ACT recommends the following:

That the Presbytery approve the amended Commissioned Ruling Elder Policy.

Background: The CRE policy was amended to include a field placement/internship component.

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

The Stated Clerk's Report was adopted by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**.

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

Items for Consent Agenda:

SC-1

Approve the minutes of the Presbytery meeting held May 13, 2025.

SC-2

Approve excuses for the Presbytery meeting of September 9, 2025.

SC-3

Receive the report of the Administration and Coordinating Team.

SC-4

Receive the report of the Church Development Team.

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Receive the report of the Commission on Ministry.

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SC-7

Receive the report of the Nominating Committee.

SC-8

Receive the report of the Property and Insurance Team.

SC-9

Receive the report of the Young Leader Formation Team.

SC-10

Receive the final report of the Administrative Commission for the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

None.

INVITATION TO HYBRID ANNOUNCEMENTS

Assuming the gavel, Presbytery Vice-Moderator, the Rev. Ryon Herin, invited participants to place their announcements in the Chat Function, or preparing for a 30 second in-person announcement. He then welcomed the following new ruling elder commissioners:

INTRODUCTION OF NEW RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS

Colleen Duerr, Clinton Presbyterian

Kay Hurd, Trinity United Church.

Kevin Klein, Bethlehem in Pittstown

Patrick Murphy, Branchville

George Shepherd, Chatham Township

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

Taking the gavel, Moderator Rodgers, invited Commission on Ministry Co-Moderator David Young to the podium.

EXAMINATION OF SCOTT STOLTE, CANDIDATE FOR THE LAMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MOTION: that Scott Stotle be approved for ordination and installation as pastor for the Lamington PC by Highlands Presbytery NJ.

Mr. Stotle was given the opportunity to introduce himself before the floor was opened to questions. Included in the examination was a question concerning their commitment to principles of inclusion, as newly required by the Book of Order.

MOVED, SECONDED, AND CARRIED to arrest the examination, and the candidate left the room. Representatives of the Lamington PC were invited to speak to the call, and did so.

MOVED, SECONDED, AND CARRIED to approve Scott Stolte for ordination and installation, and he was welcomed back into the room with the singing of the Doxology. Rev. Young then prayed over Scott.

INTRODUCTIONS OF NEW PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

Rev. Young introduced new Pastors and Pastors in new positions:

Edwin Aponte, Validated Ministry, Dean and Professor of Religion & Culture at the Theological School of Drew University

Lisette Gonzalez-Sosa, Validated Minister, Executive Director, Sanctuary + Seed

Carie Stanley, Covenant Supply Pastor, Calvary Presbyterian Church (Florham Park)

COMMISSIONING OF DONNA RAHMANN TO PRESIDE AT THE LORD'S SUPPER

Having completed both the Preaching God's Word in the World and Presiding at the Table: A Class for Ruling Elders classes, and by her participation through the Presbytery's Pulpit Supply List, Ruling Elder Donna (Fairmount) was approved for commissioning by COM at its September 2, 2025 meeting. Liturgy appropriate to the occasion, including the Constitutional Questions, followed.

DIGITAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Taking up the gavel, the Vice-Moderator read the Digital Announcements that were collected from the chat and invited individuals to the microphone for their announcements. Those submitted for the minutes are:

BLAIR ACADEMY PRESENTATION

Rev. Herin then introduced Peter Curran, Headmaster of Blair Academy, an institution with whom the Presbytery has a relationship of more than 170 years. Mr. Curran shared information on the life of the Academy.

WORSHIP

Worship, including the sermon, was led by participants from the recent Presbyterian Youth Triennium; the liturgy was taken from that same event.

PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH TRIENNIUM PARTICIPANTS

Teresa Jones | Michael Balonis | Sophia Fiorentino | Bella Fiorentino | Ethan Poplawski

Cassandra Martella | Joseph Martella | Kate Rossi | Henry Rossi | Charlotte Traver

Adult Leaders: Craig Barth | Steven Gaden | Mae Martella

Music was provided by "Jammin' for Jesus" members Rev. Mary Beth Mardis-Lecroy (Old Greenwich) and Ruling Elders Joe Martinoni (Rockaway) and Craig Barth (Morristown). The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was shared, presided by Resource Staff /Stated Clerk Rev. Steve

Shussett, who staffs the Young Leader Formation Team that oversaw the Presbytery's Presbyterian Youth Triennium involvement.

DINNER BREAK

The meeting was suspended for a dinner break.

FINAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE EAST HANOVER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Teaching Elder Tim Clarkson (Union Hill/Succasunna 1st), Member of the Administrative Commission for the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover, moved approval of the final report (See Attachments), including the following recommendations:

The remaining amount from the proceeds of the sale of the property, after accounting for expenses and revenues (\$2,314,618), be allocated in accordance with recommendations from the Budget and Finance Committee and ACT as follows:

Presbytery Mission and Ministry Fund:	\$1,500,000.00
Mission Opportunities in the East Hanover Area:	
Homeless Solutions:	\$80,000.00
Interfaith Food Pantry:	\$20,000.00
Nourish NJ	\$10,000.00
Winds of the Spirit	\$10,000.00
The Presbytery Cemetery Fund:	\$20,000.00
The Presbytery Capital Loan Fund:	\$20,000.00

The remaining amount of \$654,618.00 is meant to be developed into a fund that supports projects inspiring new life and resurrection, things like new church development, transformational projects, and new ministry ideas in Presbytery churches.

The congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover, be dissolved; and with its assigned mission completed, the Administrative Commission be dissolved with thanks. Rev. Clarkson closed the report with a prayer of thanksgiving for the church.

ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATING TEAM

BY-LAWS CHANGES were presented for consideration and vote at the November meeting.

CHANGE TO THE VULNERABLE PERSONS PROTECTION POLICY, to include adults with vulnerabilities as required by the Book of Order G-3.0106 and as recommended by the ACT. Approved by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**. (See Attachments)

ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATING COMMISSION POSITION DESCRIPTION

That the Presbytery approve a revised position description and name change of the ACT in team position descriptions (See Attachments). **MOVED AND CARRIED**

COVENANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN HIGHLANDS PRESBYTERY AND SANCTUARY+SEED

Motion made that the Presbytery approve the covenant agreement between the two parties. Passed by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**. (See Attachments)

PROPOSED OVERTURE TO THE 227TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Stated Clerk Steve Shussett presented a Proposed Overture to the Book of Order entitled, "Classification of Administrative Leave," requesting amendment to D-7.0905 as follows:

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey overtures the 227th General Assembly (2026) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

To amend D-7.0905 as follows:

(Text to be added is [in brackets and underlined]. Text to be deleted is [in brackets and struck through.]

Nothing in this section shall preclude a presbytery from establishing its own rules for administrative leave or other restrictions on a minister's service[.] [when there are allegations of financial malfeasance, any criminal allegations, medical need, or any other causes specified in the council's policy.]

Upon recommendation of the ACT, the Proposed Overture was **MOVED AND CARRIED**.

COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

Pete Peterson presented the Personnel Committee Report requesting that the Presbytery approve the creation and description of a Communications Coordinator position (See Attachments). Motion passed by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**.

FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP FOR A NEW SEASON

Presbytery Leader Jeanne Radak presented a narrative budget grounded in the Presbytery's Vocation Statement, to be voted on at the November meeting.

2026 BUDGET

Presbytery Leader Jeanne Radak and Pete Peterson, Co-moderator of the ACT highlighted the work of the Finance and Budget team and gave a presentation on the 2026 Budget that will be voted upon in November. She also described in detail the Presbytery's Financial Sustainability Plan, including actions underway by the General Assembly as a result.

2026 PER CAPITA

Pete Peterson then placed before the Presbytery the ACT recommendation:

That the Presbytery approve a Per Capita of \$44.00 for 2026, an increase of \$0.50, to cover that same increase by the General Assembly. Approved by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**.

SHARING OUR STORIES

Rev. Herin assumed the gavel and called on Deacon Carol Morris (Fairmount) to share word of the congregation's relationship with Good News Homes for Women. More information can be found at: www.goodnewshomes.org. The gavel was then returned to the Moderator.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Moderator Rodgers called on Teaching Elder Amy Lincoln (Flemington) to make a presentation on behalf of the Nominating Committee, to nominate the 2026 Presbytery Moderator and Vice-Moderator.

Nominations from the floor were requested; none were made.

The following slate of nominees were elected:

2026 Moderator: Rev. Ryon Herin (Rockaway)

2026 Vice-Moderator: Ruling Elder Donna Rahmann (Fairmount)

Motion: passed by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**.

The Assembly was reminded that an online form for nominations to the 227th General Assembly (2026) are available, for Ruling Elder and Teaching Elder Commissioners as well as Young Adult Advisory Delegates.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN: MOVED, SECONDED, AND CARRIED.

Moderator Rodgers closed the meeting with prayer at 8:24PM.

Attested:

Steven H. Shussett, Stated Clerk

Recording Secretary: Mel Prestamo (Long Valley)

ATTACHMENTS:

**The 21st Stated Meeting of
The Presbytery of The Highlands of New Jersey
May 13, 2025**

*(To be Approved at the 22nd Stated Meeting of
The Presbytery of the Highlands Of New Jersey)*

The Body of Christ, A Call to Gather

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey of the Presbyterian Church (USA) held its 20th Stated Meeting on May 13, 2025, at Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center and on the ZOOM platform.

A pastor's gathering was held in-person at the Camp Johnsonburg beginning at noon, with lunch and a recognition of those recently retired.

The Moderator, Rev. Chad Rodgers called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM with an opening prayer.

The Moderator introduced the Hybrid Meeting and Voting Process.

FORMATION OF THE ROLL

The roll was formed as Commissioners signed the registration forms. Resource Staff/Stated Clerk, Rev. Dr. Steve H. Shussett, certified that a quorum was present.

Congregation	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder		
Allamuchy, Panther Valley				A
Alpha	Rev. Scott DeCaro	P		A
Andover	Rev. Pamela Osborne	P	Sandra Wozniak	P
Basking Ridge (3)	Rev. Dennis Jones Rev. Dr. Maureen Paterson	E A	Brett Lakefield	P A A
Bedminster, Lamington	Vacant	V	Bisham Singh	P
Belvidere	Rev. Dr. Pamela Szurek	A		A
Blairstown	Rev. David Harvey	P	Bill Oliver	P
Boonton	Rev. Carie Morgan	E	Meg Meyer	P
Bound Brook (2)	Rev. Linda Owens	P	John O'Melia Jamie Breeding	P P
Branchville	Rev. Dr. Nancy Young Rev. David Young	E P	Mike Lutz	P
Califon, Fairmount	Rev. Mike Atzert	P	Joyce Martin	P
Califon, Lower Valley	Rev. Tex Culton	E	Warren Newman	P
Cedar Knolls, Hildale Park	Rev. Ross Lang	P		A
Chatham Township (3)	Rev. Thomas Brown	P		A

				A A
Chatham, Ogden Memorial	Rev. Kathi Heath	E	Nancy Kent	P
Chester	Rev. Christopher Scrivens	P		A
Clinton	Rev. Tracey Henry	P		A
Delaware	Vacant	V		A
Delaware, 1st Oxford	Vacant	V		A
Denville, Union Hill	Rev. Timothy Clarkson	P		A
Dover, First Memorial	Rev. Alan Schaefer (HR)	E		E
East Hanover, Kitchell	Rev. Hannah Allred	P		A
Flanders (2)	Rev. Cliff Acklam	P	Lois Steward	P A
Flemington (3)	Rev. Amy Lincoln	E	Jamie Evans Rob Sheneman	P P A
Florham Park, Calvary	Rev. Ronald de Groot	A		A
Franklin (2)	Rev. Julie Raffety	P		A A
Frenchtown (2)	Rev. Emily McCachren	A		A A
Gillette, Meyersville	Rev. Stefanie Muntzel	A		A
Hackettstown (2)	Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook	P	William Cors	P A
Hampton, Musconetcong Valley	Stephanie Farley, CRE	A		A
Hillsborough, TAFPC	Rev. Eric Lai	P		A
Lambertville	Vacant	V	Phil McCloughan	P
Lambertville, 2nd English	Vacant	V		A
Long Valley	Rev. Heather Morrison Yaden	P	Tricia Hayes	P
Long Valley, Highlands	Rev. Robin Burton Palmer	P	Ruth Babula	P
Madison (2)	Rev. Carol Howard	P	Becky Moody	P A
Martinsville, Seed & Sanctuary	Rev. Lissette Gonzalez-Sosa	E		A
Mendham	Rev. Scot McCachren	A	Van Buchanan	P
Milford	Rev. Dr. Linda Erkert-Bullock	A		A
Milford, Alexandria	Rev. Nicholas Hatch	P		A
Milford, Holland Bible	Rev. Geoff Stanley	A	Virginia Derbyshire	P
Mine Hill	Vacant	V	Randy Hooper	P
Morris Plains	Rev. Donald Brown	P	Susan Spidell McManus	P
Morristown (3)	Rev. Daniel Vigilante	P		A
	Rev. Audrey Webber	P		A

				A
New Vernon	Rev. William Stone	A	Donna Miller	P
Newton	Rev. Michael Cuppett	P	Thomas McNulty	P
Newton, Yellow Frame	Rev. Michael Nelms	P		A
Oak Ridge (2)	Rev. Dr. Christopher Doyle	P		A
Ogdensburg	Rev. Alden Johnson	A		A
Parsippany	Rev. Donald Bragg	P		A
Phillipsburg, Harmony	Rev. Scott Bohr	P		A
Phillipsburg, Pilgrim	Vacant	V	Debra McGuiness	P
Pittstown, Bethlehem	Rev. Linda Gaden	E		A
Pluckemin	Rev. Ian Rankine	E		A
Port Murray, Rockport	Vacant	V		A
Ringoes, 1st Amwell	Vacant	V		A
Ringoes, Kirkpatrick	Rev. Dr. Barbara Booth-Jarmon	P	Debra Neri	A
Ringwood (2)	Rev. Arlene Romaine	P		A A
Rockaway (2)	Rev. Ryon Herin	P	Dan Cassidy Andrea Brassard	P P
Somerset	Rev. Nancy Nalepa-Skibo	A		A
Sparta (2)	Rev. Dr. Patrick Sileo	P	Don Keel	P A
Stanhope	Rev. Pamela Osborne	P	Carol Barry	P
Stewartsville (2)	Rev. Stephen Choi	P	Denise DeMasi	P A
Stewartsville, Old Greenwich	Rev. Mary Beth Mardis-Lecroy	P	Hope Duncan	P
Stirling	Rev. Stefanie Muntzel	A		A
Stockton	Rev. David Snyder	P		A
Succasunna (2)	Rev. Timothy Clarkson	P		A A
Sussex	Vacant	V	Mike Kosco	P
Titusville	Vacant	V	Kris Schmidt	P
Wantage, Beemerville	Rev. Barry Young	P		A
Warren, Trinity United	Rev. Amy Sandlin	E		A
Washington	Rev. James Scovell	P	Dorothy Decker	P
West Milford	Rev. Dr. Christopher Doyle	P	Betsy Englehardt	P
Wharton	Rev. Sarah Green	P		A
Wharton, Berkshire Valley	Vacant	V	Andy Vogel	P
Wharton, Hungarian	Vacant	V	Stephen Lance	P
Whippany	Rev. Sarah Cairatti	A	Josh Willans	P

Teaching Elders Engaged in a Validated Ministry

Rev. Joanne Miller	E
Rev. Robin Miller Curras (serving church out of bounds)	P

Rev. Christine Davies	P
Rev. Lissette Gonzalez Sosa	E
Rev. John C. Kile	E
Rev. Jeanne Radak (Presbytery Leader – Highlands Presbytery)	P
Rev. Chad Rodgers (Director of Activities - Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center)	P
Rev. Dr. Steven Shussett, Stated Clerk (Highlands Presbytery)	P
Rev. Angella Son (Professor – Drew University)	P
Rev. Caroline Unzaga	P

Members at Large

Rev. Peter Billings	A
Rev. M. Elizabeth Blythe	E
Rev. Justin Choi	A
Rev. Courtney Cromie	A
Rev. Dan Dorrow	A
Rev. Jin Hee Han	E
Rev. Merideth Mueller-Bolton	P
Rev. Hayley O'Connor	A
Rev. Gail Pendleton	P
Rev. Annie Tsai	A

Honorably Retired

Rev. Peter Amerman	E
Rev. Janice Ammon	E
Rev. Jeff Archer	E
Rev. Nancy Asbury	E
Rev. Barbara Aspinall	P
Rev. Charles Baier	E
Rev. Joicy Becker-Richards	E
Rev. Robert Beringer	E
Rev. George Blank	E
Rev. Sally Campbell	E
Rev. Cynthia Crowner	E
Rev. William Culton	E
Rev. James D'Angelo	E
Rev. William Davis	E
Rev. Judith Dean	E
Rev. Richard Dole	E
Rev. Birda Ferguson	E
Rev. Guy Ferguson	E
Rev. Dr. Janet Fishburn	E
Rev. Mervin Fry	E
Rev. Peter Gregory	E
Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Hall	E
Rev. Dr. Edward Halldorson	E

Rev. David Hengerer	E
Rev. Dr. Jefferson Hatch	E
Rev. Kathryn Henry	E
Rev. Jean Holmes	E
Rev. Herbert Huffmon	E
Rev. Harold Johnson	E
Rev. Eugenia Johnston	E
Rev. Philip Jones	E
Rev. Steven Kengeter	E
Rev. Heup Young Kim	E
Rev. Dr. David Lawrence	E
Rev. Unzu Lee	E
Rev. Tony MacNaughton	P
Rev. Peter Magnan	P
Rev. Donna McDaid	E
Rev. Fred Milligan	P
Rev. James Morris	E
Rev. Elizabeth Morrison	E
Rev. Szabolcs Nagy	E
Rev. Barbara Peters	E
Rev. John Potter	E
Rev. Donald Prytherch	E
Rev. Bronc Radak (serving Rockport)	P
Rev. Jack Roan	E
Rev. Stephen Ross	E
Rev. Lorrie Rowland-Skinner	E
Rev. Diane Ruffle	E
Rev. Alan Schaefer (serving Dover)	E
Rev. Bruce Schundler	E
Rev. Donald Scott	E
Rev. Sherman Skinner	E
Rev. Sarah Taylor	E
Rev. Alfred Tisdale	E
Rev. Jacquelynn Van Vliet	P
Rev. John Verser	E
Rev. Deirdre Greenwood White	E
Rev. David Young	P
Rev. Dr. Nancy Young	E

Ruling Elders by Virtue of Office

Sue Cail, Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood, Past Moderator	P
Pete Peterson, Clinton Presbyterian Church, Co-Moderator of ACT	P
Mel Prestamo, Long Valley Presbyterian Church, Past Moderator	P
Donna Rahmann, Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon, Co-Moderator of CPM	P
Wendy Doidge, Presbyterian Church in Morristown, Past Moderator	P

Alan Ford, Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Pittstown, Past Moderator	P
Joe Martinoni, First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway, Past Moderator	P
Rich Rubin, Presbyterian Church in Morristown, Member of ACT	P
Jane MacDonald, First Presbyterian Church of Newton, Presbyterian Women	P

Others in Attendance

Sonja Gaertner, Office Manager & Attendance Clerk, Presbytery of the Highlands	P
Susan Vigilante, Presbyterian Church of Morris Plains	P
Norma Zimmerman, Kirkpatrick Memorial Presbyterian Church, Ringoes	P
Sharon Bates, First Presbyterian Church of Berkshire Valley	P
Krista Sweer, First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway	P
Doris Haring, Pilgrim Presbyterian Church, Phillipsburg	P
Sharon Smith, Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church, Stewartsville	P
Rev. Dr. SanDawna Ashley, Synod of the Northeast of NJ	P
Debbie Hooper, Mine Hill Presbyterian Church	P
Hildy Benjamin, Presbyterian Church of Morris Plains	P
Noah Rodgers, Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center	P

Total in Attendance – 114

~ Sonja Gaertner, Attendance Clerk – The Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS AND GUESTS

Corresponding Member:

Rev. Dr. SanDawna Gaulman Ashley, Transitional Leader for the Synod of the Northeast and a member of the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys

Guests:

Ruling Elder Elise Bates Russell, Executive Director, Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center.

Ruling Elder Hope Duncan, Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church

Ruling Elder Sharon Smith, Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church

The seating was **MOVED, SECONDED, AND CARRIED.**

EXPLANATION OF UNANIMOUS CONSENT

ITEMS FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT:

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Agenda was adopted by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

SC-1

Approve the minutes of the Presbytery meeting held November 12, 2024.

SC-2

Approve excuses for the Presbytery meeting of March 11, 2025.

SC-3

Receive the report of the Administration and Coordinating Team.

SC-4

Receive the report of the Church Development Team.

SC-5

Receive the report of the Commission on Ministry.

SC-6

Receive the report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

SC-7

Receive the report of the Nominating Committee.

SC-8

Receive the report of the Property and Insurance Team.

SC-9

Receive the report of the Young Leader Formation Team.

SC-10

Receive the final report of the Administrative Commission for the Westminster Presbyterian Church.

ACT-1

The ACT recommends to the Presbytery:

The Presbytery's Discernment Team Report be received.

SC-11

On March 19, 2025, the Stated Clerk filed the Presbytery's March 11 votes on proposed amendments to the Book of Order with the General Assembly.

SC-12

On March 21, Ryan Irmer sent the following to the Stated Clerk: "I am writing to formally notify you, as the Stated Clerk of Highlands Presbytery, of my decision to renounce the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church USA."

According to G-2.0509 Renunciation of Jurisdiction:

When a minister of the Word and Sacrament (or authorized representative) submits to the stated clerk of the presbytery of membership a written statement renouncing the jurisdiction of this church, the renunciation shall be effective upon receipt.

...Renunciation of jurisdiction shall remove the minister of the Word and Sacrament from membership and ordered ministry and shall terminate the exercise of that ministry. The renunciation shall be reported by the stated clerk at the next meeting of the presbytery, which shall record the renunciation, delete her or his name from the appropriate roll, and take such other administrative actions as may be required by this Constitution, including public communication of such a renunciation.

....Any former minister of the Word and Sacrament (teaching elder) who has renounced jurisdiction and later wants to be restored to office can be restored only through application to the presbytery in which he or she renounced jurisdiction for restoration to office....

The Consent Agenda was adopted by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**.

Vice-Moderator Ryon Herin (Rockaway) assumed the gavel.

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK — PART I

The report of the stated clerk was received as part of the Consent Agenda.

GREETINGS FROM JOHNSONBURG CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

Elise Bates Russell, Executive Director shared news from Camp Johnsonburg.

GREETINGS FROM THE SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST

The Rev. Dr. Sandawna Gaulman Ashley, Transitional Leader of the Synod of the Northeast brought greetings and updated the Presbytery on the Synod's discernment process..

SHARING OUR STORIES

Ruling Elders Hope Duncan and Sharon Smith (Old Greenwich), shared the story of the church's relationship with Family Promise.

DISCERNMENT TEAM REPORT

Members of the Discernment Team presented its final report.

WORSHIP

Worship was led by the following members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry: Rev. Chris Doyle (Oak Ridge/West Milford) and Ruling Elders Craig Barth (Morristown) and Susan Vigilante-Williams (Morris Plains). Music was provided by Rev. Ryon Herin (Rockaway) and Ms. Krista Sweer. Rev. Doyle preached on Ephesians 4:11-16 on the theme, "To Nurture, Equip, and Enable," and presided at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

DINNER AND FELLOWSHIP

The meeting resumed following dinner, with Moderator Chad Rodgers assuming the gavel.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS

INVITATION TO HYBRID ANNOUNCEMENTS

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATING TEAM

Ruling Elder Pete Peterson (Clinton), Co-Moderator of the ACT, placed the Discernment Team's Final Report before the Presbytery. The Report was **MOVED AND CARRIED**.

FINAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Ruling Elder Pete Peterson, Moderator of the Administrative Commission for the Westminster Presbyterian Church, moved approval of the final report, including the following recommendations:

The Presbytery of the Highlands asserts all claims to any property of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg not known at this time, or to property or funds which may be received by reason of the congregation being named as the beneficiary of will or trust not known at this time.

That \$10,000 of the \$292,330.71 remaining from settlement funds be distributed to Family Promise of Warren County as a memorial to the Westminster Presbyterian Church's active participation in the that program, and that the remaining \$282,330.71 be deposited into the Presbytery's Special Resourcing and Assistance Account.

That the congregation of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg, NJ be formally dissolved and, that the corporate entity of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg, NJ be legally dissolved.

That the Administrative Commission for the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg, NJ be dismissed with gratitude .

The Final Report and its recommendations were **MOVED AND CARRIED**.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Rev. Barbara Aspinall (HR), Moderator of the Nominating Committee placed the following persons into nomination:

Administration and Coordinating Team Class of 2027

Rev. Michael Cuppett (A), Newton/First

Blair Academy Consultation Team Class of 2027

Susan Johnson (A), Chester/Community

Blair Academy Trustees Class of 2027

Rev. Jeanne Radak, Presbytery

Nominations from the floor were requested.

The slate was elected by **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

Rev. Jacqui Van Vliet, Co-Moderator of the Commission on Ministry, introduced the following persons and moved that the Presbytery confer the status of "Honorably Retired" upon them:

Rev. Jacqui Van Vliet

Rev. Fred Milligan

Rev. Peter Magnan
 Rev. Donna McDaid
 Rev. Alden Johnson (retired as of June 30, 2025)
 Rev. Ron de Groot (retired as of June 30, 2025)

This was **MOVED AND CARRIED**.

Rev. Van Vliet moved that the “Policy and Process Regarding a Psychological Evaluation for a Pastor Where There are Concerns for Fitness for Ministry” be approved.

This was **MOVED AND CARRIED**.

SHARING OF HYBRID ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-Moderator Ryon Herin shared and solicited announcements from the Presbytery.

VOTING ON PROPOSED GENERAL ASSEMBLY AMENDMENTS

Proposed Amendments 24-A and 24-C, were presented and opened for discussion and vote.

A motion was made and seconded to postpone the vote to a special meeting. The motion **FAILED TO CARRY**.

The final outcome was as follows (May meeting results in bold):

**HIGHLANDS PRESBYTERY’S VOTING ON BOOK OF ORDER AMENDMENTS
 RECOMMENDED BY THE 226TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

AMENDMENT NUMBER	TO BE AMENDED	DATE OF VOTING	VOTING OUTCOME
24-A	F-1.0403	May 13, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-B	G-1.0104	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-C	G-2.0104b	May 13, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-D	G-2.0504b	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-E	G-2.0504b	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-F	G-2.0610	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-G	G-2.0901	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-H	G-3-0106	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-I	G-3.0302d	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-J	G-3.0501	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-K	D-7.0501	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR
24-L	D-7.0902b	March 11, 2025	AGAINST
24-M	G-5.0203	March 11, 2025	IN FAVOR

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was presented.

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK — PART 2

Stated Clerk Steve Shussett reported that prior to March 21, 2025, Presbytery representatives from the Commission on Ministry were in dialogue with Ryan Irmer and his counsel regarding mediation between the two parties. The outcome of this dialogue was to be reported at this presbytery meeting.

On March 21, 2025, Mr. Irmer sent the following to the Stated Clerk: "I am writing to formally notify you, as the Stated Clerk of Highlands Presbytery, of my decision to renounce the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church USA."

The Clerk reported that, according to G-2.0509 Renunciation of Jurisdiction, "When a minister of the Word and Sacrament (or authorized representative) submits to the stated clerk of the presbytery of membership a written statement renouncing the jurisdiction of this church, the renunciation shall be effective upon receipt," and therefore as of March 21, 2025.

"...Renunciation of jurisdiction shall remove the minister of the Word and Sacrament from membership and ordered ministry and shall terminate the exercise of that ministry. The renunciation shall be reported by the stated clerk at the next meeting of the presbytery, which shall record the renunciation, delete her or his name from the appropriate roll, and take such other administrative actions as may be required by this Constitution, including public communication of such a renunciation," reporting that this public communication completes those requirements.

"....Any former minister of the Word and Sacrament (teaching elder) who has renounced jurisdiction and later wants to be restored to office can be restored only through application to the presbytery in which he or she renounced jurisdiction for restoration to office...." meaning any restoration to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must be through the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.

ADJOURNMENT

Moderator Chad Rodgers requested and received a motion to adjourn. It was **MOVED, SECONDED, AND CARRIED**. He closed the meeting with prayer at 7:47 PM.

Attested:

Steven H. Shussett Stated Clerk

REPORTS:

CONSENT AGENDA

May 13, 2025

SC-1

Approve the minutes of the Presbytery meeting held March 11, 2024.

SC-2

Approve excuses for the Presbytery meeting of May 13, 2025.

SC-3

Receive the report of the Administration and Coordinating Team.

SC-4

Receive the report of the Church Development Team.

SC-5

Receive the report of the Commission on Ministry.

SC-6

Receive the report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

SC-7

Receive the report of the Nominating Committee.

SC-8

Receive the report of the Property and Insurance Team.

SC-9

Receive the report of the Young Leader Formation Team.

SC-10

Receive the final report of the Administrative Commission for the Westminster Presbyterian Church.

ACT-1

The ACT recommends to the Presbytery:

The Presbytery Discernment Team Report be approved.

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

May 13, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

SC-1

Approve the minutes of the Presbytery meeting held November 12, 2024.

SC-2

Approve excuses for the Presbytery meeting of March 11, 2025.

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Receive the report of the Nominating Committee.

SC-8

Receive the report of the Property and Insurance Team.

SC-9

Receive the report of the Young Leader Formation Team.

SC-10

Receive the final report of the Administrative Commission for the Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

SC-11

On March 19, 2025, the Stated Clerk filed the Presbytery's March 11 votes on proposed amendments to the Book of Order with the General Assembly.

SC-12

On March 21, Ryan Irmer sent the following to the Stated Clerk: "I am writing to formally notify you, as the Stated Clerk of Highlands Presbytery, of my decision to renounce the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church USA."

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....Any former minister of the Word and Sacrament (teaching elder) who has renounced jurisdiction and later wants to be restored to office can be restored only through application to the presbytery in which he or she renounced jurisdiction for restoration to office....

ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATING TEAM REPORT

May 13, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

ACT-1

The ACT recommends to the Presbytery:

The Presbytery Discernment Team Report be approved.

Items for Action:

None.

Items for Report:

The ACT reports the following from their March 25, 2025 meeting:

ACT-2

Reviewed the March 11 Presbytery meeting.

ACT-3

Discussed the Draft Discernment Report.

ACT-4

Approved the sale of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, Phillipsburg property, \$350,000 and the Corporate Resolution authorizing Elder Pete Peterson to sign on behalf of the Presbytery.

ACT-5

Approved the sale of First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover property for \$2,500,000 and the approved the Corporate Resolution authorizing Rev. Sarah Cairatti to sign on behalf of the Presbytery.

ACT-6

Reviewed the May 13th Presbytery Meeting Agenda.

ACT-7

Approved a letter of support for Sanctuary + Seed's application for A Flourishing in Communities Grant through Cornell University.

ACT-8

Received the YTD Financial Report.

ACT-9

Personnel Committee reported that they had completed their annual reviews of the Presbytery Staff.

ACT-10

The ACT recognized the Budget and Finance Team reported that the 2026 Budget planning will begin after the approval of the Discernment Process Report.

ACT-11

Funds Development Team reported that they are in the midst of the Financial Sustainability Project. Several workshops have been scheduled and are in the planning stages.

ACT-12

Moderator Chad Rodgers reported that he officiated at the installation of Rev. Michael Cuppett at First Presbyterian Church in Newton and at the Ordination of Rev. Lissette González Sosa to the New Church Development – Sanctuary + Seed. The Ordination took place at Bound Brook Presbyterian Church.

ACT-13

Ratified the bylaw changes for Blair Academy.

ACT-14

The Presbytery Leader reported that the Stated Clerk received a letter on March 21, 2025 from Ryan Irmer renouncing Jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Receipt of the letter was confirmed. In the future if Mr. Irmer wishes to return to the PCUSA he will have to reapply through the Presbytery of the Highlands.

The ACT reports the following from their April 23, 2025 Special meeting:

ACT-15

Approved the revised Beattystown/Skylands Mortgage Renewal.

ACT-16

Approved the Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon session request for an additional five years be added to the current lease with Good New Home for Women.

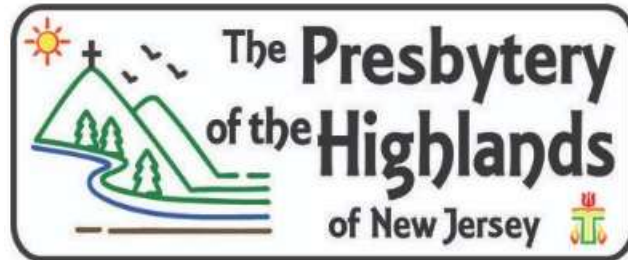
ACT-17

Approved updating the authority already granted to the Property and Insurance Team to approve the final terms of the sale of the Sparta manse and include the authority to approve the final terms of the purchase of new manse.

ACT-18

Approved the position description for a Presbytery meeting Recording Clerk.

**Discernment Report
May 13, 2025
Discernment Report
May 13, 2025**



**Presbytery of the Highlands
Vocation Statement**

God calls the Presbytery of the Highlands to nurture, equip, and enable the presbytery community as we exemplify the love of Christ in and through creative ministries preparing our faith communities to embrace and engage a new season

**Vision and Action Steps
For the Vocation Statement**

Nurture



Vision: *To strengthen the Presbytery community*, each Session will be visited annually by the COM liaison or a member of the Presbytery staff.

Action Steps:

- COM liaisons will receive training in the first quarter each year to prepare for their annual visits to Sessions. They will be equipped with the necessary tools and knowledge to provide reports back to the COM.
- The COM will track these visits and provide an annual report for the Presbytery.



Vision: *To build a connected Presbytery, all pastors in active service, including those in validated ministries, will be contacted at least annually by a COM member, a Church Development Team(CDT) member, or a Presbytery staff.*

Action Steps:

- COM moderators, CDT moderators, and Presbytery staff will hold an annual meeting to develop and enhance a process for connecting with all actively serving pastors.
- COM will report annually on the process of connecting with pastors



Vision: *To embody the love of Jesus Christ, the presbytery will host at least one annual gathering for retired pastors.*

Action Steps:

- COM moderators and the Presbytery Leader will plan an annual fellowship gathering for retired pastors and spouses.
- The Presbytery will maintain a webpage with content and resources for retiring and retired pastors



Equip



Vision: To equip and prepare our faith communities to embrace, engage with, and nurture innovation for a new season of ministry by establishing a Center/Committee for Innovation

Action Steps:

- The Presbytery will establish a Think Tank/Incubator to foster innovation and cultivate opportunities for creative ministry.
- The Think Tank/incubator will address the following:
 - o Leverage current assets for future ministries
 - o Explore creative mission ideas, particularly regarding church buildings.
 - o Provide opportunities for congregational leaders and pastors to learn how to plan for the future
 - The Think Tank will report regularly on new ideas and next steps to the Presbytery and the ACT.
 - o A new group will be defined by ACT and nominated by the Nominating Committee.
 - o Nominations will be approved by September 2025
 - o The group will be diverse, with members representing varied experiences.
 - The new team will present a plan for the Presbytery at the May 2026 Presbytery meeting
 - ACT will allocate necessary resources to support the development of the Center/Committee for Innovation.



Vision: To nurture the presbytery community by creating an environment or project that fosters storytelling.

Action Steps:

- In the first 6 months ACT will identify a group to plan “Moth” style storytelling events in the future.
- The team will work with the Communications Plan development to include a storytelling project.

- The team will encourage and engage churches to share their stories.



Vision: To support the presbytery *in fulfilling its Vocation Statement* by developing communication strategies that strengthen and build the presbytery community.

Action Steps:

- Implement a presbytery Communications program.
- ACT will collaborate with staff to develop the program, which will include:
 - o Celebrating: Highlighting milestones, achievements, and flourishing ministries.
 - o Marketing: Creating materials to the message and vision of the Presbytery.
 - o Presbytery Newsletter: Expanding outreach to congregations
 - o Story Sharing: Encouraging the sharing of stories within the community
 - o Communications Audit: Assessing the effectiveness of current communications strategies.
- ACT will assess staffing needs for communication roles and provide recommendations to the Presbytery at the earliest opportunity.



Vision: To equip, empower, and nurture the presbytery community by fostering strong relationships and collaboration among congregations and pastors.

Action Steps:

- COM will work to build community among pastors.
 - o schedule at least two in-person gatherings for pastors annually
- ACT will focus on community building among congregations.
 - o Evaluate whether in-person or ZOOM gatherings are more effective for congregational gatherings.
 - o Define appropriate types of gatherings (social, educational, meetings, etc.).
 - o Develop a one-year calendar of community-building events.

- o Encourage all teams to incorporate community-building activities into their plans.



Enable



Vision: To help our *congregations embrace a new season with information and resources*

Action Steps:

- Develop a database of resources, people, programs and assets, that can be shared.
 - o ACT will identify a person or committee to create the database and develop protocols/procedures for data collection, storage, and access.
 - o ACT or Personnel will determine who or what group will oversee the communication of resources and assets.
 - o Within 6 months, populate the database and establish methods for data acquisition.
 - o By 12 months, the database will be an active resource.



Vision: Align the Presbytery Structure *with the Vocation Statement.*

Action Steps:

- ACT will collaborate with Presbytery Staff and Team moderators to align the structure with the Vocation Statement and recommend any necessary changes to the structure and team descriptions by November 2025.
- ACT will organize a retreat for all team leadership to initiate the realignment process.
- ACT will present a preliminary report on the process at the September 2025 Presbytery meeting.
- The new Presbytery structure/alignment will be implemented in 2026.

FINAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILLIPSBURG, NJ

May 13, 2025

The Administrative Commission (AC) for the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg was formed in May 2023. Members of the AC are Ruling Elder (RE) Cathy Ahart, Rev. Nicholas Natch, Rev. Ryon Herin, RE Pete Peterson (Moderator), staff liaison Lizabeth Hutchinson, Resource Staff/Stated Clerk Steve Shussett, and Presbytery Leader Jeanne Radak.

The commission for the AC is, after many years of ministry, to work with the Session to conclude the affairs of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, dissolve the Westminster Presbyterian Church, provide for the spiritual and pastoral care of any remaining members and assist in their transition to new church homes, take possession of the church property, all funds, all records, and to oversee the disposal of the property on behalf of the Presbytery.

The Westminster Presbyterian Church was formed by members of the First Presbyterian Church in April 1886. The first pastor of the church was Rev. E. C. Cline, who served until 1903. During its years of ministry, the church was active in community missions including supporting Family Promise of Warren County, Norwescap Summer Lunch Program feeding kids lunch Monday-Friday, Christmas Tree for the Needy, and Operation Christmas Child. The church was certified to respond in local community emergency events as a comfort center as part of the Community Emergency Response Team. Over the years, the church conducted countless worship services and conducted Sunday School for all ages. The final worship service was held in April 2023, led by Rev. Scott DeCaro.

The AC held its first meeting on site at the church on May 10, 2023 along with the outgoing pastor Rev. Scott DeCaro, his wife Kim, Shaun Souders (Clerk of Session), and Kevin Cochrane (Treasurer). The AC was given a tour of the church facility. Rev. DeCaro reported that the facility was no longer used apart from the storage of items. Records of the church had been turned over to Liz Hutchinson, the Presbytery's Financial Administrator. After touring the facility and discussing the general condition of the property, the AC agreed to meet with the Session for their final Session meeting on May 23 via Zoom. On May 22, 2023, the Westminster AC entered into an agreement with Coldwell Banker Realty in Clinton, NJ to list the property for sale for \$850,000. The Westminster AC met with the Session on May 23 for its final meeting. During the meeting, it was noted that the listing agreement had been made, that all records had been transferred to Presbytery Financial Administrator Liz Hutchinson and that Liz would take responsibility for the property management in coordination with the AC. Rev. DeCaro agreed to pass along any membership issues that may arise, although none were noted at the time. The AC thanked the Session for the church's years of ministry and dismissed the Session. During the intervening time, the Financial Administrator continued paying all the utility bills, insurance payments, and arranging for minor repairs to the facility as circumstances required. Every six months, the AC made interim reports to the Presbytery. Over the course of the past two years, the Coldwell Banker Realty agents recommended a couple of reductions in pricing and

even a delisting in order to allow the property to be relisted with renewed attention to its availability.

In the fall of 2024, the Moderator of the AC was informed that a former member of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, a Florence Dominico, had passed away in 2023 and that her Last Will and Testament had left the church a bequest of \$10,000. As the successor to the Westminster Presbyterian Church, the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey was to receive those funds. The executrix of the estate was Ms. Dominico's niece and she requested that, if at all possible, the proceeds from Ms. Dominico's bequest be given to the Norwescap organization in Phillipsburg. Ms. Dominico during her lifetime had been active in the church ministry helping to provide lunches to kids. The Westminster AC considered the matter and consulted with the Presbytery's Administration and Coordinating Team (ACT) and approved transferring the \$10,000 bequest to Norwescap once the check was received. The check was received and the money transferred to the Norwescap organization.

At the time the Westminster AC dismissed the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church and all records were transferred to Presbytery Financial Administrator Liz Hutchinson, there was about \$4,000 remaining in the church's bank accounts and there were 22 members on the roll of the church. Since that time, one member was transferred to Stewartsville Presbyterian Church. There are reports that several other members became members of Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church, but we have no documentation.

In February 2025, the Westminster AC was notified by Coldwell Banker agents of receipt of an offer to purchase the Westminster Presbyterian Church property for \$350,000 in "as is" condition. The purchaser was a church moving from New York called "Congregation of St Pius V." The Westminster AC approved the purchase agreement on February 12, 2025. Settlement took place on April 14, 2025 and the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey received a check for \$327,789.54. From the receipts received at closing, the Presbytery was paid \$2252.50 for unpaid per capita for 2024 and 2025. The Presbytery was reimbursed \$33,206.33 for expenses incurred during the oversight of the property (after spending the \$4,000 that remained in the church's accounts). That leaves a total of \$292,330.71 to be distributed as recommended by the Westminster Administrative Commission after consulting with the ACT.

Recommendations of the Westminster Administrative Commission made by the AC by vote on May 1, 2025:

The Presbytery of the Highlands asserts all claims to any property of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg not known at this time, or to property or funds which may be received by reason of the congregation being named as the beneficiary of will or trust not known at this time.

That \$10,000 of the \$292,330.71 remaining from settlement funds be distributed to Family Promise of Warren County as a memorial to the Westminster Presbyterian Church's active participation in the that program, and that the remaining \$282,330.71 be deposited into the Presbytery's Special Resourcing and Assistance Account.

That the congregation of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg, NJ be formally dissolved and, that the corporate entity of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg, NJ be legally dissolved.

That the Administrative Commission for the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg, NJ be dismissed with gratitude .

Respectfully submitted,



Pete Peterson, Moderator

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REPORT – PART 1

May 13, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

From the April 1, 2025 meeting:

COM-1

Approved Rev. Shelley Gardner, Chaplain to officiate at church officer ordination/installation services in Highlands Presbytery for 2025.

COM-2

Appointed the following moderators:

Rev. Nancy Asbury as moderator for United First Presbyterian Church of Amwell, Ringoes (Larison's Corner)

Rev. Jacquelynn Van Vliet as moderator for Second English Presbyterian Church of Amwell, Lambertville (Mount Airy)

Rev. Tex Culton as moderator for First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville

COM-3

Received from the Stated Clerk the report that Ryan Irmer renounced jurisdiction of the church on March 21, 2025 (G-2.0509).

COM-4

Approved the following Terms of Call between:

Rev. Linda Owens and the Bound Brook Presbyterian Church

Rev. Timothy Clarkson, Union Hill Presbyterian Church, Denville and the First Presbyterian Church of Succasunna

Rev. Julie Raffety and the First Presbyterian Church of Franklin

Rev. Robin Palmer Burton and Highlands Presbyterian Church, Long Valley

Rev. Heather Morrison Yaden and Long Valley Presbyterian Church

Rev. Don Brown and the Presbyterian Church of Morris Plains

COM-5

Approved the Policy and Guidelines for Ruling Elders on the Pulpit Supply List.

COM-6

Approved the renewal of the Commissioned Ruling Elder position between Elder Stephanie Farley and Musconetcong Valley Presbyterian Church, Hampton for a period of two years 2025-2027.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REPORT – PART 2

May 13, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

The COM recommends the following:

COM-7

Policy and Process regarding a psychological evaluation for a pastor where there are concerns for fitness for ministry.

COM-8

Recommend that the presbytery confer Honorably Retired for the following pastors:

Rev. Jacqui Van Vliet

Rev. Fred Milligan

Rev. Peter Magnan

Rev. Donna McDaid

Rev. Alden Johnson (retired as of June 30, 2025)

Rev. Ron de Groot (retired as of June 30, 2025)

Items to Report:

From the May 6, 2025 meeting:

COM-9

The COM is training COM members and others in Conflict Management.

COM-10

Approved the Terms of call between Rev. Dr. Barbara Booth-Jarmon and the Kirkpatrick Memorial Presbyterian Church.

COM-11

Approved the Covenant Supply Pastor position for Second English Presbyterian Church of Amwell (Mount Airy).

COM-12

Approved the Covenant Supply Pastor position for Calvary Presbyterian Church, Florham Park.

COM-13

Approved the session exemption request from Hungarian Presbyterian Church of Wharton.

Policy and Process for Psychological Evaluation for Fitness for Ministry of Pastor in the Presbytery of the Highlands

The presbytery's duty to care for the health and well-being of its pastors and congregations (G-3.0303) includes the important responsibility of developing policies and procedures that are both effective and compassionate, thoughtfully addressing the needs of all involved.

The presbytery holds a sacred responsibility to care for the well-being of pastors, ensuring they are prepared and equipped for faithful ministry. In times following conflict, an involuntary dissolution, a disciplinary matter, or a significant mental or physical health concern, the presbytery's role is to offer guidance and support in discerning the pastor's readiness to continue serving. As part of this compassionate process, the presbytery may request a professional Psychological Evaluation for fitness, providing both the pastor and the faith community with clarity and confidence for the path forward.

In fulfilling its responsibility to provide care and oversight for its pastors and congregations, the Highlands presbytery, through the Commission on Ministry (COM), has a process in place to help assess a pastor's fitness for ministry in a manner that is both fair and compassionate, confidential and comprehensive.

This process is designed to support the pastor, providing care and guidance to promote their well-being and success as they move forward in faith and ministry.

Discernment¹

The Presbytery, through observation, conversation, and other means, will determine if there is a need to assess a pastor's fitness for ministry. This process will be approached with sensitivity and care. If, in carrying out such responsibilities, the Commission on Ministry becomes convinced that some psychological or psychiatric problem afflicting the minister is decreasing their effectiveness and affecting their relationship with the congregation or other relationships within the presbytery, the COM can inform the minister of that determination and request that the minister undergo a psychological or psychiatric evaluation. If the COM has determined that the problem is one that is so dramatically affecting the suitability for the call of the minister that the word imperatively demands that the COM take action, the presbytery's obligation, responsibility, and accountability for oversight remains and the presbytery may require a psychological examination.

Scheduling and Communication

If an assessment is deemed necessary, the COM will arrange an appointment with Physis Associates for the pastor. The Presbytery will provide the necessary information outlining the reasons for the evaluation in a clear and respectful manner.

¹ This section originates in "Commissioners' Resolution 97-1. On Requesting a Study of Use of Psychological and Psychiatric Evaluations (12.013-.019). Although it was approved in 1999 and is based upon the language in the former Form of Government, the General Assembly has affirmed that it continues to apply to the current Form of Government.

Financial Responsibility

In most cases, if the Presbytery requires the assessment, the presbytery will cover the costs of the evaluation, including travel expenses.

Consent and Confidentiality

The pastor will be asked to sign a waiver allowing a summary report of the assessment with recommendations to be shared with both the pastor and the appointed COM Care Team. All information will remain confidential and will be shared only with the pastor and the Care Team.

Care Team Appointment

Before the scheduled assessment, the COM will appoint a Care Team, which will include up to three members of the COM, the Presbytery Leader, and if the pastor desires, another individual of the pastor's choosing from the presbytery who is not part of the COM. This team will provide ongoing support throughout the process.

Psychological Evaluation

The evaluation may include the following assessments, along with additional tools recommended by the therapist as needed:

- Two clinical interviews
- MMPI-3 (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory)
- Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory
- Rorschach Inkblot Test
- Thematic Apperception Test
- Physis Profile Questionnaire

Report and Findings

Following the evaluation, the therapist will provide a report that addresses agreed-upon concerns. This report will summarize the outcomes of the testing and observations without disclosing unnecessary personal details. The report may include:

- The pastor's emotional and psychological well-being
- Identified issues or concerns that need to be addressed for the pastor's overall health
- Insights on how the pastor reached this point in their ministry and strategies to prevent similar challenges
- An assessment of the pastor's readiness to succeed in parish or other ministry, along with recommendations for achieving the necessary preparedness.

Follow-Up and Care Plan

The report will be shared with both the pastor and the COM Care Team in hard copy only. After the process is complete, the report will be sealed and placed in the pastor's confidential file. The Care Team's role includes:

- Reviewing the report with the pastor in a supportive manner
- Collaborating with the pastor to develop a plan for moving forward

Providing encouragement, guidance, and monitoring progress as needed

Pastor's Responsibilities

The pastor's role throughout this process is to:

Engage in the assessment with openness and good faith

Avoid actions that might intentionally skew or disrupt the process

Work collaboratively with the COM Care Team in a spirit of trust and transparency

Completion of the Process

The COM Care Team and the pastor will work together to determine when the process is complete. The COM will be responsible for dismissing the COM Care Team.

The COM Care Team will report to the full COM on the nature of the completed process.

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT TEAM REPORT

May 13, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

CDT-1

New Grant Program: Who is my Neighbor? Who is My Neighbor is a process of using your congregation's demographics to learn about the people in your neighborhood and ministry opportunities. Complete the Who is My Neighbor program and your session can apply for a \$1000 grant to reach out in mission and ministry to your neighbors.

CDT-2

CDT has approved a grant request from Alexandria First Presbyterian Church as they seek creative ways to engage the families in their local community.

CDT-3

CDT provides Liaisons to congregations in transition and helps support them with their discernment studies (Turn the Page). This discernment study and additional resources can be found on the Presbytery webpage.

CDT-4

CDT is currently supporting five congregations that are in transition.

CDT-5

CDT is responsible for providing support for New Church Developments.

A liaison from our team is involved with the NCD: Sanctuary and Seed.

CDT-6

CDT is discussing possible speakers for 2025. More information to come.

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT

May 13, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda

None.

Items for Action

None.

Items for Report

From the February 10, 2025 meeting:

CPM-1

CRE Aspirant, Tricia Hayes, will do her Field Ed at Community Presbyterian Church, Chester. Tricia is a member of the Long Valley Presbyterian Church.

CPM-2

CRE Form 3 was edited to address information unique to the CRE process.

From the March 10, 2025 meeting:

CPM-3

Jessica Fisher (Certified Ready) requested, and CPM approved, that her status be paused until such time she feels ready to continue. Jessica is a member of Presbyterian Church of Morris Plains.

CPM-4

Candidate Benjamen Willans was authorized to take the Worship & Sacrament ordination exam in April. Benjamen is a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Whippany.

CPM-5

CRE Aspirant, Tricia Hayes, met with CPM for her annual review. CPM voted to continue with Tricia in this process. Tricia is a member of the Long Valley Presbyterian Church.

CPM-6

Rev. Tim Clarkson (Denville/Succasunna) and RE Dan Mullen (West Milford) were approved as 2025 exam readers.

From the April 14, 2025 meeting:

CPM-7

Form 4 was amended to include CRE aspirants; the Financial Policy was revised in order to clarify the terms of the policy.

CPM-8

CPM agreed to lead worship at the May Presbytery meeting. Rev. Chris Doyle will preach and preside at Communion, and REs Susan Vigilante-Williams and Craig Barth will assist.

CPM-9

CRE aspirant, Tricia Hayes, requested a \$1,000 grant. This request was approved on motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathi Heath and Chris Doyle, CPM Co-Moderators

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

May 13, 2025

Administration and Coordinating Team

Class of 2027
Rev. Michael Cuppett (A), Newton/First

Blair Academy Consultation Team
Class of 2027
Susan Johnson (A), Chester/Community

Blair Academy Trustees
Class of 2027
Rev. Jeanne Radak, Presbytery

PROPERTY AND INSURANCE TEAM REPORT

May 13, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

From the April 28, 2025, meeting:

P&I-1

Sparta Manse Sale

The Property & Insurance Team accepted the authority delegated to it from ACT to approve the final terms of the Sparta manse property, contingent upon a favorable vote of the congregation.

P&I-2

Franklin Manse Sale

The Property and Insurance Team approved for the Franklin Church to continue the process of selling its manse based on the contract for sale received from the church.

P&I-3

Insurance Update

Renewal quotes and accompanying information will be sent imminently. There will be no rate increase this year. Coverage and limits of liability for our GL and executive lines are staying the same as well as our deductibles. However, premiums will be impacted by a 5% automatic increase on the property values due to the continued inflation of building materials and labor.

YOUTH LEADER FORMATION TEAM REPORT

May 13, 2025

Triennium 2025 Updates:

Mae Martella, Children's Ministry Coordinator at The Presbyterian Church of Morris Plains, has been serving as the Triennium Registrar and coordinator for the Presbytery of the Highlands.

Steve Gaden and Craig Barth will also be serving as chaperones. 10 youth and 1 college student from the Presbytery of the Highlands will be attending. The Highlands Presbytery is sharing a

bus with the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey and Hudson River Presbytery (NY). The group will have an opportunity to meet and get to know one another on Saturday, June 7th from 12 – 1:30 pm at the Morris Plains Presbyterian Church. Please pray for the youth and chaperones who will be attending Triennium, departing from Morris Plains Presbyterian Church on July 27th and returning early Friday morning, August 1st.

To find out more about Presbyterian Youth Triennium, visit their website.

<https://presbyterianyouthtriennium.org/>

Youth Ministry Workshop: Sunday, August 24, 2025; 2 pm – 6:30 pm

Save the Date – We will again be sponsoring a workshop this summer to provide resources, ideas and connection for all those who support youth learning, growth and programs within your churches and communities. Watch for more details about this event coming very soon!

We would love to hear about your summer youth ministry programs and mission trips.

To share news and to stay current on events and resources for youth ministry, check out the YLF webpage:

<https://highlandspresbytery.org/young-leader-formation-team/> If you are interested in joining the team, contact Steve Shussett at steves@highlandspresbytery.org

Submitted by:

Amy Clarkson, coordinator of the Young Leader Formation Team

Review of the 2024 Session Minutes Report September 9, 2025

Minutes approved without exceptions:

First Presbyterian Church of Blairstown
First Presbyterian Church of Boonton
Lower Valley Presbyterian Church, Califon
Kitchell Memorial Presbyterian Church, East Hanover
United Presbyterian Church, Flanders
First Presbyterian Church of Franklin
First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville
Alexandria First Presbyterian Church, Milford
Mine Hill Presbyterian Church
Presbyterian Church of Morris Plains
Presbyterian Church in Morristown
First Presbyterian Church of New Vernon
First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway
First Presbyterian Church, Stirling
West Milford Presbyterian Church
First Presbyterian Church of Berkshire Valley, Wharton
Hungarian Presbyterian Church of Wharton
First Presbyterian Church of Whippany

Minutes approved with exceptions:

Panther Valley Ecumenical Church, Allamuchy
United Presbyterian Church of Alpha
Andover Presbyterian Church
Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church
Lamington Presbyterian Church, Bedminster
United Presbyterian Church in Belvidere
Bound Brook Presbyterian Church
First Presbyterian Church of Branchville
Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon
Hildale Park Presbyterian Church, Cedar Knolls
Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township
Ogden Memorial Presbyterian Church, Chatham
Community Presbyterian Church, Chester
Clinton Presbyterian Church
First Presbyterian Church of Oxford at Hazen, Delaware
Union Hill Presbyterian Church, Denville
First Memorial Presbyterian Church, Dover
Flemington Presbyterian Church
Calvary Presbyterian Church, Florham Park
Frenchtown Presbyterian Church
Taiwanese American Fellowship Presbyterian Church, Hillsborough
Second English Presbyterian Church, Lambertville
Long Valley Presbyterian Church
Highlands Presbyterian Church, Long Valley
Presbyterian Church of Madison
First Presbyterian Church of Mendham
Presbyterian Church of Milford
Holland Bible Church, Milford
First Presbyterian Church of Newton
Yellow Frame Presbyterian Church, Newton
Oak Ridge Presbyterian Church
Parsippany Presbyterian Church
Pilgrim Presbyterian Church, Phillipsburg
Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Pittstown
Presbyterian Church at Pluckemin
Rockport Presbyterian Church, Port Murray
Kirkpatrick Memorial Presbyterian Church, Ringoes
United First Presbyterian Church of Amwell, Ringoes
Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood
Somerset Presbyterian Church
First Presbyterian Church of Sparta
First Presbyterian Church of Stanhope

Stewartsville Presbyterian Church
Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church, Stewartsville
First Presbyterian Church of Stockton
First Presbyterian Church of Succasunna
First Presbyterian Church of Sussex
First Presbyterian Church of Titusville
Beemerville Presbyterian Church
Trinity United Church, Warren
First Presbyterian Church of Washington

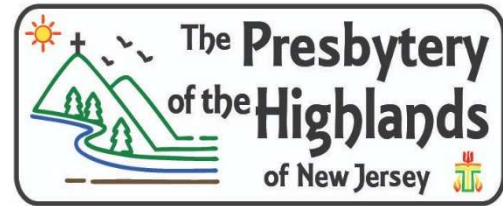
Minutes not approved

Delaware Presbyterian Church

Minutes not received and not approved

Meyersville Presbyterian Church, Gillette
Musconetcong Valley Presbyterian Church, Hampton
First Presbyterian Church of Ogdensburg
Presbyterian Church in Harmony, Phillipsburg
Wharton United Community Church

THE PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER POLICY



INTRODUCTION

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey affirms that God calls women and men to serve the church in a variety of ways, equipping each for ministry through gifts of the Spirit. Among these forms of service, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides for the commissioning of ruling elders to limited pastoral service in particular contexts. This ministry is both a response to the needs of congregations and a witness to the belief that all members of the body of Christ are called to share in leadership and service.

Within our presbytery, the Committees on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and Ministry (COM) collaborate to identify, equip, examine, and authorize qualified ruling elders who sense a call to serve in this way. Together, these committees ensure that Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) are faithfully prepared, responsibly supervised, and supported in their ministry as they serve Christ's church.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance for the preparation, training, examination, commissioning, and supervision of Commissioned Ruling Elders within the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey. This policy seeks to:

Clarify the responsibilities of CPM and COM in the CRE process.

Outline the qualifications, training, and preparation required of applicants.

Establish procedures for application, education, psychological evaluation, and internship.

Define the commissioning process, including terms of service, scope of authority, and accountability.

By setting these standards, the presbytery seeks to ensure that all congregations—particularly those unable to call a full-time Minister of Word and Sacrament—may receive pastoral leadership that is faithful, competent, and grounded in the Reformed tradition. This policy exists to strengthen the life and mission of the church, so that the good news of Jesus Christ may be proclaimed with integrity and joy in every corner of our presbytery.

AUTHORITY

According to the Book of Order (G-2.10), a presbytery may authorize a ruling elder to be “commissioned to limited pastoral service” when, in consultation with the session or other responsible committee, the presbytery “determines that its strategy for mission requires it.”

In the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) is responsible for the approval of applicants according to the qualifications below as well as their training and examination in accordance with (G-2.1002). The CPM is also responsible for approving candidates as ready to accept a position as a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE). The Committee on Ministry (COM) is responsible for authorizing the placement and

commissioning in accordance with (G-2.1001-2.1004). The CPM and the COM consider the commissioning of ruling elders a further means of fulfilling the presbytery's commitment to ensure that all congregations within its bounds have the best possible leadership in ministry.

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER

A CRE is a salaried or volunteer ruling elder interested in congregational ministry, affirmed by their session, and trained and commissioned by the presbytery to pastoral service in a particular parish or congregation in the Presbytery. Normally, a CRE provides pastoral leadership in congregations that are unable to secure pastoral leadership from a teaching elder because of congregational size, geography, finances or language. CREs may also be commissioned to serve specialized ministries such as immigrant or emerging ministries. A CRE is not an ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament, but is commissioned only to a particular congregation in Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey and may not provide pastoral leadership or services outside of that commission or after the commission ends. As part of their commission, the COM will establish whether a CRE is authorized to moderate the session of the congregation to which they are commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages. This commission shall also specify the term of service, which shall not exceed three years but shall be renewable. The presbytery, through the COM, shall review the commission at least annually.

QUALIFICATIONS

Normally, the qualifications for acceptance into the program shall be that the individual (known as an "applicant" until CPM accepts them into the CRE process, and thereafter as an "aspirant"):

- Senses that they have a call to ministry.
- Is a member in good standing of a congregation in the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.
- Possesses recognized leadership ability in the congregation as a ruling elder and has been ordained for at least two years.
- Demonstrates pastoral ability and shows a commitment to personal spiritual growth through prayer, Bible reading and devotions.
- Holds a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent, except in certain cases approved by CPM. The CPM shall determine appropriate credit for post high school course work and life experience.
- Is endorsed by the session of the congregation where they are a member.
- Is recommended by three references, at least one of whom is a teaching elder and a member of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.
- Accepts and has an understanding of the ethical standards of the PCUSA and the presbytery of Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.
- Is willing to accept the care and guidance of a mentor appointed by the Presbytery.

APPLICATION

Qualified individuals interested in pursuing a commission to pastoral service process (the aspirant) should complete the following steps:

1. Submit a completed Commissioned Ruling Elder Application (Appendix A) along with the supplemental questions and list of references to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

2. Obtain a letter of personal reference from three individuals familiar with their involvement in the Presbyterian Church (USA), including one from the applicant's pastor or another teaching elder in the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey. Letters should address the following areas of the applicant's readiness to enter a program of training for ministry:
 - a. Personal faith
 - b. Commitment to the PC(USA)
 - c. Gifts, talents and skills for pastoral ministry
 - d. a recent example of service to the congregation
3. Obtain a written letter of endorsement from their home session.
4. Submit to a criminal background check, which the Presbytery will complete prior to the applicant's first meeting with CPM.
5. Meet with the CPM for an initial consultation and endorsement. At this meeting, the CPM shall:
 - a. Review the individual's application, reference letters and related materials.
 - b. Discuss the roles and responsibilities of a CRE with a specific focus on how a CRE's commission differs from the ordination of a teaching elder.
 - c. Provide an overview of the CRE training process and steps toward commissioning once it is complete.
 - d. Determine the applicant's readiness to enter a program of training and education according to the requirements below.
 - e. Assign a liaison from the committee to work with the applicant during this process.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The aspirant must complete a suitable educational/training program that will prepare them to lead congregations in all aspects of service to God and each other. The Presbytery of the Highlands in New Jersey does not offer CRE training, but will work with each aspirant, through its assigned liaison, to design a program that shall include formalized instruction in the following areas:

Presbyterian Polity

Old and New Testament, including Biblical Exegesis

Reformed Worship and Sacraments

Reformed Theology

Preaching

Pastoral Care

Christian Education

The proposed training program must be approved by the CPM prior to beginning any coursework. The aspirant may choose to enroll in a designated CRE training program offered by a college, seminary, or other governing body. In cases where this is not practical due to financial and/or time constraints, the CPM will work with the aspirant to find appropriate classes,

seminars and/or courses that will satisfy these requirements. Ordinarily, instruction is to be at the post-graduate level, with exceptions to be determined by the CPM.

In addition to the courses outlined above, in accordance with G-2.1002, “A ruling elder who seeks to serve under the terms of G-2.1001 shall receive such preparation and instruction as determined by the presbytery to be appropriate to the particular commission. Such preparation shall include a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements.” This boundary training must be completed before the year-long internship can begin.

CPM may require the aspirant to attend additional presbytery workshops and/or training events to supplement his or her training.

INTERNSHIP

Each aspirant shall also be required to satisfactorily complete a year-long internship in a congregation of the Presbytery of the Highlands. The internship shall offer opportunities for preaching, worship leadership and pastoral care, and involvement in other aspects of the congregation’s life. The congregation’s pastor, who must be a teaching elder in good standing with the presbytery, will supervise and meet regularly with the intern.

Throughout the education and training phase, the aspirant will meet at least annually with the CPM to review their progress and determine other needs or future plans.

If a CRE who has been trained or formally commissioned by another presbytery seeks to be commissioned to a congregation in the Presbytery of the Highlands, the CPM will evaluate the training program and explore past ministerial experiences of the CRE aspirant. The CPM would then interview the CRE aspirant to determine if they have met the standards established for training CREs in the Presbytery of the Highlands. Any discrepancies of training will be made up at the discretion of the CPM, prior to the recommendation of the CRE aspirant to COM for recommendation to a congregation for commissioning by the presbytery.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION

All aspirants must complete a psychological evaluation approximately one year after beginning the CRE process. They are responsible for signing the necessary releases to have the results of their psychological evaluation sent to the chairperson of the CPM. The entire psychological evaluation will be reviewed with the members of the CPM and discussed with the aspirant at their annual consultation. Confidentiality is assured. This evaluation is a tool to be used to point out strengths and areas where growth is needed. It may also highlight areas of concern and bring to light issues which need to be addressed in order for the aspirant to become effective in their future commissioning(s). Aspirants will not be commissioned until this process has been completed.

The CPM requires that the evaluation be done at:

Physis Associates
Dr. Dennis J. O'Hara
109 Fox Knoll Lane
West Chester, PA 19380
610-269-3037
<https://physisassociates.com/>

The chairperson of the CPM should be notified when an appointment has been made so that payment of the presbytery's one-third, church's one-third, and aspirant's one-third shares of the cost may be arranged. The aspirant is responsible for the cost of transportation, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. Financial assistance may be available. Appointments are generally booked months in advance. Those interested are encouraged, therefore, to call the center for an appointment as early as possible.

ANNUAL GRANT

The Presbytery can provide a \$1000 grant annually, up to \$2000 total, to those persons formally in the CRE process; the aspirant must be enrolled in least one class in the year of the request. The purpose of this grant is to aid students with expenses such as the psychological examination, tuition, books, or other course-related expenses.

HOW TO APPLY: Submit a written request outlining the anticipated use of the grant.

EXAMINATION

At the successful completion of all the coursework and following the desires of the aspirant, an examination of the aspirant shall be arranged by the CPM. The examination shall be scheduled at a time, place, and location and in a manner determined by the CPM, including virtual meetings.

Prior to, and in preparation for the examination, CRE aspirants must submit to CPM (carefully prepared and typed double spaced) the following items:

- **Sermon Manuscript:** The length of the sermon, including the reading of the scripture, should be no more than 10 minutes in length. This sermon will be preached at a CPM meeting or in a setting approved by CPM.
- **Exegesis:** Exegetical study of the biblical material out of which the sermon arose including a study of key words, discussion of context, notes on significant points of grammar and variant readings, and an interpretation of the passage.
- **Statement of Faith:** This statement should be a statement of the CRE aspirant's personal faith (not a restatement of a creed) and ought to address matters of faith, including but not limited to: God, Jesus, the , Holy Spirit, the Trinity, the life and mission of the Church, the authority of Scripture, and the role of the Sacraments. The statement of faith should not be longer than one side of an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper. It should be single-spaced, and double-spaced between paragraphs. We recommend sensitivity to the use of inclusive language.

The material shall be reviewed by the CPM and discussed with the aspirant. In addition, the scripture will be read and preached to the CPM. Input may also be offered or requested from the aspirant's mentor or pastor. Based on this discussion and examination:

The CPM may request that the material be revisited or rewritten.

The CPM may approve the aspirant's readiness and preparedness to be a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

After the CPM has approved the candidate as ready to be commissioned, the candidate may actively seek a position as a CRE. An invitation to serve must be recommended by the COM and approved by the Presbytery. When commissioned, they come under the supervision of the Presbytery through the COM.

COMMISSIONING

Upon recommendation by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) to the Committee on Ministry (COM), the designated commissioned ruling elder may complete a Personal Information Form (PIF) and may be considered for commissioning to a specific congregation or validated ministry as a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

Upon commissioning to a particular pastoral service, the CRE must meet the same standards of boundary training as minister members of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.

This commission shall be valid for a period up to three years as designated by the session, COM, and the CRE and approved by the Presbytery. It should document in writing the CRE's full compensation package, including salary, vacation time, study leave and other allowances as determined by the Session, the CRE, and COM. A CRE's commission may be renewed at expiration or terminated at any time at the discretion of the Session, the CRE, or COM, with approval of the Presbytery.

The commissioning of a ruling elder to a particular congregation or specialized ministry is an act of the presbytery. Ordinarily, the commissioning service shall take place at a stated meeting of the Presbytery. If other circumstances warrant, and if Presbytery approves, the commissioning may take place at another time and place. Refer to the Book of Order (W-4.0404) for questions asked at the time of commissioning.

The CRE may perform pastoral functions not requiring ordination as a teaching elder, in agreement with the session such as teaching, visitation of members in home or hospital, visitation of prospective members, supervising Sunday school, leading music, prayer meetings, or study groups or conducting funerals. If commissioned to a congregation, the CRE will ordinarily be the primary leader of worship and preacher for the congregation.

Upon the written request of the session to the COM, and with the recommendation of the mentor and supervisor, the CRE may also be authorized by the Presbytery to carry out other functions allowed in the Book of Order, G-2.1001:

1. Administer the Lord's Supper
2. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism
3. Moderate the session of the congregation under the supervision of, and when invited by, the moderator of the Session appointed by the Presbytery;
4. Have voice in meetings of the Presbytery;
5. Have a vote in meetings of the Presbytery;
6. Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or other responsible committee of the Presbytery.
7. May be appointed by the Presbytery as moderator of the session to the congregation to they have been commissioned.

If the CRE is to be commissioned to a validated ministry, rather than a congregation of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey, then the CRE will follow the same procedure through the COM for confirmation of that field of service as a validated ministry as followed by teaching elders. (Book of Order, G-2.0503a)

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Commissioned Ruling Elder shall work under the supervision of a mentor who is assigned by the COM and is a teaching elder. The mentor and supervisor will meet regularly with the CRE, at least annually with the CRE and members of the session of the commissioning congregation to conduct the annual review of the work of the CRE. The results of this annual review will be communicated to the CRE and the COM.

The CRE shall comply with the polity of the Presbyterian Church (USA), including G-4.0301, and the by-laws of the congregation(s) being served. The CRE is expected to participate in continuing educational training experiences while commissioned.

Appendix A Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey Commissioned Ruling Elder Application

Name:

Mailing Address:

Phone: Home, Work

Email:

Occupation/Place of Employment:

Academic Background

List the academic institutions you have attended, beginning with high school and provide the information requested:

Institution	Dates Attended	Program or Major	Diploma or Degree
-------------	----------------	------------------	-------------------

Describe any previous experience in Preaching or CRE Training:

Occupational History

List the three most recent full-time or part-time positions in which you have been employed and also provide the following information: job title, dates of employment, aspect most enjoyed, aspect most disliked.

1. Current employment:

2. Next most recent:

3. Second most recent:

Congregational History

Date and place of baptism:

Date and place of profession of faith:

Congregation Membership (name, city, and state):

Date joined:

Date ordained an elder: Date ordained a deacon (if applicable):

List other congregations where you have been a member:

List areas of involvement in your local congregation both as a participant and leader. Indicate areas of leadership.

List areas of involvement in Presbytery, Synod or General Assembly.

List voluntary services, civic or social organizations of which you are or have been a member. Indicate your extent of participation and your role.

List any factors that may place limits on your ability to receive training or to serve as a Commissioned Ruling Elder:

Signature: __ Date: __

Questions for Reflection

Write a response to each of the following. These responses should be attached to this application.

1. In one or two paragraphs, describe yourself as a person.
2. Describe briefly what it means to you to be a Commissioned Ruling Elder. What has motivated you to consider this program?
3. Write a brief statement of your personal faith describing what you believe about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and your relationship to them.
4. What does it mean to you to be Presbyterian?
5. Describe your current spiritual journey, spiritual practices, prayer life, and disciplines.
6. Who/what is your ideal/role model for ministry? What do you expect in your ministry? What aspect of ministry do you find least interesting?

References

On a separate sheet attached to this application, please list three people who will serve as references. One should be your pastor or a teaching elder within Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey. Please include name, mailing address, email, daytime phone number and relationship to you.

Please ask your references to answer the following questions and send their responses under separate cover directly to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry at the following address: The Presbytery of the Highlands, 390 Route 10 West, Randolph, NJ 07869 or email it to one or both co-moderators.

1. How long have you known the applicant and would you say you know the applicant well?
2. What is your relationship to the applicant and under what circumstances have you observed his or her leadership in the church?
3. To what extent does the applicant's way of life demonstrate the teachings of Christ?
4. What is your experience of the applicant's commitment to the Presbyterian Church (USA)?
5. What special gifts, talents and skills does the applicant exhibit for service as a Commissioned Ruling Elder?
6. What is the most recent example of the applicant's service to the congregation?
7. If the applicant were your Commissioned Ruling Elder, what specific areas would you wish him or her to improve?

After completing the application, email it to one or both co-moderators.

Appendix B: Field Education for Commissioned Ruling Elders

Purpose

Field education is an integral part of preparation for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Through supervised experiences in congregations, the aspirant has an opportunity to:

develop basic skills in the practice of ministry,
clarify and focus the sense of call,
discern specific gifts for ministry,
integrate theology and theory with experience,
develop pastoral identity and character,
build a network of persons (in ordained ministry and otherwise) who can serve as references as the aspirant seeks a first call and who can continue to be mentors during early years in ministry.

Requirements

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey requires supervised field education. Service in the Inquirer's/Candidate's home church is not acceptable to the presbytery. CRE aspirants are encouraged to reduce their involvement in their home sessions and active leadership roles in their

home congregations while they are serving their field education assignments due to the additional commitment.

Fulfilling the required unit will ordinarily be accomplished:
in a Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation that is not their home church,
part time (6 hours per week),
8-9 months, to include the entire program and liturgical year

The CPM reserves the right to require a second year of field education in a Presbyterian church due to circumstances and/or readiness for a call.

Expectations

It is expected that the aspirant will get a well-rounded parish experience. This will include:
sharing in worship leadership, including occasional preaching;
sharing pastoral responsibilities as available, including visitations, weddings, funerals, etc.;
attending session meetings as permitted and time allows;
and any other activities that might be available to them; such as leading a Bible Study or adult education class, or assisting in youth ministry.

The pastor and aspirant should meet at least twice per month to review the aspirant's experiences, ask questions, share observations, etc.

Preaching outside of the field education placement is discouraged as it (1) limits the aspirant's supervised leadership when liturgist, and (2) denies the supervisor opportunity to witness the aspirant's preaching.

Ordinarily, field education will include the entire liturgical and program calendar, from the start of Sunday School and other programming (September), Advent/Christmas (November-December), Ordinary Time (January-February), and Lent/Easter (March-May). The goal is that the aspirant get a well-rounded experience of the church and program year.

Field Education Plans and Reporting

All field education plans must be submitted to and approved by the CPM prior to acceptance of the position.

The plan shall indicate how the Expectations (above) are expected to be met, while the mid-point and final evaluations (see below) will include actual goals and achievements in those same categories.

The field education plan shall include agreement on how the church and personal calendars will be coordinated. For example, personal breaks or holidays may coincide with Advent/Christmas or Lent/Easter, but worship leadership at these times is an important experience for the aspirant. Self-care provided by breaks are important, but so is the real-life experience of the challenging schedule these seasons require.

At the mid-point of the field education experience, aspirant and supervisor will meet to evaluate how well they are living into the covenant they established at the beginning of the experience. At the end of this experience they will meet again, to evaluate aspirant's progress toward their learning goals and other progress made during the year. The supervisor shall provide the aspirant with a written report that can include, but is not limited to an evaluation of the aspirant's gifts, growth areas, experiences, responses and any suggestions the supervisor might have for the future growth of the aspirant.

Following these mid-point and final evaluations, it is the aspirant's responsibility to submit the forms to their CPM liaison within 30 days of dates established by CPM. The liaison will forward this material to a CPM Co-moderator. Completing them is necessary for meeting their presbytery requirement. These reports will be kept confidential, as is the practice for the required psychological evaluation.

Compensation

Compensation shall be negotiated between aspirant and church, and the arrangements included in the field education plan provided to the CPM. Reimbursement is expected for the following: mileage for private vehicle use while on official church business (but normally not for commuting to the site) at the current IRS rate; any pre-approved, out-of-pocket expenses such as supplies, trips, meals, or overnight lodging necessitated by the field education work.

Note: Stipends are taxable income pursuant to IRS guidelines.

*With appreciation for materials created by the Presbytery of Boston, and Pittsburgh and Princeton Theological Seminaries.

For Prospective and Approved Commissioned Ruling Elder Field Education Supervisors*

Purpose

Field education is an integral part of preparation for ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) . Through supervised experiences in congregations and agencies, the aspirant has an opportunity to:

- develop basic skills in the practice of ministry,
- clarify and focus the sense of call,
- discern specific gifts for ministry,
- integrate theology and theory with experience,
- develop pastoral identity and character,
- build a network of persons (in ordained ministry and otherwise) who can serve as references as the aspirant seeks a first call and who can continue to be mentors during early years in ministry.

Requirements

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey requires 8-9 months of supervised field education, to cover the entirety of the church year.

Fulfilling the required unit will ordinarily be accomplished:
in a Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation that is not their home church,
part time (6 hours per week),
8-9 months, to include the entire program and liturgical year

Expectations

It is expected that the seminarian will get a well-rounded parish experience. This will include:
sharing in worship leadership, including occasional preaching;
sharing pastoral responsibilities as available, including visitations, weddings, funerals, etc.;
attending session meetings as permitted and time allows;
and any other activities that might be available to them, such as leading a Bible Study or adult education class, or assisting in youth ministry.

The pastor and aspirant should meet at least twice per month to review the aspirant's experiences, ask questions, share observations, etc.

Preaching outside of the field education placement is discouraged as it (1) limits the aspirant's supervised leadership when liturgist, and (2) denies the supervisor opportunity to witness the aspirant's preaching.

Ordinarily, field education over the full academic year or following graduation will include the entire liturgical and program calendar, from the start of Sunday School and other programming (September), Advent/Christmas (November-December), Ordinary Time (January-February), and Lent/Easter (March-May). The goal is that the aspirant get a well-rounded experience of the church and program year.

Field Education Plans and Reporting

All field education plans must be submitted to and approved by the CPM prior to acceptance of the position.

The plan shall indicate how the Expectations (above) are expected to be met, while the mid-point and final evaluations (see below) will include actual goals and achievements in those same categories.

The field education plan shall include agreement on how the church and personal calendars will be coordinated. For example, personal breaks or holidays may coincide with Advent/Christmas or Lent/Easter, but worship leadership at these times is an important experience for the aspirant. Self-care provided by breaks are important, but so is the real-life experience of the challenging schedule these seasons require.

At the mid-point of the field education experience, aspirant and supervisor will meet to evaluate how well they are living into the covenant they established at the beginning of the experience. At the end of this experience they will meet again, to evaluate aspirant's progress toward their learning goals and other progress made during the year. The supervisor shall provide the aspirant with a written report that can include, but is not limited to an evaluation of the aspirant's gifts, growth areas, experiences, responses and any suggestions the supervisor might have for the future growth of the aspirant.

Following these mid-point and final evaluations, it is the aspirant's responsibility to submit the forms to their CPM liaison within 30 days of dates established by CPM. The liaison will forward this material to a CPM Moderator or Co-moderator. Completing them is necessary for meeting their presbytery requirement. These reports will be kept confidential, as is the practice for the required psychological evaluation.

Compensation

Compensation shall be negotiated between aspirant and church, and the arrangements included in the field education plan provided to the CPM. Reimbursement is expected for the following: mileage for private vehicle use while on official church business (but normally not for commuting to the site) at the current IRS rate; any pre-approved, out-of-pocket expenses such as supplies, trips, meals, or overnight lodging necessitated by the field education work.

Note: Stipends are taxable income pursuant to IRS guidelines.

Questions for Prospective Pastor/Church to Consider

How would you describe your site's broader community context?

How would you describe your site's current areas of strength?

How would you describe your supervisory style?

What opportunities could you make available for an aspirant at your site?

For what tasks or ministry areas would you like an aspirant to take responsibility? (optional)

What monthly stipend, if any, could you provide an aspirant?

What mileage reimbursement, if any, could you provide an aspirant?

What sort of work environment and resources would be available to an aspirant?

*With appreciation for materials created by the Presbytery of Boston, and Pittsburgh and Princeton Theological Seminaries.

Commission on Ministry Report – Part 1

September 9, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

From the June 3, 2025 meeting:

COM-1

Approved the request from the Presbytery of the Northeast to Transfer Rev. Rich Gelson to serve as pastor of the South Presbyterian Church, Bergenfield, NJ.

COM-2

Approved Jim Vespoli a temporary member of the Presbytery while he serves as Panther Valley Ecumenical Church as UCC pastor.

COM-3

Approved the Terms of Call between the following:

Elder Stephanie Farley and the Musconetcong Valley Presbyterian Church, Hampton

Rev. Dr. Maureen Paterson and the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church

Rev. Ron de Groot and Calvary Presbyterian Church, Florham Park

COM-4

Approved the Ministry Discernment Profile for the following:

First Presbyterian Church of Branchville

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church, Califon

From the July 29, 2025 meeting:

COM-5

The Rev. Bronc Radak was appointed moderator for First Presbyterian Church of Sparta.

COM-6

The Rev. Dr. Maureen Paterson was appointed moderator for Bound Brook Presbyterian Church beginning October 2025.

COM-7

The COM approved a disbursement of \$2500 from the Clergy Care Fund to assist a pastor with an emergency situation.

COM-8

Approved the Validated Ministry of Rev. Dr. Edwin Aponte as Dean of Drew Theological School.

COM-9

Approved the Terms of Call between the following:

First Presbyterian Church of Branchville and Candidate for ministry

Calvary Presbyterian Church, Florham Park and Rev. Carie Stanley

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church, Califon and Rev. Tex Culton

Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood and Rev. Arlene Romaine

Somerset Presbyterian Church and Rev. Nancy Nalepa-Skibo

First Presbyterian Church of Sussex and Rev. Barry Young

COM-10

Approved the First Presbyterian Church of Sparta position description for a Transitional Pastor.

COM-11

Approved the Dissolution Agreement and Separation Ethics Covenants for the following:

Rev. Ron de Groot and Calvary Presbytery Church, Florham Park

Rev. Dr. Pat Sileo and First Presbyterian Church of Sparta

BIO & STATEMENT OF FAITH – SCOTT K. STOLTE

Scott Stolte grew up in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania and The Presbyterian Church of Falling Spring. He attended Purdue University where he obtained his Doctor of Pharmacy degree. He then began a 25-year career as a pharmacist, academic pharmacy faculty member, and higher education administrator. In 2022, Scott answered the call to Seminary and graduated from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in May 2025.

Scott is married to Laura, who is now a Program Administrator at Rutgers University. They have two children, Daniel (26) and Katherine (Kate, 23).

STATEMENT OF FAITH – SCOTT K. STOLTE

I believe in the Triune God who eternally existed and is beyond our ability to fully comprehend. I will seek to understand God, but when we reach the human limit of ability to understand, I find peace and rest in knowing that God is God while I am not.

I believe that God is self-sufficient and the Creator of all things. I believe that God is necessarily good. Thus, when God decided to be God with others and created the community of humanity to be the eternal family and friends of Jesus Christ, God created that which is better to be than not to be.

I believe that Jesus Christ has been since the beginning, is the first of creation, and is the first in eschatological consummation in his resurrection. At the incarnation, Christ added a second, human nature to his divine nature to become visibly present in God's creation, to die to reconcile humanity to God, and to be resurrected to begin the eschatological redemption of all things. As Christ, the Word of God, is God translated into human form, Scripture is the inspired and authoritative Word of God, translated by the Holy Spirit to reveal truth, guide people, and proclaim Jesus Christ.

I believe the Holy Spirit is the active presence of God in the world, within individual believers, and the Church. The Spirit comforts, guides, and empowers Christians, particularly in prayer and the sacraments, for spiritual growth and service.

I believe humans are equipped to serve one another, reach out in love, compassion, and justice to those in need, and build each other up by the power of the Holy Spirit. Because we are Christ's family gifted with God's grace, we should desire to do these, but God loves us so much that we are free to respond or not to God's gift.

I believe that the Church is rooted in the future. We are called to look for what God is doing to bring all to God through Christ and join God in it. I believe the Church is not meant to be aligned with former or current powers but with God's emerging Kingdom. Thus, we are obliged to

address the current powers, especially when they are not aligned with God's mission of equality, mercy, goodness, and justice.

I believe that our life together as a community of Christians is grounded in the sacraments beginning at baptism and sustained and deepened in our communion with God and one another at the table of the Lord's Supper. Baptism signifies our union with Christ in his death and resurrection, the washing away of sin, and our incorporation into the covenant community. The Lord's Supper is a means of spiritual nourishment, a sign and seal of Christ's saving work, a proclamation of his death until he comes again, and a reminder that God chose to join humans in fully human life in Christ.

I believe that all of us, as believers, are interdependent on one another. We are to support and be accountable to one another while awaiting the glorious return of our Lord. We are to prioritize the needs of the full community of Christ's siblings over individual needs.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REPORT – PART 2

SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

From the September 2, 2025 meeting:

COM-12

The following moderators have been appointed:

Rev. Robin Curras – First Presbyterian Church of Berkshire Valley Presbyterian Church, Wharton

Rev. Don Bragg- First Presbyterian Church of Boonton

Rev. Bronc Radak – Delaware Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Oxford at Hazen, Delaware

COM-13

Approved Commissioning Ruling Elder Donna Rahmann to preside at the Communion table in accordance with the Presiding at the Table policy. Elder Donna Rahmann will be commissioned at the Presbytery Meeting.

COM-14

The following COM documents were reviewed, editorial changes made, and were approved :

The Clergy Care Fund (editorial changes)

Your Appointed Moderator (editorial changes)

Ordination of Minister of Word and Sacrament (editorial changes)

Session Rotation Exemption Requests Policy (reviewed no changes made)

Position Description for COM members (editorial changes)

Code of Ethics for COM members (editorial changes)

COM-15

Approved the Terms of Call between the First Presbyterian Church of Sparta and Rev. Robin Miller Curras.

COM-16

Approved that 2026 Minimum Terms of Call which reflects a 2.65% increase.

COM-17

Approved granting covenant agreements up to 36 months, as allowed by the Book of Order, on a case-by-case basis. Annual Terms of Call are required no matter the length of the covenant agreement.

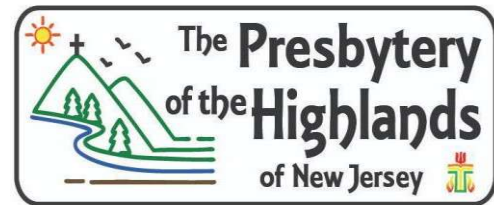
COM-18

Approved the Board of Pension Policy (2026).

COM-19

Approved the Covenant Supply Position description for Pilgrim Presbyterian Church, Phillipsburg.

**THE PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY
CLERGY CARE FUND POLICY**



Introduction

The Presbytery of The Highlands of New Jersey recognizes that unforeseen emergencies and crises can significantly impact the well-being of its Ministers of Word and Sacrament and their families. In response to these challenges, the Presbytery—through the Commission on Ministry’s Clergy Care Team—has established a policy to provide timely, compassionate, and confidential financial support. This fund is designed to offer practical assistance during times of acute need, ensuring that our pastors and their families are cared for in moments of vulnerability and distress. The policy outlined below defines the purpose, scope, eligibility, and guidelines for accessing these emergency grants.

Purpose

To provide financial assistance for Teaching Elders of the Presbytery of The Highlands of New Jersey in times of emergency and/or crisis.

Policy

Funds can be used for:

Assistance with medical bills outside of normal deductibles and shared cost.

Mental or Physical health care for pastor, spouse, or family members (26 or under) which are not covered by the Board of Pensions.

Shared grants with the Board of Pensions

Financial family emergencies/crisis

Emergency Pulpit supply (up to 2 weeks) because of hospitalization or life threatening illness.

Other emergencies or care issues as determined by the Clergy Care Team of COM.

Grants are not to exceed \$2500 with a lifetime cap of \$5000. Expectation is the grant is a one time request.

Clergy Care Team has the discretion of final decision of all grants and amounts.

Application

There is no application process. Requests may be made in person or in writing to the Presbytery Leader and the Commission on Ministry Moderator.

All grants will be confidential to the Presbytery Leader, COM moderators and Pastoral Care Team.

Grants may not be used for:

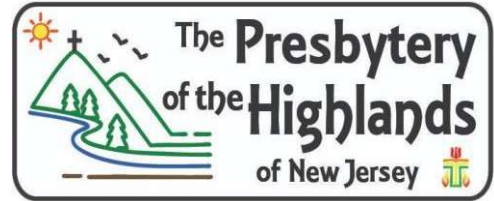
Continuing Education

Moving Costs

Supplement to income

Pulpit supply for scheduled hospitalizations or recovery from scheduled medical procedures or hospital stays.

**THE PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY
YOUR APPOINTED MODERATOR**



Introduction

The Commission on Ministry (G-1.0505) appoints a moderator to help a session and congregation have continuity in leadership during the times of transition or when a church doesn't have a pastor. A moderator is appointed by the Commission on Ministry and is authorized to serve in that role for a particular congregation. The person appointed is ordinarily a teaching elder member of The Presbytery of the Highlands.

Responsibilities of the Session

Welcome your temporary moderator! Help him/her get to know you and to know about your congregation so that she/he is able to effectively guide you in your work and decision-making. You can help your appointed moderator be more effective by:

- Providing your moderator with a copy of your bylaws and minutes from the last few session meetings.

- Providing a calendar/schedule of upcoming or possible dates for session meetings.

- Keeping him/her “in the loop” by copying the moderator on email communications and sending reports and handouts to him/her that you would normally put in the pastor’s office mailbox

- Letting your moderator know if there are issues or concerns that may need particular attention and/or necessitate a special meeting of either the session or the congregation

- Having the clerk of session confer with the moderator in preparing the agenda for your meetings

Expectations for the Moderator

What you can expect from your appointed moderator:

Keep the session meeting on track and seek to include everyone in discussions

Ensure that constitutional requirements are met (G-3.02) (i.e. session meetings are held at least quarterly, ruling elders and deacons are elected and ordained/installed, electing commissioners to presbytery/hearing reports, session prepares and approves the annual budget, minutes and records are kept up-to- date, etc.)

Answer questions and/or provide guidance to committee chairs on a limited basis
Attest to the minutes of a meeting of the congregation

Boundaries

Please remember that the moderator is not serving as the congregation's pastor. Their role is limited to moderating meetings of the session and the congregation. They are not expected to provide pastoral care, attend additional meetings or fellowship events, arrange for pulpit supply, or perform other responsibilities typically carried out by the church's installed or temporary pastor.

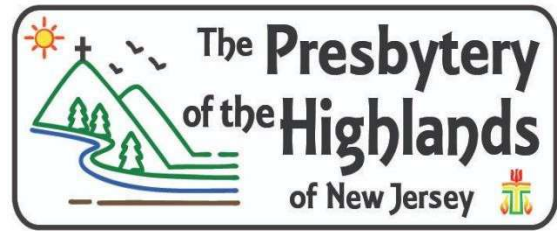
Compensation

Moderators should be compensated for each session or congregational meeting they moderate, unless a different arrangement has been mutually agreed upon by the moderator, the session, and the Commission on Ministry (COM). This honorarium is intended to include reimbursement for mileage.

In 2025 the honorarium is \$90 In 2026 the honorarium is \$100.

Questions -If you have any questions, please contact the COM moderator or the Presbytery Leader.

ORDINATIONS IN THE PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY



Introduction

“Ordination to the ordered ministry of the minister of Word and Sacrament is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to ordered ministry. Such a person shall have fulfilled the ordination requirements of the presbytery of care and received the call of God to service to a congregation or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and to the presbytery of call” (Book of Order, G-2.0701).

Ordination is a joyful and sacred milestone in your call to ministry. The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey is committed to walking alongside you in this significant moment, ensuring that your transition into ordained ministry proceeds smoothly and in good order.

Purpose

This document provides guidance for candidates preparing for ordination within the Presbytery of the Highlands. It outlines the responsibilities of the Commission on Ministry (COM), the steps required for presbytery approval, the procedures for the ordination service, and the expectations regarding participation and planning. This information ensures consistency and care as you move from candidate to ordained minister of Word and Sacrament.

Instructions

Work with the Commission on Ministry (COM)

The COM plays a central role in the ordination process. Your COM liaison is your primary point of contact and will assist you throughout.

COM is responsible for:

Confirming that your presbytery of care has certified you as ready to receive a call (the Presbytery Leader will typically contact them on behalf of COM).

Conducting an entrance examination and recommending you for membership in the presbytery. For this, you must submit:

A copy of your Personal Discernment Profile (PDP)

A brief biography

A one-page Statement of Faith

Reviewing and confirming that your terms of call meet Presbytery standards.

Reviewed, edited, approved by COM September 2025

Affirming that a congregation has extended a formal call to you.

Approving non-parish ministries as validated calls and recommending you serve in them, if applicable.

Presbytery Examination and Approval

Your examination for ordination and membership will take place at a regularly scheduled or specially called meeting of the Presbytery.

Materials to be included in the Presbytery Packet:

Your biography

Your one-page Statement of Faith

Proposed terms of call

Guidelines for examining a candidate

Following successful examination:

The Presbytery will approve your membership and terms of call, effective as of your ordination date.

If COM recommends that you be ordained in your presbytery of care, the Presbytery will vote to approve that request.

Planning the Ordination Service

As outlined in G-2.0702, the presbytery extending the call ordinarily conducts the examination, ordination, and installation.

Timing and Location:

Must be scheduled after the presbytery meeting at which your ordination is approved.

Typically held at the church to which you are called.

It should be at a time when the presbytery community can attend, usually Sunday afternoons/evenings or another weekday—not Sunday mornings.

Sunday morning services will only be considered in extraordinary circumstances.

Reviewed, edited, approved by COM September 2025

To coordinate scheduling:

Contact the Presbytery Office to review:

The church calendar

COM's meeting schedule

Presbytery events calendar

Availability of the Presbytery Moderator

The Administrative Commission

An Administrative Commission of the Presbytery leads the service of ordination. The commission includes:

Five members from at least five different congregations:

Either three teaching elders and two ruling elders or vice versa

The Presbytery Moderator (serves as the commission moderator)

Your Responsibilities:

Work with your COM liaison to invite members of the presbytery to serve on the commission.

Provide the list of proposed commission members to COM prior to their meeting to approve the ordination.

Confirm current COM meeting dates with the Presbytery Office.

The Moderator will report the commission's work to the Stated Clerk. The commission is dissolved at the conclusion of the ordination service.

The Worship Service

The ordination is a worship service of the Presbytery and must include required elements found in:

The Book of Occasional Services

The Book of Common Worship [PC(USA)]

Reviewed, edited, approved by COM September 2025

If you do not have access to either, we highly recommend obtaining a copy.

Additional Notes:

While you do not need prior approval for the full content of the worship service, we strongly encourage consultation with the Presbytery Moderator.

Teaching or Ruling Elders from outside the presbytery may participate only with prior COM approval, and their roles in the service must be specified.

Members of the administrative commission should also take part in the service.

Offering:

An offering is taken for the Commission on Preparation for Ministry Scholarship Fund.

Funds should be given to the Moderator or sent as a check to the presbytery.

The Presbytery's QR code for online giving may also be used.

Questions and Contacts

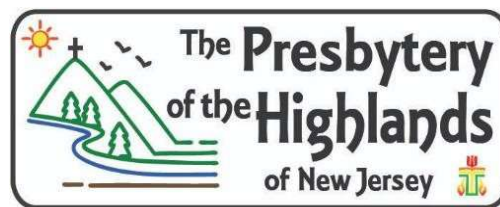
If you have any questions or need assistance with any part of the ordination process, please contact:

Presbytery Office: (973) 361-0084

Your Committee on Ministry Liaison

Presbytery Leader or Stated Clerk

**THE PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY
SESSION ROTATION REQUIREMENT
EXEMPTION POLICY
INTRODUCTION**



The Book of Order outlines clear provisions for the election, service, and responsibilities of ruling elders and deacons within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). These standards affirm the importance of shared leadership, representative diversity, and accountability in church governance.

Two key provisions are:

G-2.0401 – Election of ruling elders and deacons from among the congregation, with attention to diversity and inclusiveness.

G-2.0404 – Terms of service, limiting consecutive years of service and requiring rotation in leadership roles.

Congregations may, at times, encounter circumstances that make it difficult to meet these requirements. In such situations, the Book of Order allows presbyteries to grant exemptions upon written request and approval by majority vote. If a session finds it necessary to request exemptions on a recurring basis, the Commission on Ministry (COM) may invite the session into conversation to explore ways of strengthening leadership and supporting the congregation's ministry.

Purpose

This policy provides guidance for congregations within the Presbytery of the Highlands seeking an exemption from G-2.0401 and/or G-2.0404. It ensures that requests are made transparently, thoughtfully, and with a commitment to responsible leadership practices.

Description of Requirements for Exemption Requests

To request an exemption, the session must submit a written request annually. Requests must be approved prior to the annual election of elders and/or deacons.

Each request must include the following:

Congregational and Leadership Size

Provide the size of the congregation and the current size of the session and/or board of deacons if applicable

Efforts Toward Inclusive Leadership

Describe how the congregation has attempted to nominate and elect new leaders who reflect the diversity of the church community, in alignment with F-1.0403.

Rationale for the Exemption

Clearly state the reasons the congregation is unable to comply with G- 2.0401 and/or G-2.0404.

Explain any efforts made to adjust the size of the session or board of deacons to be more proportionate to the size of the congregation.

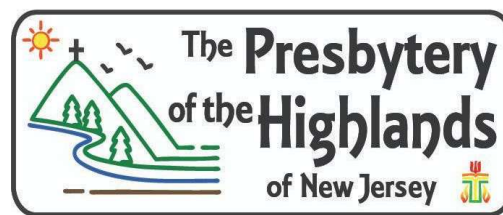
Submission Instructions

Please submit exemption requests to the Presbytery of the Highlands at:

- office@highlandspresbytery.org

The COM liaison to the church will contact the session's clerk of session.

**PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY
POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR
COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MEMBERS**



Introduction

Members of the Commission on Ministry (COM) play a vital role in supporting the health and vitality of congregations and pastoral leaders across the Presbytery of the Highlands. COM members serve as representatives of the Presbytery and work closely with pastors, sessions, and congregations to guide and sustain ministry.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Commission on Ministry is to provide oversight, care, and support for congregations and pastoral leadership, particularly during times of transition. COM members ensure that churches are nurtured in their mission and that pastoral relationships are healthy and faithful to the values of our Reformed tradition.

Responsibilities and Expectations

Eligibility: Must be a Minister of Word and Sacrament or a ruling elder from a congregation within the Presbytery of the Highlands.

Meeting Attendance: Attend monthly COM meetings, as well as additional meetings when necessary.

Team Participation: Serve actively on one of the COM's working teams.

Church Oversight: Maintain consistent contact with assigned churches and provide support as needed, including assuming special assignments from the COM.

Congregational Support: Collaborate with pastors and sessions to help strengthen the life and ministry of assigned congregations.

Candidate Examinations: Assist in examining candidates for pastoral positions within assigned churches and as requested by COM.

Pastoral Transitions: Support congregations and their pastoral nominating committees (PNCs) during pastoral transitions, offering guidance and resources.

Exit Interviews: Participate in conducting exit interviews with pastors and sessions when a pastoral relationship is dissolved

Conflict Mediation Referrals: Notify the COM moderator if a situation in an assigned church may require the involvement of the Mediation Team.

Training: Attend training events sponsored by the COM, including the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Workshop and other continuing education opportunities.

**PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY
A CODE OF ETHICS FOR
COMMISSION ON MINISTRY (COM) MEMBERS**



Introduction

The work of the Commission on Ministry (COM) is central to the health and mission of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey. Members of the COM are entrusted with responsibilities that require confidentiality, fairness, accountability, and integrity. Because of the sensitive nature of COM's work, all members are expected to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct in order to foster trust within the presbytery and strengthen the ministry of the church.

Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to:

Establish clear expectations for the ethical conduct of COM members.

Protect the integrity of the presbytery's decision-making processes.

Promote fairness, confidentiality, and accountability in all interactions.

Ensure that COM members serve faithfully as representatives of the presbytery, guided by Scripture, the Book of Order, and the Holy Spirit.

Code of Ethics for COM Members

Confidentiality

I will keep confidential all information and discussions of the COM.

I will not share this information with colleagues, friends, family members, or others, except as required by law, the Book of Order, or the presbytery.

References

I will not provide references concerning a minister of the word and sacrament or commissioned ruling elder of the presbytery unless I have been listed as a reference by that minister of the word and sacrament or commissioned ruling elder.

When giving references, I will limit my answers to matters on which I have direct knowledge or that can be substantiated by public record.

I will not knowingly libel or slander a colleague in ministry.

Discretion

I will exercise discretion in the way I conduct myself as a member of the COM, recognizing the trust placed in me.

Fairness

I will treat all colleagues, congregations, and sessions within the presbytery fairly and equally.

Conflicts of Interest

I will avoid conflicts of interest by recusing myself when matters pertain to my personal interests or those of my congregation.

Undue Influence

I will not use my relationships with other COM members to influence outcomes in matters related to my personal interests or those of my congregation.

Accessibility

I will be reasonably available to Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and session members who seek to share concerns or need to be heard.

Respect for COM Decisions

I will respect the advice, counsel, and decisions of the COM and its staff.

I will remember that I serve as a representative of the COM, acting only with authority granted to me by the Commission

I will fairly represent the official position of the COM, and I will not present personal opinions as the position of the commission when they differ.

I will comply with and be guided by the Book of Order in all matters.

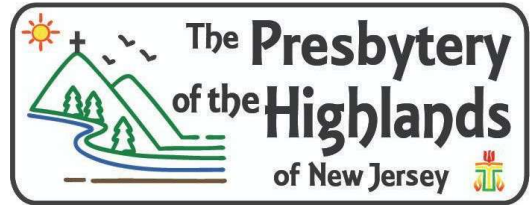
Personal Conduct

I will conduct myself ethically in all ways expected of ministers of the word and sacraments and ruling elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) <https://pcusa.org/resource/standards-ethical-conduct>

Adoption

By affirming this Code of Ethics, members of the Commission on Ministry commit themselves to serving with integrity, fairness, and accountability in support of the mission and ministry of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.

**THE PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY
BOARD OF PENSIONS (BOP)
REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2026**



Introduction

The Presbytery of the Highlands is committed to ensuring that all pastors, commissioned ruling elders (CREs), and other eligible employees receive the benefits and medical coverage they need through the Board of Pensions (BOP).

Purpose

This document outlines the BOP benefit and medical coverage options for 2026 and beyond, as well as the requirements set by the Committee on Ministry (COM). It is designed to help pastors, sessions, and personnel committees make informed decisions that align with both BOP policy and presbytery expectations.

BOP Package Options for 2026

Congregational Pastor Package (Congregational Settings)

Required for all installed pastors; available to non-installed pastors and CREs.

Pension Benefits: 10% of effective salary

Medical Coverage: Member-only PPO – 17.5% of effective salary

Optional Coverage (additional fees):

Children: \$9,950

Spouse: \$12,250

Family: \$22,200

Covenant Package

Available to any employee working 20 hours or more per week, including:

Non-installed ministers serving in congregations

Ministers serving outside congregational settings

Non-ordained employees

Medical PPO: Cost based on zip code (no online calculator; call BOP for pricing)

Additional coverage available for spouse, children, or family

Transitional Package (Second year of 3 year program)

For ministers currently in the Transitional Pastor Package (2025)

Continuation of Pastor Participation structure through 12/31/2027

2027 rate: 47% of effective salary (includes medical + pension)

Automatic enrollment for all pastors in Pastor Participation as of 12/31/2024

Once opted out, pastors cannot re-enter the program

BOP Grant Program

Beginning in 2025, BOP is offering a 3-year Shared Pastor Grant Program. Congregations may receive up to \$10,000 per year.

COM Requirements and Recommendations

General Requirements

Installed Pastors: Shall receive BOP Benefits and Medical - Congregational Pastor Package or continue in the Transitional Pastor Package.

Non-Installed Pastors (20+ hours): Shall receive BOP Benefits and Medical unless proof of alternate coverage is provided annually.

CREs (20+ hours): Must receive BOP Benefits.

BOP Benefits (Required)

10% of effective salary for Pension, Death & Disability, Temporary Disability and Employee Assistance PPlan (EAP)

Provides access (at member's cost) to dental, vision, and supplemental death benefits.

Exception: Retired pastors serving congregations.

Medical Coverage

Family Coverage

Required for installed pastors (Congregational or Transitional Package).

Required for non-installed pastors (Congregational, Transitional, or Covenant Package).

Exceptions: Clergy couples, or where family is covered by noncontributory employer insurance.

Spouse Coverage

Same requirements as Family Coverage.

If the spouse loses employer coverage, the congregation must provide BOP coverage.

Children's Coverage

Required for children up to age 26
Same requirements and exceptions as Family Coverage.

Exceptions Process

COM has trained members available to guide pastors, sessions, and personnel committees.

If an exception is needed:

Meet with a COM BOP team member.

Document the exception agreement in the annual Terms of Call.

Retired Pastors

Serving <20 hours/week: Exempt from BOP requirements.

Serving 20+ hours/week: Exempt from BOP medical/benefits, but congregation must pay 12% post-retirement service dues.

Recommendation: Congregations contribute to the retired pastor's 403(b) retirement plan.

FINAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HANOVER, EAST HANOVER SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Report:

AC-1

An Administrative Commission was established to walk alongside the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover in 2020. The AC, chaired by the Rev. Sarah Cairatti and served faithfully by Richard Kaller, Carol Corea, and the Rev. Timothy Clarkson, attended the Session Meetings of the church. Reviewing membership, possibilities, and finances, over time, that discernment process revealed the church was not sustainable.

Following a congregational meeting, the final worship service at the church was held on June 9, 2024. Since that time, the AC and Presbytery have explored options for the property. Ultimately, and with many thanks to Presbytery attorney, Tania Nameth, the sale of the property closed on August 25, 2025, with Township of East Hanover purchasing the church, cemetery, parish house building and parking lot, and manse for \$2,500,000.00. The Township assumes responsibility for the cemetery and plans to create a much needed Senior Center on the property where the church house office building has been. This repurposed space will remain a center of the neighborhood, nurturing and serving the needs of the community for generations.

AC-2

The AC is grateful to the Presbytery, the Session and congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover, the Rev. Tom Brown (who served as moderator of the Session for many years), Tania Nameth, and the Township for sharing this process together faithfully.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Sarah Cairatti and the Members of the Administrative Commission
Items for Action:

Acknowledging the responsibility of being stewards of the legacy of this congregation of over three hundred years in ministry, and given the status of the church and the property at this time, the AC respectfully recommends to the Presbytery that:

AC-3

The remaining amount from the proceeds of the sale of the property, after accounting for expenses and revenues (\$2,314,618), be allocated in accordance with recommendations from the Budget and Finance Committee and ACT as follows:

Presbytery Mission and Ministry Fund: \$1,500,000.00

Mission Opportunities in the East Hanover Area:

Homeless Solutions: \$80,000.00

Interfaith Food Pantry: \$20,000.00

Nourish NJ \$10,000.00

Winds of the Spirit \$10,000.00

The Presbytery Cemetery Fund: \$20,000.00

The Presbytery Capital Loan Fund: \$20,000.00

The remaining \$654,618 will be set aside to establish a fund that supports initiatives fostering new life and creative ministries within the presbytery's congregations. The Innovation Team and the ACT will work together to develop this fund.

AC-4

The congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover, be dissolved; and

AC-5

With its assigned mission completed, the Administrative Commission be dissolved.

FINAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HANOVER, EAST HANOVER September 9, 2025

An Administrative Commission was established to walk alongside the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover in 2020. The AC, chaired by the Rev. Sarah Cairatti and served faithfully by Richard Kaller, Carol Corea, and the Rev. Timothy Clarkson, attended the Session Meetings of the church. Reviewing membership, possibilities, and finances, over time, that discernment process revealed the church was not sustainable.

Following a congregational meeting, the final worship service at the church was held on June 9, 2024. Since that time, the AC and Presbytery have explored options for the property. Ultimately, and with many thanks to Presbytery attorney, Tania Nameth, the sale of the property closed on August 25, 2025, with Township of East Hanover purchasing the church, cemetery, parish house building and parking lot, and manse for \$2,500,000.00. The Township assumes responsibility for the cemetery and plans to create a much needed Senior Center on the property where the church house office building has been. This repurposed space will remain a center of the neighborhood, nurturing and serving the needs of the community for generations.

The AC is grateful to the Presbytery, the Session and congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover, the Rev. Tom Brown (who served as moderator of the Session for many years), Tania Nameth, and the Township for sharing this process together faithfully.

Acknowledging the responsibility of being stewards of the legacy of this congregation of over three hundred years in ministry, and given the status of the church and the property at this time, the AC respectfully recommends to the Presbytery that:

1. The remaining amount from the proceeds of the sale of the property, after accounting for expenses and revenues (\$2,314,618), be allocated in accordance with recommendations from the Budget and Finance Committee and ACT as follows:
 - a. Presbytery Mission and Ministry Fund: \$1,500,000.00
 - b. Mission Opportunities in the East Hanover Area:
 - i. Homeless Solutions: \$80,000.00
 - ii. Interfaith Food Pantry: \$20,000.00
 - iii. Nourish NJ \$10,000.00
 - iv. Winds of the Spirit \$10,000.00
 - c. The Presbytery Cemetery Fund: \$20,000.00
 - d. The Presbytery Capital Loan Fund: \$20,000.00
 - e. The remaining amount is meant to be developed into a fund that supports projects inspiring new life and resurrection, things like new church development, transformational projects, and new ministry ideas in presbytery churches. That amount being \$654,618.00;

2. The congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Hanover, East Hanover, be dissolved; and
3. With its assigned mission completed, the Administrative Commission be dissolved.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Sarah Cairatti and the Members of the Administrative Commission

ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATING TEAM REPORT

September 9, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

ACT-1

The ACT recommends the following:

That the Presbytery approve the amended Commissioned Ruling Elder Policy.

Background: The CRE policy was amended to include a field placement/internship component.

Items for Action:

ACT-2

The ACT recommends the following to the Presbytery:

That the Presbytery Bylaws be amended with the following changes. This is the first reading of the changes to the Bylaws. The Presbytery will vote at the November meeting on these changes: Section 2.3 to include the following: and ordinarily thereafter while holding membership in a church within the Presbytery.

Background: This allows for elder moderators to be voting members of the presbytery after their term is completed. This takes in the tradition of legacy presbyteries and a practice we have been using since late 2021.

Section 2.4 to state: Quorum: The quorum for stated and special meetings of the Presbytery shall be eight minister member commissioners and eight ruling elder commissioners, for a total of sixteen commissioners, representing eight different congregations.

Background: This does not change the quorum only clarifies who makes up a quorum. Previous statement was ambiguous.

Section 2.7 – The Manual of Operations may be amended by the majority vote of the members at a stated meeting or at a special meeting called for such purpose.

Background: The Manual of Operations is not one big document but a collection of policies and procedures. The Book of Order allows for the collection of policies and procedures.

ACT-3

The ACT recommends the following to the Presbytery:

That the Presbytery approve the amended Child, Youth, and Adults with Vulnerabilities Protection Policy.

Background : Changes in the Book Order now require that Adults with Vulnerabilities be included in the policy. This complies with the Book of Order requirement.

ACT-4

The ACT recommends the following to the Presbytery:

That the Presbytery approve the revised position description for the Administration and Coordinating Commission (aka ACT).

Background: As part of the recent realignment, it was determined that the Property and Insurance Team would function more effectively within the ACT. The commission-level responsibilities previously held by the Property and Insurance Team are now incorporated into the Administration and Coordination (A&C) Commission. In recognition of this expanded scope, the commission name will be updated to the Administration and Coordinating Commission, aligning with similar naming conventions such as the transition from the Committee on Ministry to the Commission on Ministry. The revised position description reflects this merger and includes the responsibilities of Property and Insurance.

ACT-5

The ACT recommends the following to the Presbytery:

That the Presbytery approve the Covenant Agreement between Sanctuary + Seed and the Presbytery.

Background: The GA Office of New Church Development/1001 Worshiping Communities recommends that each new worshiping community establish a covenant agreement with its sponsoring organizations. In response, the Church Development Team collaborated with the leadership of Sanctuary + Seed to develop this covenant document.

ACT-6

The ACT recommends the following to the Presbytery:

That the Presbytery approve an overture to the 2026 General Assembly requesting a clarification of the Book of Order concerning the use Administrative Leave outside of a disciplinary process.

Background: Administrative leave is intended as a neutral tool, not a disciplinary action, allowing space for discernment in situations affecting both the minister and the presbytery.

While historically restricted to cases of alleged sexual abuse, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission has recognized that presbyteries may establish broader rules for its use. In Remedial Case 2024-02, The GA PJC notes the section does "suggest an amendment to this section would provide new and needed flexibility for a presbytery to use the same instrument for matters such as pastoral care."

ACT-7

The ACT recommends the following to the Presbytery:

That the Presbytery approve the Communications Coordinator position description.

Background: The Discernment Report Action Steps included hiring a communications person to assist the presbytery in developing a communication strategy and to tell the story of the ministry within congregations and presbytery.

ACT-8

The ACT recommends the following to the Presbytery:

That the Presbytery approve a per capita of \$44 an increase of 50 cents to cover the cost of the increase of the General Assembly Per Capita.

ACT-9

The ACT recommends the following to the Presbytery:

That the Presbytery receive the 2026 budget for a first reading in September and approval in November.

Background to the budget will be presented at the September meeting.

Items for Report:

The ACT reports the following from their May 27, 2025 meeting:

ACT-10

The ACT reviewed the May 13 Hybrid Presbytery meeting and discussed plans for the September 9 Hybrid Presbytery meeting.

ACT-11

The Treasurer reported the Per Capita and the Financial position for the first five months was where we expected.

ACT-12

Moderator Pete Peterson discussed the upcoming plans for budget planning. He also reported the Annual Investment review with the New Covenant Trust Company took place on April 29.

ACT-13

The Funds Development Team reported that the Financial Sustainability Project continues.

ACT-14

The ACT approved pursuing the transfer of the deed to Old Clove Cemetery to the Sussex County Historical Society who had expressed interest in the purchase of Old Clove Church Cemetery.

ACT-15

The ACT approved the lease agreement between the Wharton United Community Church and the Morris Community Church - Church of God of Prophecy to rent space including the sanctuary for \$2500 per month beginning June 1, 2025.

Background: All congregations must have presbytery approval to lease property that includes the sanctuary. G-4.02 CHURCH PROPERTY

b. Leasing Congregational Property - A congregation shall not lease its real property used for purposes of worship, or lease for more than five years any of its other real property, without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the congregation.

The ACT reports the following from their August 16, 2025 meeting:

ACT-16

Authorized the ACT moderators to call a special meeting of the Presbytery for the purpose of examining a candidate for ministry if requested by the COM.

ACT-17

Reviewed the following documents that have been reformatted and have had minor edits.

The Presbytery of the Highlands Anti-Racism Policy

The Presbytery of Highlands Sexual Misconduct Policy including the Boundary Training Policy

Committee on Representation position description

Nominating Committee position description

Young Leader Formation Team position description

Ecclesiastical Officers position description

Electronic Meeting of the Presbytery

Anti-Harassment Policy

Background: Part of the Discernment Report includes an alignment of the Presbytery's documents, policies and procedures. This review of the documents are part of the alignment. Some minor editorial changes were made to the documents.

ACT-18

Approved the sale of Oxford 2nd church property which included the Corporate Resolution granting Rev. Kathi Heath, moderator of the Administrative Commission, the authority to sign the closing documents on behalf of the Presbytery.

ACT-19

The ACT continued their discussion on the realignment of structure and documents/policies/procedures. More information will be coming soon.

ACT-20

The treasurer, Elder Becky Moody, reviewed the year-to-date financial position of the presbytery. Currently the financial position is on target.

ACT-21

The ACT approved the Personnel Committee recommendation of providing a 2.7% COLA for the presbytery staff in 2026.

ACT-22

The Stated Clerk/Resource Staff reported that the presbytery sent a commission of 16 youth and adults to Triennium. The team traveled with youth and adults from Northeast Presbytery and Hudson River Presbytery. The triennium participants will be leading worship at the presbytery meeting.

ACT-23

The Stated Clerk/Resource Staff reported that the New Jersey Presbyteries and Long Island Presbytery are providing Preaching the Word in the World for Ruling Elders and Presiding at the Table for Ruling Elders who have completed the Preaching course and are on the pulpit supply list.

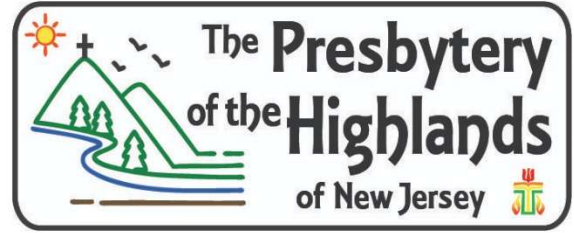
ACT-24

The Presbytery Leader shared the transition and work of the New Jersey Council of Religious Leaders (NJCORL).

ACT-25

The Presbytery Leader reported that she served communion at the Art of Transitional Ministry at Zephyr Point, PCUSA camp and conference center, Lake Tahoe, Nevada in July. She also served on the faculty teaching Conflict Management, Systems Theory and Financial Management.

BYLAWS FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY



ARTICLE 1

Organization and Mission

Name and Organizational Structure: The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey (hereinafter the “Presbytery” or the “Corporation”) is a nonprofit Corporation organized and existing under the laws of incorporation of the State of New Jersey under the provisions of the Title 16 Statute.

Bounds: The Presbytery is the corporate expression of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and consists of all the churches and teaching elders located in Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties, Somerset County excluding Kingston and North Plainfield, and in Passaic County, the towns of West Milford, Ringwood, Bloomingdale, Wanaque, and Pompton Lakes, New Jersey.

Tax Status and Purpose: The Presbytery is an organization formed exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

Function: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (the most recent edition), and the Bylaws and the Manual of Operations shall be the effective rules of procedure for the Presbytery. The role and responsibilities of the Presbytery are detailed in the Book of Order, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Interpretation: These Bylaws shall be interpreted, to the extent possible, to maintain consistency with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including any amendments thereto. To the extent these Bylaws cannot be interpreted in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including any amendments thereto, the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall control the proceedings of the Presbytery.

ARTICLE II

Membership and Meetings

Membership: Membership in the Presbytery shall be consistent with the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) and the Presbytery’s Manual of Operations.

Roll: The roll of the Presbytery shall consist of all minister members of the Presbytery and each of the member congregations.

Each ruling elder elected moderator or vice moderator shall be enrolled as a member of the Presbytery for his/her term of office, and ordinarily thereafter while holding membership in a church within the Presbytery. Ruling elders elected to the Administration and Coordination Team, or moderator of a Standing Committee shall be enrolled as a member of Presbytery for her/his term of office. Certified Christian Educators who meet the provisions of the Book of Order shall be enrolled as members of the Presbytery.

Quorum: The quorum for stated and special meetings of the Presbytery shall be eight minister member commissioners and eight ruling elder commissioners, for a total of sixteen commissioners, representing eight different congregations.

Meetings: The Presbytery shall hold at least quarterly stated meetings with the time, date, and place to be set by the Administration and Coordinating Team. Announcement of the meeting and its location and the agenda shall be sent to churches at least two weeks prior to the meeting. All business appropriate to the Presbytery may be conducted at a stated meeting.

Special Meetings: A special meeting of the Presbytery shall be called under the following conditions: The moderator shall call a special meeting at the request, or with the concurrence, of two teaching elder members and two ruling elders, the ruling elders representing different churches. Should the moderator be unable to act, any three teaching elders and three ruling elders, the ruling elders representing different churches, may call a special meeting. The Synod may direct the presbytery to convene a special meeting for the transaction of designated business. Notice of a special meeting shall be sent not less than ten days in advance to each teaching elder and to the session of every congregation. The notice shall set out the purpose of the meeting and no other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted.

Electronic Meetings: Electronic meetings of the Presbytery shall be conducted under the provisions in the Presbytery Manual of Operations:

Manual of Operations: The Manual of Operations shall define the membership, terms, and responsibilities of all elected and appointed bodies of the Presbytery. The Manual of Operations may be amended by the majority vote of the members at a stated meeting or at a special meeting called for such purpose.

ARTICLE III

Officers

The Officers of the Presbytery shall be Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer. The specific responsibilities and terms of these officers are detailed in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (the newest edition), and/or the Manual of Operations of the Presbytery.

Moderator: The Moderator is elected for a term of one year and presides at all meetings of the Presbytery.

Vice-Moderator: The Vice-Moderator is elected for a term of one year. In the event of resignation or death the Vice- Moderator shall assume the office and serve out the remainder of that term and shall be eligible to be elected for a full term as moderator. The Vice-moderator may preside at meetings of the presbytery at the invitation of the moderator.

Stated Clerk: The Stated Clerk is elected by the presbytery as specified by the terms described in the Manual of Operations.

Treasurer: The Treasurer must be a ruling elder or minister. The Treasurer is elected for a term specified by the terms described in the Manual of Operations.

Officers of the Corporation: Officers of the Corporation shall be the President, Secretary, and Treasurer. All officers shall be elected by the Presbytery for a term as specified in the Bylaws or Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE IV

Teams, Committees and Entities of the Presbytery

The mission and ministry of the Presbytery shall be carried out by teams, committees, and entities as required by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Bylaws, and/or Manual of Operations. As specified in these Bylaws, teams, committees, and entities of the Presbytery may be commissioned to carry out specific responsibilities on behalf of the Presbytery. The Manual of Operations provides specific details on how ministry and mission of teams and committees are carried out in the Presbytery.

Teams, committees, and entities: In accordance with the Book of Order the Presbytery shall maintain a Permanent Judicial Commission and a Committee on Representation. Various Teams and Commissions will provide the required functions of the Presbytery. Delegation of Presbytery powers to Teams or Commissions will be noted in their descriptions in the Manual of Operations.

The Presbytery may create or eliminate additional teams, committees, and entities as it deems appropriate. Provision for establishing and organizing teams and committees is described in the Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE V

Nominations and Elections

The Committee on Representation shall be consulted to ensure that nominees represent the diversity of the Presbytery.

The Nominating Committee shall nominate persons to all elected positions except for the Nominating Committee, the Treasurer, the Stated Clerk, and the staff of the Presbytery. These elections will follow the process as listed in the Manual of Operations.

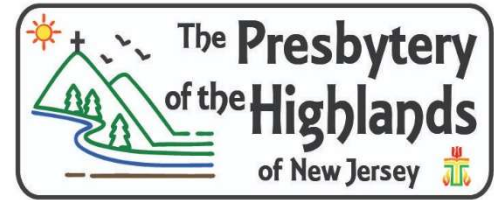
If an elected commissioner to the Synod or General Assembly is unable to serve, an alternate Minister, ruling elder, or Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) is not available, and a stated meeting of the Presbytery will not occur prior to the scheduled meeting of the Synod or General Assembly, the Nominating Committee shall, in consultation with the Moderator and the Stated Clerk, select another commissioner to attend.

The Presbytery, as specified in the Manual of Operations, shall nominate persons to serve on the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENTS

6.1 These Bylaws may be amended, subject to the laws of the state of New Jersey and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), by approval of the Presbytery at any stated or special meeting called for this purpose at which a quorum is present, by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, provided that a full reading of the proposed changes or a printed distribution of the same shall have been given at the previous stated meeting at which a quorum was present. These Bylaws may not be amended contrary to or so as to not include the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). or in violation of the laws of the state of The Presbytery of the Highlands

**CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND ADULTS WITH
VULNERABILITIES PROTECTION POLICY
THE PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY**



“Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God.”
~ Mark 10:14

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves...”
~Proverbs 31:8

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Children and Youth

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Policy Purpose

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey is committed to providing an environment that is a safe place for Children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities (also known as “vulnerable persons”), and that will protect those who may be at risk due to various factors from any abuse when they are involved in Presbytery-related activities. Highlands Presbytery adopts these policies and procedures not only to maximize safety and prevent abuse against vulnerable persons from occurring within its Presbytery community, but also to guide and protect volunteers and employees from unwarranted allegations of such abuse.

Terms and Definitions

Adults with Vulnerabilities - 18 years or older person without the developmental or cognitive capacity to consent; who is unable to make, communicate, or carry out decisions concerning his or her well-being due to physical or mental illness, disability, or deficiency. Such persons retain all their civil and constitutional rights unless some of those rights have been restricted by court action.

Child or Youth – Persons under 18 years old and considered a minor under the law.

Abuse of Child, Youth, or Adult with Vulnerabilities (“vulnerable persons”) - An act committed by a parent, caregiver, or person in a position of trust (even though he or she may not care for the vulnerable person on a daily basis) which is not accidental and which harms or threatens harm to a child’s physical or mental health or welfare. Types of abuse may include physical abuse, including physical injury or threat of injury; physical neglect, such as failure to provide necessary care to a child; sexual abuse; mental abuse or neglect; emotional abuse; spiritual abuse; and exploitation for personal benefit. Abuse of children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities includes, but is not limited to:

Neglect of Basic Needs - A form of abuse. Denial of food, water, cleanliness, clothing, and sleep are not appropriate means of discipline.

Physical Abuse - Any physical force applied by an adult or older youth in a position of care or authority to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. Physical force (hitting, spanking, shaking, shoving, etc.) is not to be used by leaders in our programs.

Sexual Abuse –

Book of Order (D-7.0901) Sexual abuse is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone without the capacity to consent, or any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position. Sexual abuse is contrary to the Scriptures and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and is therefore always an offense for the purpose of discipline.

Emotional Abuse - Inappropriately belittling, hateful, or angry words and/or actions directed toward vulnerable persons. Discipline by humiliation is also emotional abuse.

Exploitation: When a person is taken advantage of for personal benefit in either financial or legal means.

Spiritual Abuse- Using religious references to shame or by guilt to motivate a vulnerable person into a particular action or behavior.

Employee – Any person who works for salary or wages at Highlands Presbytery.

Volunteer – Any person not employed by Highlands Presbytery who, at any time during the year, teaches, supervises, or helps with activities involving vulnerable persons, or is in the presence of children, youth, or adults with vulnerabilities.

Leader – An adult designated by Highlands Presbytery or by a sponsoring organization to have responsibility for vulnerable persons. The adult must be a minimum of 18 years of age. Leaders of overnight trips must be at least 21 years of age. It is suggested that leaders be a minimum of four years older than the children or youth they are supervising.

Presbytery Activity or Sponsored Activity - Includes any and all gatherings that arise from any worship, educational, childcare, fellowship, administrative, pastoral, mission or recreational event generated or organized by Highlands Presbytery. Whether within the bounds or outside the bounds of Highlands Presbytery.

Volunteer Ministry – Includes any Presbytery sponsored activity engaged in by a volunteer. Screening –includes mandatory background checks as specified in a council’s policies.

Staff: Background Requirements

Additional terms regarding adults with vulnerabilities may be found in the material following.

Applicants for Employment or Volunteer Opportunities at Highlands Presbytery

Applicants for full-time or part-time paid employment at Highlands Presbytery will be required to provide, complete or undergo the following:

- An Employment Application which will include information regarding past employment and prior convictions for crimes;
- A specific statement that the individual has no prior conviction for abuse or sexual misconduct against any vulnerable persons; and
- A reference check covering, where possible, the two immediate past employers, or personal references unrelated to the applicant if no information can be obtained from past employers.
- Prior to hiring an applicant, Highlands Presbytery will obtain a criminal record report for that individual. Every five years, Highlands Presbytery will perform national criminal database searches and national sex offender registry searches on existing employees, and each employee shall be required to execute any documents that Highlands Presbytery might request for such purpose. Any individual who has lived outside New Jersey in the last five years may be subject to additional county or state court search.
- Upon being hired, each new employee will be required to sign an acknowledgement that he or she has received a copy of the Highlands Presbytery Child, Youth, and Adults with Vulnerabilities Protection Policy, understands it and will comply with its terms.
- Each new employee will be provided orientation and training on child abuse, including its recognition and prevention, as well as on the terms and conditions of this policy.

Any candidate for employment who has a past conviction of or pending proceeding addressing an allegation of abuse or neglect against vulnerable persons cannot be employed by Highlands Presbytery. Conviction for any of the following will automatically disqualify an individual from employment: drug-related, pedophilic behavior, incest, rape, assaults, indecent exposure, pornography, sodomy or abuse of a minor.

Volunteers: Background Requirements

Volunteers working with vulnerable persons for a Presbytery Activity will be required to provide, complete or undergo the following:

- An Volunteer Ministry Application which will include information regarding past employment and prior convictions for crimes;
- A specific statement that the individual has no prior conviction for abuse or sexual misconduct against vulnerable persons; and
- Prior to becoming a volunteer working with vulnerable persons, Highlands Presbytery will obtain a background check for that individual. Every three years, Highlands Presbytery will perform national criminal database searches and national sex offender registry searches on existing volunteers and each volunteer shall be required to execute any documents that Highlands Presbytery might request for such purpose. Any individual who has lived outside New Jersey in the last five years may be subject to additional county or state court search
- Each new volunteer, prior to beginning any volunteer role, will be required to sign an acknowledgement that he or she has received a copy of the Highlands Presbytery Child, Youth, and Adults with Vulnerabilities Protection Policy, understands it, and will comply with its terms.
- Each new volunteer will be provided orientation and training on child abuse, including its recognition and prevention, as well as on the terms and conditions of this policy.

Any candidate for volunteer service who has a past conviction of or pending proceeding related to an allegation of the abuse or neglect of vulnerable persons MAY not work with vulnerable persons at Highlands Presbytery. Refusal to complete the Volunteer Application process or a conviction for any of the following will automatically disqualify an individual from volunteer service with vulnerable persons: drug-related activity, pedophilic behavior, incest, rape, assaults, indecent exposure, pornography, sodomy, or abuse of a minor.

Leaders of other groups that involve children, youth, or adults with vulnerabilities using Highlands Presbytery's facilities or hold events on Presbytery property will also be required to read the Policy and sign the Volunteer Acknowledgement Statement.

Code of Conduct

1. Staff and volunteers are required to adhere to the Highlands Presbytery Child, Youth, and Adults With Vulnerabilities Protection Policy guidelines in all their interactions with children and youth.
2. Staff and volunteers will respect the rights of vulnerable persons not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable or that disregard their right to say no.
3. Staff and volunteers may not discipline vulnerable persons by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
4. Physical restraint is used only in situations necessary to protect the vulnerable person, other participants, or staff from harm.
5. While supervising vulnerable persons participating in Highlands Presbytery programs, staff and volunteers should know where participants are at all times.
6. Restroom supervision: Whenever possible, volunteers will make sure any restroom used is not occupied by any suspicious or unknown individual before allowing vulnerable persons to use the facilities. Always send children in pairs with a volunteer. The staff or volunteer, will stand in the doorway while vulnerable persons are using the restroom. This policy allows for both the person's privacy and protection for the staff or volunteer (not being alone with a vulnerable person). Staff and volunteers shall strongly encourage parents to take vulnerable persons to the restroom whenever possible.
7. Diapering and potty training should be done primarily by paid caregivers. Volunteers may be asked to help in certain situations and should follow posted nursery guidelines when performing diapering.
8. Staff and volunteers should be alert to the physical and emotional state of vulnerable persons. Any signs of injury or possible abuse of vulnerable persons must be reported according to the Highlands Presbytery Child, Youth, and Adults with Vulnerabilities Protection Policy.
9. Staff and volunteers are discouraged from being alone with vulnerable persons without parental permission.
10. Under no circumstances should staff or volunteers release vulnerable persons to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other individual authorized by the parent or guardian.
11. Consuming, using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while working or volunteering with vulnerable persons is prohibited.
12. Being impaired by legally prescribed drugs while working or volunteering with vulnerable persons is prohibited.
13. Possessing or using any weapons or firearms while working or volunteering with vulnerable persons is prohibited.
14. Smoking or use of tobacco in the presence of vulnerable persons or parents while working or volunteering is prohibited.
15. Profanity, inappropriate jokes and media, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of vulnerable persons or parents are prohibited.
16. Staff and volunteers will be mindful of the content on any portable electronic device, social networking pages, or other electronic media that might be accessible to any vulnerable persons.

17. Staff and volunteer adult and youth leaders shall wear appropriate dress when volunteering with vulnerable persons.
18. Movies used in all Presbytery settings shall meet the voluntary movie rating system guidelines established by the Motion Picture Association of America for age-appropriate content.
19. Staff and volunteers may not date or be romantically involved with program participants or church members who are younger than 18 years of age.
20. Staff and volunteers are required to read, sign, and adhere to all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and will attend training sessions on the subject.
21. Staff and volunteers are required to report any concerns or suspicions regarding their observations of any individual's interaction with vulnerable persons. Except for concerns related to alleged or potential abuse, which require mandated specific immediate reports (see REPORTING, Appendix A), these concerns may be reported to the individual. If the concerns are not alleviated by a change in the individual's behavior, a second report must be made to the pastor, clerk of session, or Stated Clerk.
22. Leaders will always give parents advance notice and full information regarding the event in which their child, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities will be participating.
23. If it is necessary for an adult to take a vulnerable person home after an event, all staff and volunteers shall abide by safe driving laws when transporting such persons. Driving record history shall be obtained on all youth leaders and volunteers. An effort should be made to contact the family and inform them of the situation before transporting the vulnerable person.

Please note that training for the care of adults with vulnerabilities is not required by this policy, but it is available and strongly recommended for any persons who work with adults with vulnerabilities. You can find "Sexual Abuse Awareness Training for Vulnerable Adults Programs" through MinistrySafe at <https://ministrysafe.com/training-pva/>

General Procedures

Supervision: Two-Leader/Open-Door Policy

Whenever possible, any adult who is present in a Presbytery sponsored activity for child, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities should be accompanied by another adult. Highlands Presbytery employees and volunteers should not, during a Highlands Presbytery program, be alone with a single vulnerable person where they cannot be observed by others.

In order to avoid situations where an individual is alone in a room with a vulnerable person, all such activities should be supervised by at least two adult leaders. Whenever possible, these adults should be unrelated. The presence of two leaders is to protect vulnerable persons against situations in which abuse might occur, and to protect leaders against false allegations of abuse or neglect.

Classrooms, childcare rooms, and any area in which programs for vulnerable persons are taking place may be visited without prior notice by Presbytery staff, parents, or other volunteer church workers. No windows may ever be totally blocked so as to prevent visual observation into the classroom.

In the event that two leaders cannot be present in the room, such that one leader is alone in a room with one or more vulnerable persons, a door or half-door from the room must be left open. The leader should not position himself or herself in the room such that other adults passing in the hallway cannot see him or her.

Ratios

Maintain appropriate adult-to-vulnerable adult ratios for effective supervision. The optimal ratio can depend on the group size, ages, and individual needs, and may be subject to legal requirements, while maintaining the two-leader Rule, meaning two or more responsible adults supervise activities with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

The recommended adult/volunteer-to-child/youth ratio, is 1:6 for elementary age, 1:8 for Middle School and 1:10 for Senior High ages, gender balance is recommended.

Parental/Guardian Consent

Children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities must obtain parental or guardian permission for involvement in Presbytery sponsored activities or programs that involve travel away from the any Presbytery physical facilities.

“Six Month” Rule for Volunteers

A volunteer must be a member of a congregation of Highlands Presbytery, or have regularly attended that congregation, for six months before working with children, youth, or adults with vulnerabilities. This requirement does not apply to paid staff or volunteers involved in activities in which their own children are present. The Administrative and Coordinating Team (ACT) shall have the authority to waive this six-month rule upon request if deemed appropriate.

Policy Review

The provisions of this Policy shall be reviewed annually by the ACT. Any proposed changes to the Policy will be brought to the attention of the ACT for its input, if any, prior to such changes being recommended to the Presbytery.

Off-Site Trips & Events

Permission Forms

Parent/Guardian Permission Forms and Medical Consent Forms must be completed prior to all trips. The two-adult rule must be followed throughout the trip with any foreseeable exceptions clearly stated and approved in advance by the parent or guardian. The total number of adults on

each trip will be adjusted according to the requirements of the planned activities. Under no circumstances may one adult alone take or accompany vulnerable persons on an overnight outing.

Ratios

Maintain appropriate adult-to-vulnerable adult ratios for effective supervision. The optimal ratio can depend on the group size, ages, and individual needs, and may be subject to legal requirements, while maintaining the two-leader Rule, meaning two or more responsible adults supervise activities with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

The required adult to child/youth ratio for chaperones for any ministry with children or youth shall be 1:6 for elementary age, 1:8 for Middle School and 1:10 for Senior High. Gender balance is required.

Rooming Arrangements

- Rooming arrangements should provide for vulnerable persons of the same sex to room together and adults of the same sex to room together.
- When possible, adults' rooms shall be next to the rooms of vulnerable persons and these persons may be checked on during the night.
- Ordinarily, adults should not share rooms with vulnerable persons. An individual minor may share a room with an individual adult if the two are related (for example, parent/child), or if written permission has been granted prior to the event by a parent or guardian.
- In situations where one large sleeping area is provided, at least one adult of the same sex shall sleep in proximity of vulnerable persons of the same sex.

Medical

- Each vulnerable person, adult volunteer, and staff must submit a completed medical/insurance form. Each minor's forms must have a parent or guardian's signature.
- Whenever possible, all activities with vulnerable persons shall have a staff or volunteer adult leader with current-certification first aid/CPR training.
- Group leaders should have a copy of all medical forms for overnight or off-site events. These forms will be kept on the event site for the duration of the event.
- First Aid supplies will be available on the event site. All workers will be informed of the location of First Aid supplies/equipment and shall have access to information concerning specific medical conditions and concerns of participants.
- A written report will be completed in the case of any accident, medical emergency or injury.

Driving Rules/Travel

- All drivers of Children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities must be over 24. In situations where this is not possible, parent permission shall be obtained before the trip and vehicles shall travel together.
- When one vehicle is used for an event, the two-leader rule still applies unless parental permission is obtained prior to the trip. When several vehicles are taken for an event and two leaders are not available for every vehicle, keeping the other vehicle in sight at regular intervals is an acceptable substitution for the two-leader rule.
- Travel arrangements for off-campus events will be coordinated through the Presbytery.
- All adult drivers of Children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities will be screened through a driving history search. A valid driver's license will be required.
- All vehicles should remain parked throughout the duration of the activity except for transporting Children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities, and obtaining supplies.
- Seat belts will be provided for all passengers.

Outside Groups

All leaders of non-Highlands Presbytery sponsored groups and events that use Highlands Presbytery facilities and supervise vulnerable persons are expected to adhere to these policies. Upon receipt of the policy from Highlands Presbytery, the leaders must review the Child, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities Protection Policy and sign the Outside Group Leaders Release Form to acknowledge their review of it and to confirm their agreement to follow the policy and are expected to conduct their own due diligence in this regard.

Appendix A – Reporting

Children and Youth

Reporting: here is information from www.preventchildabuse.nj.org

Report Abuse

Who is responsible for reporting suspected child abuse in New Jersey?

In New Jersey, ANY person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected has a legal responsibility to report it to the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS). A concerned caller does not need proof to report an allegation of child abuse and can make the report anonymously. Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect according to the law or to comply with the provisions of the law is a disorderly person and subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or up to six months imprisonment, or both.

How do I report child abuse in New Jersey?

Call New Jersey's Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 1-877-NJ ABUSE (652-2873) (TTY/TDD use 1-800-835-5510)

They are available and will respond 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If a child is in immediate danger, you should call 911.

Do callers have immunity from civil or criminal liability?

Any person who, in good faith, makes a report of child abuse or neglect or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action. Calls can be placed to the hotline anonymously.

What happens when I call the Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline?

The hotline is answered by trained caseworkers who know how to respond to reports of child abuse/neglect. This caseworker may ask you about:

Who: The child and parent/caregiver's name, age and address and the name of the alleged perpetrator and that person's relationship to the child.

What: Type and frequency of alleged abuse/neglect, current or previous injuries to the child and what caused you to become concerned.

When: When the alleged abuse/neglect occurred and when you learned of it.

Where: Where the incident occurred, where the child is now and whether the alleged perpetrator has access to the child.

How: How urgent the need is for intervention and whether there is a likelihood of imminent danger for the child

What happens after I make the call?

When a report indicates that a child may be at risk, the Division of Youth and Family Services will promptly investigate the allegations of child abuse and neglect within 24 hours of receipt of the report.

What if I tell Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey about my concerns?

While Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey values the health and safety of children — we, like all NJ citizens, are legally required to forward concerns about suspected abuse to the Division of Youth and Family Services. They are the only investigative and protective bodies of the State of NJ responsible for handling them.

We all care about children. We urge you to report any concern about the welfare of a child to DYFS, the legal authorities responsible for investigating suspected situations of abuse. You should call 1-877-NJ-ABUSE and let them know the details of your concern. They will take the matter seriously and gather information that is in the best interest of the child.

Confidentiality

All communications shall be conducted in as confidential a manner as is compatible with the reporting of an allegation.

Parental Notification

If an incident has occurred on church property during a presbytery-sponsored event, the parents of any minor involved in any allegation of abuse shall be immediately notified.

Potential Responses

Upon any report of potential or alleged child abuse by an employee or volunteer of WJP, any individual accused of such conduct may be temporarily relieved of any duties involving youth or children pending an appropriate investigation.

Adults with Vulnerabilities

There are multiple offices within the [Department of Human Services \(DHS\)](#) that exist to protect adults against abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Adult Protective Services (APS): <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/doas/services/a-k/aps/>

Adult Protective Services provides investigations of adults living in the community who have reported experiencing abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. If someone you know is 18 years of age or older, contact your county APS office to file a referral.

Toll-Free Number: (855) TELL APS | (855) 835-5277

A vulnerable adult is:

Age 18 years or older,

Residing in the community (in a private residence or unlicensed, non-institutional setting),

Due to physical or mental illness, disability or deficiency, lacks sufficient understanding or capacity to make, communicate, or carry out decisions concerning his or her well-being, and the subject of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Abuse comes in physical, mental, or sexual forms and can have physical or emotional signs.

Neglect is when a primary caregiver fails to provide adequate assistance that the individual depends on— such as food, clothing, shelter, or necessary medical care.

Self-Neglect is a non purposeful act where an individual fails to meet their own essential physical, psychological, or social needs, which threatens the individual's health, safety, and well-being.

Exploitation is when someone takes advantage of the individual for personal benefit in either financial or legal means.

WHO ARE Mandated Reporters? In most states there are “mandatory reporter” statutes applying to persons providing services to seniors or adults with disabilities. Mandatory reporters in New Jersey are: Health care professionals, Law enforcement officers, Firefighters, Paramedics, Emergency medical technicians

APS investigation

An APS investigation is a thorough assessment of a vulnerable adult who is experiencing

maltreatment. Within 72 business hours of receipt of a report, a face-to-face meeting with the adult by a trained APS social worker is required. During this meeting the vulnerable adult is interviewed in private. Every effort is made to determine the decision-making ability of the adult. Other individuals or agencies that have knowledge of the situation may also be interviewed. When the investigation is complete a report is submitted to the APS Supervisor who will then consult with the social worker and determine if the adult is the subject of abuse, neglect or exploitation. All information generated by the investigation is confidential

Make sure to provide the following information, but please note that you can make this report anonymously if you so choose:

The individual's name, address, age/DOB, or other identifying info

The nature and extent of the suspected abuse, neglect, self-neglect or exploitation

Description of the situation, any important identifiers of the alleged abuser, or other dangers in their home environment

WHY Should you report? Most seniors and adults with disabilities live independently without assistance. However, some face abuse or neglect by others and need trained professionals to advocate on their behalf. Others may simply be struggling with routine activities and benefit from in-home support services to maintain their health and independence. APS helps by assessing each individual's unique needs, then developing a service plan to maintain his/her safety, health and independence.

WHAT HAPPENS After I make a report? APS will investigate the suspected abuse, neglect, self-neglect or exploitation, and connect the individual with support services if the individual wishes to receive them. We understand that every adult individual has the right to self-determination; APS cannot force anyone to accept help (except in a limited set of circumstances) if they do not wish to receive it. APS does not have jurisdiction in facilities. We also cannot control whether or not law enforcement opens an investigation. Due to strict confidentiality rules, APS may not be able to provide details of an investigation.

CONFIDENTIALITY All records and communications related reports, evaluations, or services provided are confidential. APS may only share information when directed by court order.

Adults retain all their civil and constitutional rights unless some of those rights have been restricted by court action

WHAT IF I'm not sure? Do you just have a "feeling" about a situation but can't verify the details? APS professionals are trained to help in these situations. Based on your report, the agency will assess the situation and determine how best to respond. Your local APS agency can determine the best course of action in such situations.

Appendix B - Indications of Abuse

CHILD and YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

INDICATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

What is an “abused, neglected, or dependent child”?

The definition of an abused, neglected, or dependent child is very broad. It includes any child under eighteen or person over the age of 18 who is without the mental capacity to consent whose parents or other person is responsible for his/her care:

Inflicts or allows to be inflicted, or creates a substantial risk of serious physical injury not by accident;

Creates or allows to be created serious emotional damage;

Uses or allows to be used cruel or grossly inappropriate procedures or devices to modify behavior;

Neglects or refuses to provide care, supervision, or discipline necessary for her/his health;

Abandons such child or allows such child to live in an environment injurious to the child’s welfare;

Is unable to provide for care or supervision and lacks an appropriate child care alternative; or

Commits or allows to be committed any act of sexual exploitation or any sexual act upon a child in violation of the law.

How can children be at risk in a “safe” place like church?

There may be several reasons children can be at risk even in “safe” places like a church. The following factors may contribute to the risk in a church setting:

Ready access to children

Institutional surprise: “We’re good people”

Many churches have historically failed to prosecute

Fewer external barriers than other youth-serving organizations

Challenges coordinating child protection strategies

Potential indicators of sexual abuse

A combination or pattern of indicators may indicate the possibility of sexual abuse. Potential indicators include:

Child does not want to go to a certain place or be around a particular person

Child shows sexual knowledge or behavior beyond that expected for his or her age

Child is overly affectionate and seems seductive with peers and adults

Child has recurring genital infections or pain in the genital area

Child has difficulty in walking or sitting

- Child has torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- Child shows reluctance to change clothes
- Child is withdrawn, chronically depressed, or displays infantile behavior
- Child has exceptionally poor peer relationships
- Child is threatened by physical contact
- Child has unexplained money or “gifts”

Signs of Neglect Concerning Adults with Vulnerabilities — Adult Protective Services

What is neglect? Neglect is the failure by a primary caregiver to support the physical, emotional and social needs of the individual dependent for care and well-being. Neglect can include failure to provide adequate food, medications or access to health care professionals.

Physical Neglect

Includes failure to attend to an individual’s medical, hygienic, nutrition and dietary needs such as: dispensing medications, arranging doctors appointments, changing bandages, bathing, grooming, dressing, or failure to provide ample food to maintain health.

Emotional Neglect

Failure to meet the individual’s emotional well-being such as providing adequate opportunities to socialize with friends and family and engage in meaningful activities.

Financial Neglect

Disregarding an individual’s financial obligations such as: failure to pay rent, mortgage, insurances, property taxes, assessments, utility bills and other essential services.

What are some risk factors for neglect?

- Failing to provide needed supervision
- Excessive stress or burden on the caregiver
- Lack of resources and support for the caregiver
- Sudden increase in caregiver responsibilities
- Isolation of caregiver and vulnerable adult

What is financial exploitation?

Financial or material exploitation includes the misuse, mishandling or exploitation of property, possessions, or assets of adults. Examples include: using an individual’s assets without consent, under false pretense, or through coercion and/or manipulation.

What are the signs of financial exploitation?

- Unusual financial activity (e.g. large bank withdrawal or use of ATMs or credit cards not normally used)
- Missing checks or missing bank statements/records
- Address or names have been changed on accounts

Purchases made without the individual's knowledge or consent
Newly authorized signatures on accounts or forged signatures
Evidence that the person fell victim to a scam
Missing belongings
Change to a financial power of attorney
Change of ownership of bank accounts or the deed to a physical property such as a home

What are some risk factors for financial exploitation?

Excessive spending or financial donations
No oversight of finances
Unaware of technology or modern payment methods
Cognitive impairment or dementia
Social isolation

What is self-neglect?

Self-neglect involves older adults or adults with disabilities who cannot meet their own essential physical, psychological or social needs, which threatens their health, safety and well-being. Examples include: failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, and health care for one's own needs.

What are the signs of self-neglect?

Not following up with health care provider
Not taking medication as needed
Doesn't have food, inadequate nutrition
Lives in unsafe housing conditions such as lack of heat, electricity or running water
Has poor personal hygiene
Lacks/won't allow needed care

What are some risk factors for self-neglect?

Recent widow or loss of loved one
Worsening medical problems or a physical disability
Lack of outside contact, isolated from friends and family
Lack of a caregiver
Cognitive impairment, dementia

What is physical or sexual abuse?

Physical abuse may include slapping, hitting, beating, bruising or causing someone physical pain, injury or suffering. This also could include confining an adult against his/her will, such as locking someone in a room or using restraints. Sexual Abuse includes physical force, threats, or coercion to facilitate non-consensual touching, fondling, intercourse or other sexual activities. This is particularly true with vulnerable adults who are unable to give consent or comprehend the nature of these actions.

What are the signs of physical or sexual abuse?

Bruising

Unexplained bruising

Strangulation

Fractures

Burns

Bed sores

Over or under medicating

Not wearing appropriate clothing for the weather (such as heavy clothing when hot)

Controlling access to or the movements of an individual

What are some risk factors?*

Family crisis or family members are suffering from stress

Domestic issues causing violence or conflict in the home

Depression, unusual fears or sudden loss of self-confidence

Noticeable withdrawal and lack of socialization

Loneliness and isolation

*The presence of warning signs doesn't necessarily mean that the adult is being abused.

Standards of Behavior for Ministry with Vulnerable Adults

From the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh: Policy for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (2024)

All persons who work with vulnerable adults are expected to model the patterns of healthy relationships that all God's children deserve. Interactions must meet all the requirements outlined above as well as those that follow, and laypersons and ordained ministers working with vulnerable adults shall take particular care (1) not to influence unduly any person to whom they minister, and (2) to accept only token gifts from those to whom they minister. Ministers who receive gifts shall report those gifts in writing to the Bishop, Clergy in Charge, Senior Warden, Supervisor, or Responsible Person (as appropriate) at the earliest possible time.

DO's — All who minister to vulnerable adults shall:

decline to accept loans or gifts of any kind from those to whom they minister.

decline to be named as a beneficiary or to act as an administrator or executor in a will executed by anyone to whom they minister.

inform the Pastor, Clerk of Session, Presbytery Leader, Stated Clerk, Supervisor, or Responsible Person (as appropriate) of anything that causes them concern for the safety or wellbeing of a person to whom they minister.

All who minister to vulnerable adults are encouraged to:

engage in ongoing spiritual practices, which may include daily prayer, regular participation in corporate worship, and Bible study.

spend time with, and listen carefully to, vulnerable adults, and advocate for their ministry within the Body of Christ.

maintain healthy boundaries when sharing personal information about themselves or others.

All who minister to vulnerable adults may also offer appropriate physical expressions of care and affection, such as handshakes, pats on the forearm or shoulder, or hand-holding during prayer. However, it is best practice always to assess the willingness of the vulnerable adult before initiating physical contact of any kind and to be sensitive to any indication on their part that the contact causes discomfort or embarrassment either before or after the fact.

DON'Ts — Adults shall not under any circumstances:
provide vulnerable adults with non-sacramental alcohol, marijuana, illegal drugs, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography;
arrive under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or misused legal drugs when they are responsible for, or ministering to, a vulnerable adult;
consume non-sacramental alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse legal drugs while they are responsible for, or ministering to, a vulnerable adult;
engage in illegal behavior or permit others to engage in illegal behavior; or
engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit, or secretive relationship or conduct with any vulnerable adult

Appendix C - Employee and Volunteer Ministry Application Form

The Presbytery of The Highlands of New Jersey Volunteer Ministry Application Form

This application form is to be completed by all Highlands Presbytery any volunteers desiring a ministry position involving the supervision or custody of Children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities. This form will be completed on-line or by paper copy at the onset of ministry and resubmitted every three years. It is being used to help the Presbytery provide a safe and secure environment for those vulnerable persons who participate in our programs and use our facilities. This confidential information will be viewed only by those persons designated by the Presbytery as having access to this private information.

Name Date
Last First Middle

Address

Home Phone Cell Phone

Email

Occupation

Places of Employment

How long at this address? If less than five years, give previous addresses/years:

Years Address

Years Address

VOLUNTEERS

(Name of church) member since

List (names and addresses) other churches you attended regularly during the last five years:

What leadership/volunteer experience have you had with Children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities during the last five years? Be specific. Where possible, include dates and places if not at your current church.

Please list other church ministries in which you were or are involved in the last five years.

Confidential Information - to be used only by those authorized by the Presbytery
Auto Insurance Carrier

Do you have any medical training?

Are you currently CPR certified?

Is there any health-related reason that would keep you from effectively working with or cause any potential harm to Children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities? ___ If yes, please explain.

Personal References (Two are required. Must be over 18 years of age and not related to you.)

Name

Address

Phone Relationship

Name

Address

Phone Relationship

The questions listed below are necessary in order to help ensure a safe and secure environment for our children and for the protection of our volunteer and/or paid staff. All information is held strictly confidential. Please answer these questions. If you have any concerns regarding the questions, please consult with the Stated Clerk or with the Presbytery Leader. If any one or more of the questions is marked yes, the application will be reviewed by those persons so designated by the Presbytery.

Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere (no contest) to traffic violation(s) in the last five years? _____

If yes, please describe all convictions for the past five years and any conviction resulting in the suspension of your license, whether or not within the past five years. (Add more pages as needed.)

Have you ever been convicted for the possession, use or sale of drugs? _____

Have you ever been hospitalized or treated for alcohol, substance abuse or mental illness? _____

Have you been arrested for a criminal offense excluding minor traffic violations? _____

Have you been arrested or convicted for any sexually related crimes? _____

Have you ever been denied participation in supervising youth activities? _____

Have you ever been denied participation in any organization? _____

Please explain any yes answers. Add more pages as needed

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

The information contained in this application is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references, churches, or other organizations listed in this application to give you any information they may have (including employer's opinions) regarding my

character and fitness for working with children or youth and I hereby release all such references, churches, or other organizations from liability for damages of whatever kind or nature that may result from furnishing such evaluations to you. I waive any right I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this application.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to follow the Highlands Presbytery Child and Youth Protection Policy and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the

Presbytery. I understand that any violation of this Policy or misrepresentation of information that I have provided may result in termination of employment or volunteer service with children/youth.

I have no past conviction of or pending proceeding addressing an allegation of child abuse or neglect. I authorize that a Criminal and Civil Records Check may be conducted on me and that any information which pertains to any record of convictions contained in police files or any criminal or civil file maintained on me, whether national, state, or local, be released to Highlands Presbytery. In so authorizing, I release any law enforcement agencies, Highlands Presbytery or those individuals receiving the results of the check from any and all liability resulting from such disclosure.

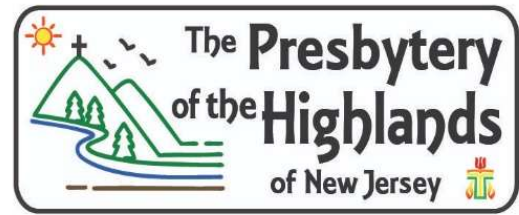
I acknowledge that I have read the Highlands Presbytery Child and Youth Protection Policy and have received a copy for my personal use.

I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT IN EXCHANGE FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AS A HIGHLANDS PRESBYTERY EMPLOYEE OR VOLUNTEER. This is a legally binding agreement, which I have read and understand. I understand that the personal information will be held confidential by the Presbytery.

Applicant's Signature Date

Social Security Number (for Background Check use ONLY)

**ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATING
COMMISSION (A & C COMMISSION)
PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS
OF NEW JERSEY**



Introduction

The Administration and Coordinating Commission (A & C Commission) of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey is commissioned to provide strategic oversight, coordination, and leadership in the Presbytery's governance and operations. The A & C Commission serves as the central body for managing Presbytery functions between meetings and ensuring continuity in mission, administration, and vision.

Purpose

The Administration and Coordinating Commission exists to coordinate the work of the Presbytery, steward its resources, communicate its mission, and provide administrative and spiritual leadership. Through collaboration, planning, and oversight, the A & C Commission helps guide the Presbytery's ongoing journey of faith, service, and governance.

Membership

The A & C Commission shall be composed of:

Twelve elected members, serving in three classes of four.

The Presbytery Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Immediate Past Moderator.

A representative of Presbyterian Women, with voice and vote.

Ex officio members:

Presbytery Leader

Stated Clerk

Treasurer

Co-moderators of A & C Commission will be elected by the Presbytery

Position Description

Members of the Administration and Coordinating Commission are responsible for the following: Coordinating and supporting the work of the Presbytery's commissions, teams, and mission partners.

Serving as a visionary body, discerning and interpreting the evolving mission and ministry of the Presbytery.

Organizing and planning all stated meetings of the Presbytery, including content and worship.

Overseeing communications and storytelling initiatives of the Presbytery.

Developing and presenting the annual operating budget.

Review of presbytery insurance and participate in the New Jersey Insurance Partnership.

Responsible for matters that deal with property issues including: Historic grants, loans and loan guarantees, sale and rental of church property, presbytery property and office and other matter relating to church and presbytery property

Managing the books, records, and accounts of the Presbytery, in partnership with financial officers.

Encouraging financial stewardship and generosity among congregations.

Nominating the members of the Presbytery Nominating Committee.

Overseeing all personnel matters related to paid and volunteer staff.

Providing accountability and structure to all continuing mission partnerships.

Representing the Presbytery in its relationships with other governing bodies and councils of the Church.

Commissioned Responsibilities

As commissioned by the Presbytery, the A& C Commission is authorized to:

Serve as the Board of Trustees for the corporation, reporting Trustee actions at Presbytery meetings.

Provide oversight of all mission partnerships, defined as established and recognized relationships with mission organizations. This includes:

Utilizing existing Presbytery entities or creating new teams to manage partnerships.

Proposing budget allocations for continuing partnerships.

Approving or delegating approval of financial expenditures for such partnerships.

Act on behalf of the Presbytery between stated meetings when timely action is required. Actions shall be reported at the next Presbytery meeting. Responsibilities include:

Approving, modifying, adopting, and interpreting procedures.

Approving descriptions and appointing members for Administrative Commissions (excluding ordination/installation commissions).

Approving expenditure for both operating and capital needs.

Approving emergency loans to churches as per presbytery policy.

Approving leases between church and organizations for the use of the church's property in accordance with the requirements of the Book of Order (G-4.0206b)

Authorize the retaining of legal counsel for corporate and ecclesiastical matters.

Approving the purchase or sale of church property involving small parcels of land without structures, as well as to approve the sale of larger properties when action is required and the presbytery is unable to meet in a timely manner.

Working Groups of A & C Commission

Executive or Presbytery Planning Team

Finance and Property Team

Communications

Funds Development and Investment Team

Personnel Team

Worship Planning

NJ Presbytery Insurance Partnership

Mission Partnerships of the Presbytery

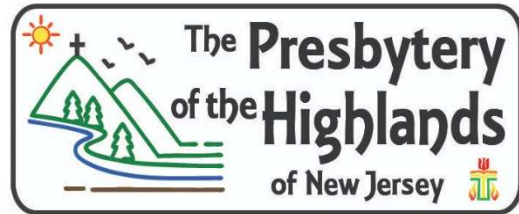
Interim Unified Agency (formerly OGA and PMA)

Synod of the Northeast

Blair Academy

Johnsonburg Camp and Conference Center

**COVENANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN
SANCTUARY + SEED
AND THE PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY**



INTRODUCTION

This covenant agreement between Sanctuary + Seed (S+S) and the Presbytery of the Highlands is established to affirm and strengthen the relationship between this emerging worshipping community and the governing body that supports and oversees its ministry. Rooted in the Reformed tradition and guided by the principles of mutual accountability, pastoral care, and collaborative mission, this covenant seeks to provide clarity, encouragement, and shared direction for our life together in Christ.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this covenant is twofold:

To articulate the theological, missional, and relational commitments that ground the ministry of S+S within the life and witness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), under the care of the Presbytery of the Highlands.

To define the structures of support, accountability, and partnership that will enable both S+S and the Presbytery to faithfully live out their call to proclaim the gospel, nurture discipleship, and participate in God's work of justice, reconciliation, and care for creation.

By entering into this covenant, both S+S and the Presbytery acknowledge their shared responsibility to honor Christ's call, to walk together in trust, and to cultivate practices that embody hope, creativity, and faithful stewardship of God's good earth.

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Sanctuary + Seed (S+S) is a validated ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), formally recognized as a 1001 New Worshipping Community under the care and jurisdiction of the Presbytery of the Highlands. As an innovative ministry rooted in eco-theology, land stewardship, and creative worship, S+S embodies an alternative yet faithful expression of Christian discipleship and witness, grounded in a theological commitment to the tending and care of the earth as entrusted by God in Genesis 2:15. This commitment includes care for soil, water, plants, people, and more-than-human creation, reflecting a symbiotic relationship that is mutually beneficial and offered as an act of worship to the Lord, honoring the interconnectedness woven into the creation story.

This covenant affirms the Presbytery of the Highlands' role as the ecclesial body providing oversight, care, and support for S+S as a ministry of Word and Sacrament within its geographic bounds and under its governance.

STATEMENT OF RELATIONSHIP

This covenant formalizes the relationship between S+S and the Presbytery of the Highlands as one of mutual accountability, pastoral care, and collaborative mission. The Presbytery serves as the mid-council overseeing S+S's standing as a validated ministry while affirming its operational and programmatic independence.

PRESBYTERY LIASON

The Church Development Team of the Presbytery of the Highlands will appoint a liaison or team of liaisons who will:

Serve as the primary point of contact between the Presbytery and S+S.

Provide guidance on matters of polity, governance, and compliance.

Offer pastoral care, counsel, and support to S+S leadership.

Facilitate access to denominational and Presbytery resources.

PRESBYTERY SUPPORT AND SHARED RESOURCES

The Presbytery of the Highlands commits to exploring and clarifying ways it can assist S+S's ministry through:

Offering guidance on Presbyterian polity, governance, and best practices for validated ministries.

Providing access to Presbytery communications channels (website, newsletter, social media) for promotion of S+S events and programs.

Invitations to Presbytery-led trainings and workshops relevant to ministry and leadership development.

Facilitating connections to committees, resources, and congregational networks.

Providing introductions to denominational and Presbytery grant opportunities that could sustain S+S's financial viability.

The Presbytery will consider requests for financial support related to specific needs and potential grant opportunities.

SHARED COMMITMENT TO CREATION CARE

In mutual recognition of the church's call to care for God's creation, this covenant affirms a shared commitment to address the urgent realities of climate change and ecological justice. The Presbytery of the Highlands and S+S will:

Foster opportunities for learning, dialogue, and collaboration about the health and well-being of all creation, especially the land and watersheds in our region.

Explore joint initiatives that help congregations and ministries become better stewards of the earth.

Encourage faithful action by the broader Presbytery to contribute to ecological restoration, sustainability practices, and education.

Promote participation and advocacy for the health of soil, the earth, water, more-than-human creatures, and humanity as interconnected parts of God's creation.

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

S+S will provide regular updates to the Church Development Team to ensure transparent communication and mutual trust. The frequency and format of these reports will be determined in consultation with the Church Development Team liaison. Options may include: quarterly written reports summarizing key ministry activities, financial status, partnerships, and emerging needs. Report levels of engagement, ministry impact. An annual presentation to the Presbytery gathered body.

MUTUAL PARTICIPATION

S+S ecclesial representative commits to participating as appropriate in the life and mission of the Presbytery of the Highlands, including:

Attendance at Presbytery meetings.

Offering workshops, retreats, or presentations that highlight the ministry of S+S and its contributions to the Presbytery's wider mission.

The Presbytery encourages its members and leaders to attend S+S events and worship gatherings as a sign of mutual support and connection.

REVIEW AND RENEWAL

This covenant will be reviewed annually to reflect on the relationship, clarify expectations, and address any changes in circumstances. Either party may propose amendments at any time.

Proposed Overture - Classification of Administrative Leave – D-7.0905

Recommendation

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey overtures the 227th General Assembly (2026) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

To amend D-7.0905 as follows:

(Text to be added is [in brackets and underlined]. Text to be deleted is [in brackets and struck through.]

Nothing in this section shall preclude a presbytery from establishing its own rules for administrative leave or other restrictions on a minister's service[.] [when there are allegations of financial malfeasance, any criminal allegations, medical need, or any other causes specified in the council's policy.]

Rationale

Administrative leave is an instrument available to an employer that temporarily removes an employee from their workplace, for the benefit of the employer, employee, or both. It is a neutral

action, not a disciplinary measure, meant to provide space for one or both parties to examine a situation and discern next steps, without premature decision-making.

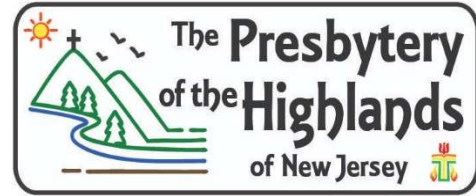
In Remedial Case 2024-02, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Decision and Order notes that while a presbytery may seek to impose administrative leave for reasons other than disciplinary, “the historic restriction on administrative leave to cases of alleged sexual abuse, complicates a presbytery’s authority to utilize leave as a valid form of support for a minister who needs it.”

At the same time, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission observes that the July 2023 addition to D-7.0905, reads: “Nothing in this section shall preclude a presbytery from establishing its own rules for administrative leave or other restrictions on a minister’s service.”

The Note to the Decision and Order then concludes,
Because this new constitutional revision appears to address the use of administrative leave outside the disciplinary process, this Commission suggests that a further corresponding amendment to the Form of Government would be helpful to define and clarify the scope and use of administrative leave beyond the provisions of Church Discipline.

This amendment to D-7.0905 would maintain the necessary function of administrative leave as currently found in Church Discipline, while providing new and needed flexibility for a presbytery to use that same instrument for matters such as pastoral care.

**PART-TIME COMMUNICATIONS
COORDINATOR
PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS
OF NEW JERSEY — POSITION OVERVIEW**
September 2025



Position Summary

The Presbytery of the Highlands is seeking a Part-Time Communications Coordinator (25 hours per week) to craft and amplify its distinctive voice. This role blends storytelling with strategy, offering the opportunity to create engaging online content, manage impactful projects, and foster vibrant church communities through inspired communication.

Role Purpose

Direct the development and implementation of a unified communications strategy.

Support and advance the presbytery's mission.

Share the presbytery's stories and vision with the wider community.

Structure

This position is intentionally structured as a part-time role under the supervision of the Presbytery Leader and is not intended to encompass the responsibilities of a full-time job within part-time hours.

Content creation aims for consistent and quality output rather than focusing on volume.

The position is organized with goals set for three phases.

Key Responsibilities

Strategy and Brand Identity (Phase 1, estimated first 6–8 months)

Work with the Communications Team and staff to develop a communications strategy aligned with the Presbytery's mission, vision, and values.

Define a clear brand voice, tone, and visual identity.

Create a basic style guide (including logo, fonts, colors, and sample messaging).

Plan an annual communications calendar reflecting the liturgical year, major events, and mission objectives.

Foster relationships with staff, Team leaders, and church leadership.

Implementation and Creation (Phase 2, estimated next 6–8 months)

Collaborate with staff and Presbytery leadership to execute the communications strategy and calendar.

Establish a consistent content schedule based on the annual calendar.

Ensure use of style guidelines in all communications.

Adapt and repurpose content on existing platforms for multiple channels to maximize reach and engagement.

Create and/or edit resource videos and update Presbytery website in conjunction with staff and presbytery leader.

Utilize tools such as Canva, Mailchimp, WordPress, Adobe Suite, and others as needed.

Develop, refine, and distribute content related to Presbytery meetings and events across existing web, email, social media, and print platforms.

Gather narratives from local churches and share these stories across platforms (website, newsletter, social media) to inspire and resource others.

Encourage the use of emerging social media platforms (e.g., TikTok, blogs) to foster engagement and connectivity.

Metrics & Performance

Track analytics for social media, email, and web channels.

Use data insights to refine content and report to leadership.

Optimize Presbytery website and blog content for SEO so that churches and ministry resources are more discoverable online.

Follow accessibility standards (alt text, readable fonts, color contrast, closed captions).

Training & Congregational Support (Phase 3)

Create a Communications Toolkit with templates, branding basics, and a social media guide as a resource for local churches.

Maintain a shared drive of templates, logos, and graphics.

Lead 2–3 regional workshops per year on communications, branding, and/or storytelling for local churches.

Resource Innovation and Communications Team in their goals to support congregational leaders in their communication strategies and skills.

Required Qualifications

Understanding of and appreciation for the values and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Strong administrative and organizational skills

Experience in strategic communications or digital marketing.

Strong writing, editing, and storytelling skills across a variety of media and formats.

Proficiency in managing social media platforms, email marketing tools (e.g., Mailchimp), and content management systems.

Experience with basic graphic and video editing tools (e.g., Canva, Adobe Creative Suite, iMovie, etc.).

Excellent interpersonal skills, with the ability to build relationships across theological, generational, and cultural lines.

Ability to work independently while also collaborating with staff and committees.

Willingness to travel within the Presbytery for events and occasional evening/weekend coverage.

Preferred Qualifications

Familiarity with the geography and ministries of the Presbytery of the Highlands.

Background in church communications, nonprofit storytelling, or faith-based marketing.

Knowledge of Presbyterian polity and the ethos of connectional ministry.

Compensation and Benefits

Competitive salary.

Continuing education funds.

Mileage and travel reimbursements for off-site events.

Flexible work arrangements

Healthcare Contribution

To Apply

Send a resume, cover letter, and 2–3 samples of past communications work (social media posts, newsletters, articles, etc.) to [Insert Email or Application Portal].

For internal use only:

Base salary \$42,900 — 25 hours @ \$33/hour

\$7,722 — 18% of base salary, Healthcare

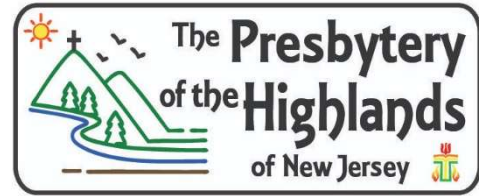
\$3,003 — Social Security

\$1,000 — Continuing Education (Con Ed)

*Travel reimbursement for (non-clergy) staff is consolidated within an existing general expense fund.

TOTAL: \$54,625.00

**ANTI-RACISM POLICY FOR THE
PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS
OF NEW JERSEY
FALL 2024**



We cannot move forward without looking back.
Repair begins when reconciliation and truth telling begins

Timeline info

In 2016, the 222nd General Assembly of the PC(USA) approved a new churchwide antiracism policy titled: Facing Racism: A Vision of the Intercultural Community. This policy began as a review of the earlier 1999 statement on racism in America, and began by noting that, “...the realities of racism in the United States have not improved significantly...” Several years later, acting on the recommendation and report of various committees, the 225th General Assembly revised the Book of Order (G-3.0106) to require all church councils to adopt and implement an antiracism policy.

Theological/Biblical Foundation

The Bible insistently reveals that God loves diversity and justice. This is seen in the wide variety of creation in which God delights. It is heard in the words of the prophets, who reject oppression and commend justice as true worship. It is embodied in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, who resists the power of empire and values all persons, regardless of status, as children of God. Jesus gathered a community of people around him that crossed over every social and cultural boundary. Those who had been set apart were brought together: poor and rich, male and female, Gentile and Jew, centurion and tax collector, Canaanite, Galilean, and Syrophonecian. Jesus called this community together in anticipation of, and participation in, the coming of the new creation. –From Facing Racism

The Bible testifies that humanity is diverse and yet one, unique but together created in the image of God.

The words of the Apostle Paul remind us of the common identity we share as members of God’s family. “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” –Galatians 3:27-28

The vision of John in Revelation shows us a multitude gathered from every nation worshipping God together. “After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice,

saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!’” – Revelation 7:9-10

Faith challenges us to acknowledge the distance between God’s vision for humanity and our present reality. Faith also calls us to action, building up things which help that vision to flourish, and removing obstacles and stumbling blocks we encounter along the way (John 10:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Romans 14:13). One of the largest stumbling blocks that persists in our culture today is racism.

Confession/acknowledging our complicity/role

Recognizing that sin exists in our world at both an individual and a corporate level, in both intentional and unintentional harm, and echoing the words of Paul, who reminds us that, “all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God,” we confess our participation in a society and culture that allows racism to persist (Romans 3:23). As a response to our confession we affirm our desire to lean into uncomfortable conversations, to promote growth, and embody a faithfulness that works to dismantle racism within and beyond our communities.

We Commit Ourselves to Accountability

We hold ourselves accountable for working consistently and purposefully towards racial justice and equity in our synod, our presbytery and our congregations.

We commit to take steps as a presbytery to participate in the ongoing process to dismantle racism in our churches, communities and our own lives through the following and other ways we may not be aware of at this time:

Engage with resources and conversations to help us grow and learn through training events or other similar opportunities

Create opportunities to invite people into conversations about dismantling racism.

Provide for worship experiences at presbytery gatherings that work toward dismantling racism.

Commit to self-reflective truth-telling concerning actions and experiences where our actions or inactions perpetuated racism or continue to perpetuate racism.

Listen to voices long silenced

ACTION STEPS

The Presbytery of the Highlands commits to the following:

At least one presbytery-wide annual training/workshop on racism

Work with congregations to implement Matthew 25

Provide at least one worship service annually that focuses on dismantling racism

Engage the Presbytery in conversations about racism through workshops, small groups, seminars, or book study.

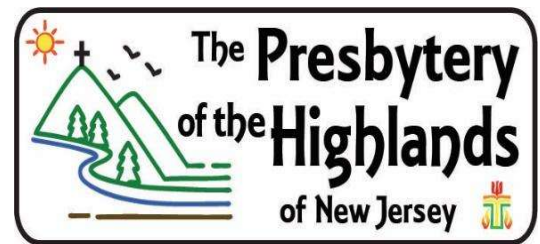
Work alongside the Committee on Representation to assure that diversity is expressed in Presbytery committees and teams and that the environment in which we serve and gather provides for open and affirming dialogue and action

Provide resources and communications about dismantling racism.

Annually review the Anti-racism policy and recommend updates

Definitions and other resources from the PCUSA Committee on Racism, Truth and Reconciliation can be found on the Presbytery of the Highlands webpage.

**SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY
PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS
OF NEW JERSEY
FEBRUARY 2021**



**PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS SEXUAL
MISCONDUCT POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURES**

I. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Presbytery of The Highlands that all teaching elders, temporary members, officers, ruling elders, employees, and volunteers of the presbytery are to maintain the integrity of the pastoral, collegial, employment, and professional relationship at all times. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in Scripture, and also of the pastoral, collegial, employment, and professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct.

Distribution

Copies of this policy and its procedures shall be made available to all those who are members of and/or participate in activities of the presbytery. This policy and its procedures are to be made available to persons who accuse others of misconduct, including victims of sexual misconduct, as well as their families.

II. Standards of Conduct

... As [God] who called you is holy,
be holy yourselves in all your conduct;
... Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, ...
not under compulsion but willingly, ...
not for sordid gain but eagerly. ...
not lord it over those in your charge,
but be examples to the flock.
... You know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.
1 Pet. 1:15; 5:2–3; Jas. 3:1, NRSV

The ethical conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because through these representatives an understanding of God and the gospel's good news is conveyed. "Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world" (Book of Order, G-2.0104).

The basic principles of conduct guiding this policy are as follows:

1. Sexual misconduct is a violation of the role of teaching elders, temporary members, officers, ruling elders, employees, and volunteers who are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity,

and caring in a trust relationship. This improper conduct breaks the covenant to act in the best interests of other persons within the presbytery.

2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power which breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relationship to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, and unjust manner. If a ruling elder, employee or volunteer initiates or invites sexual content in the relationship, it is the responsibility of the teaching elder, temporary member, or officer to maintain the appropriate role and prohibit a sexual relationship.

3. Sexual misconduct occurs when a person in a relationship of power takes advantage of the vulnerability of persons who are less powerful and unable to act for their own welfare, including children and adults with vulnerabilities. It is antithetical to the gospel's call to work as God's servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world. It violates the mandate to protect the vulnerable from harm.

Definitions

Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include:

Child sexual abuse: including, but not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not the child consents. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the sexual abuse definition of a child is anyone under age eighteen.

Sexual abuse as defined in the Book of Order: "Sexual abuse is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone without the capacity to consent, or any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position. Sexual abuse is contrary to the Scriptures and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and is therefore always an offense for the purpose of discipline (D-7.0901).

Sexual harassment: defined for this policy as follows: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
- d. an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.

Rape: sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.

Sexual conduct: Conduct (such as offensive, obsessive or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling) which is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.

Sexual Malfeasance: Is a breach of trust resulting from sexual activities within a pastoral, collegial, employment, or professional relationship which results in misuse of office or position arising from such a relationship.

Misuse of technology: Is use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, including texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons with whom one has a pastoral relationship. It is never appropriate to view pornography on church or presbytery property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or the presbytery or within the context of ministry.

III. Presbytery Response to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct

A. Principles

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, teaching elders, temporary members, officers, ruling elders, employees, and volunteers of the Presbytery should seek healing and assure the protection of all persons. Where possible, the privacy of persons should be respected and confidentiality of communications should be maintained.

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, teaching elders, temporary members, officers, ruling elders, employees, and volunteers of the Presbytery should seek to uphold the dignity of all persons involved, including persons who are alleging harm, persons who are accused of sexual misconduct, and the families and communities of each.

The Presbytery has jurisdiction over its teaching elders, temporary members, officers, ruling elders, employees, and volunteers. If one of these persons is alleged to have committed an offense against Scripture, the PC(USA) Constitution, or the Presbytery bylaws, manual of operations, or policies, the Presbytery has the duty to inquire into the allegations and, if the allegations are proven, to correct the behavior of the member, officer, or employee and ensure the safety of others in the community.

Allegations of sexual misconduct are always considered allegations of offense against Scripture. Such allegations trigger the disciplinary processes of the PC(USA) set forth in the “Church Discipline” section of the Book of Order. In the case of an employee of the Presbytery, the individual will be covered by the procedures of the written sexual misconduct and personnel policies of the Presbytery.

If the person accused of sexual misconduct is no longer a member of the PC(USA) but the conduct occurred while the person was acting on behalf of the Presbytery, the Presbytery does not have jurisdiction to correct the behavior, but it does have a duty to hear the allegations of offense and to take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm. The Presbytery may appoint an administrative commission to hear the allegations of sexual misconduct. The Presbytery may also take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm through education and policy.

B. Reporting Requirements

1. Reporting Sexual Misconduct

A person needing to report that a teaching elder, temporary members, officer, ruling elder, employee, or volunteer of the Presbytery has committed sexual misconduct shall contact the stated clerk of the Presbytery for guidance regarding filing the report. If the allegations are against the stated clerk, then the presbytery leader shall be contacted.

If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a teaching elder or temporary member, the report of allegations should be made to the stated clerk of the Presbytery. If the allegations are against the stated clerk, then the Presbytery leader shall be contacted. The report of allegations is placed in writing, and the Presbytery will respond by using the procedures set forth in the “Church Discipline” section of the Book of Order.

If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a ruling elder, volunteer, or employee of the Presbytery, the report of allegations may be made to the presbytery leader or the stated clerk. The Presbytery will respond by using procedures set forth by the sexual misconduct policy of the Presbytery.

2. Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct will occur in a variety of ways, and may come from persons who have, or who do not have, a formal relationship with the Presbytery. Because the Presbytery cannot control to whom the victim of sexual misconduct will speak first, it is important that officers, the presbytery leader, employees, and persons highly visible to the members of the Presbytery understand how reports of incidents are channeled to the proper person, keeping in mind the mandatory reporting requirements for allegations of child abuse.

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the victim, the accused, and the presbytery. Reports of allegations should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities as outlined below.

The first person receiving the initial report of allegations of sexual misconduct should not undertake an inquiry alone or question either the victim or the accused, but, instead, shall contact the stated clerk who will determine the relationship of the person accused of sexual misconduct with the Presbytery and shall make sure that the allegations of offense are filed with the council

with jurisdiction over the person accused. If the allegations are against the stated clerk, then the presbytery leader shall be contacted.

In cases where the incident is divulged in the process of pastoral care, counseling, or a therapy session, the person hearing the allegation should encourage the accuser to report the allegation but cannot report the incident since the information was obtained in the context of a confidential relationship (G-4.0301). Allegations of misconduct involving a minor must always be immediately reported to both the stated clerk and the pertinent civil authorities. If you know of a victim of child abuse immediately call 1-877-NJ-ABUSE and file a report. Following that report, follow the procedures outlined in this policy. All persons covered by this policy are mandatory reporters of child abuse in New Jersey. If you know of adult with vulnerabilities who is a victim of abuse, call Adult Protective Services at (855) TELL APS | (855) 835-5277.

If the report is made orally, the person receiving the report of allegations should request that the person making the report of allegations place it in writing. A report of allegations of sexual misconduct in writing from a member of the Presbytery alleging another teaching elder, temporary member, officer, ruling elder, employee, or volunteer of the Presbytery committed an offense must be acted on according to the “Church Discipline” section of the Book of Order. If the stated clerk or presbytery leader receives a report of allegations in writing from a nonmember of the Presbytery alleging another teaching elder, temporary member, officer, ruling elder, employee, or volunteer of the Presbytery committed sexual misconduct, the report also should be acted on according to the “Church Discipline” section of the Book of Order. If the person who makes the report is unwilling or unable to place it in writing, any member of the presbytery may make the written statement that will automatically trigger the “Church Discipline” section of the Book of Order. (See D-7.0201 for information on filing a disciplinary complaint.)

3. Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

Any member of the presbytery or a church who is engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by the presbytery or a congregation, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse. (G-4.0302). Again, allegations of misconduct involving a minor must always be immediately reported to both the Stated Clerk and the pertinent civil authorities. If you know of a victim of child abuse immediately call 1-877-NJ-ABUSE and file a report. Following that report, follow the procedures outlined in this policy. All persons covered by this policy are mandatory reporters of child abuse in New Jersey.

C. Responding

The Presbytery response will vary according to the relationship of the Presbytery with the person who is accused of sexual misconduct. Teaching elders, temporary members, officers, ruling

elders, and volunteers are subject to inquiry and discipline (censure and correction) under the “Church Discipline” section of the Book of Order.

When an allegation of offense of sexual misconduct has been received by the stated clerk of the Presbytery, the clerk will report to the Presbytery that an offense has been alleged and that the presbytery will proceed according to the procedures set forth in the "Church Discipline section of the Book of Order. The Presbytery shall appoint an investigating committee according to its rule to inquire into the allegations. The investigating committee must promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations. Delay may cause further harm to the victim and/or the accused.

When a teaching elder renounces jurisdiction, the stated clerk shall report the renunciation at the next meeting of the Presbytery and shall record the renunciation in the minutes. The status of any pending charges may be shared with the Presbytery at that time.

Employees are subject to oversight and correction by the Personnel Committee of the Presbytery according to the personnel and sexual misconduct policies. In this case, the personnel committee will be responsible for the inquiry. The Presbytery may choose to appoint an administrative commission for the review of the allegation. The committee or commission that will respond to the allegation of offense of sexual misconduct will do the following:

- a. Determine whether or not the allegation gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct by the accused.
- b. If so, gather additional information necessary to make a decision about correcting the behavior.
- c. Determine any remedies, including limiting ministry, suspension, or termination necessary and advisable under the circumstances. If the accused is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegations and the response.
- d. Inform the victim and the accused of the remedy.
- e. In all cases, the personnel committee shall prepare a written report, which shall be included in the accused’s permanent personnel file. The accused shall be allowed to attach any written statements to said documents, also for permanent inclusion in the permanent file.

The Presbytery must cooperate with civil authorities in an investigation of child sexual abuse or other criminal sexual misconduct. Church disciplinary proceedings cannot interfere with a criminal investigation by civil authorities and may have to be suspended until these are completed.

D. Presbytery Record Keeping

The Presbytery should keep detailed records of its actions and minutes of its deliberations and its conversations with the accuser, the accused, and other parties involved, correspondence, and copies of the reports received from committees or commissions. Such records will be kept confidential as far as possible. The stated clerk will maintain the records while the inquiry is in process.

IV Prevention and Risk Management

A. Implementation

The Book of Order requires all councils to adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy (G-3.0106). This policy should be reviewed and updated regularly.

B. Liability and Insurance

The Presbytery should regularly inform their liability insurance carriers of the activities and programs they operate or sponsor and of the duties and responsibilities of officers, employees, and volunteers. The Presbytery shall obtain an endorsement to their general liability insurance policy specifically covering sexual abuse and molestation. Such coverage shall provide for legal defense expenses and judgments in civil suits brought against the Presbytery, its teaching elders, temporary members, officers, ruling elders, employees, and volunteers.

C. Employment Practices

1. Record Keeping

Accurate record keeping is an essential part of hiring and supervision practices of the Presbytery. A personnel file shall be maintained on every employee, teaching elder, and temporary member. The file should contain the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, background checks, reference responses, and all other documents related to an employee's employment, except records which may be required, by law, to be kept in separate files.

2. Prescreening Applicants

The Presbytery will establish thorough and consistent hiring practices. If an applicant is unknown to the employer, the employer should confirm the applicant's identity by requiring photographic identification such as a driver's license. The Presbytery should perform a background check, including a national and/or international criminal background check, on all applicants that may have interaction with children and youth. Part of pre-employment screening should include specific questions related to discovering previous complaints of sexual misconduct.

3. References

The Presbytery is responsible for contacting references for prospective teaching elders, and employees. A written record of conversations or correspondence with references should be kept in the teaching elder's or employee's personnel file.

In dealing with teaching elders when transferring from one position to another, the presbytery leader or stated clerk will have the responsibility for previous employer reference checks. The presbytery leader or stated clerk is obligated to give truthful information regarding allegations, inquiries, and administrative or disciplinary action related to sexual misconduct of the applicant or teaching elder.

If false or misleading information is given by the applicant or teaching elder, or relevant information is

withheld, the applicant or teaching elder should be eliminated from consideration. Applicants should be informed of negative comments regarding sexual misconduct and shall be given an opportunity to submit additional references or to give other evidence to correct or respond to harmful information obtained from a reference.

V. Educating and Training- Awareness

Since the issue of sexual misconduct has become an ever more present reality, there is an emerging need to educate and train a wide variety of persons. Persons needing this specific education include: teaching elders; volunteers; officers; nonprofessional and professional staff; and candidates for teaching elder. Education for these persons and groups may be different on a group-by-group basis. A primary requirement for all persons should be common knowledge regarding professional and ministerial boundaries, and the presbytery sexual misconduct policy.

The appropriate presbytery committees shall oversee training for inquirers, candidates, newly ordained pastors, new pastors to the presbytery, commissioned ruling elders, Certified Christian educators, and Certified Associate Christian educators regarding sexual misconduct and the Presbytery's policy.

All teaching elders in active service or may be in active service; temporary members of the Presbytery; those under care of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, including aspirants to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder; Certified Christian educators and Certified Associate Christian educators; and Commissioned Ruling Elders shall attend an approved boundary training every three years.

Appendix

Meeting the Needs of All Involved

In cases of sexual misconduct there are needs that have to be met for the good of all persons, and groups. To ensure that the Presbytery is ready to meet the variety of needs present, an independent response coordination team may be named. This team will not investigate the allegation or in any way function as an investigating committee for disciplinary purposes but should confine itself to coordinating a process that will meet the specific needs of victims and their families (if any), the accused and family (if any), the Presbytery and congregations.

A. The Needs of the Victim

The Presbytery, and response coordination team should assure that adequate treatment and care are available for alleged victims of sexual misconduct and their families.

Sometimes, the victim or family is so angry and alienated from the church, that offers of help may be perceived as insincere or as attempts of a cover-up. If the victim or family at first refuses, the church should continue to offer help. Above all the church should not act in a self-protective manner by ignoring the victim and their families.

The extent of the damage to the victims of sexual misconduct will vary from person to person and is influenced by such factors as the degree or severity of abuse, the age and emotional condition of the victim, human dynamics, and the importance of one's religious faith. The Presbytery and response coordination team is to assume in all cases that the victim has been wounded by the experience.

Feelings of guilt, shame, anger, mistrust, lowered self-esteem, unworthiness, and feelings of alienation from God, self, the religious community, and family are frequent injuries suffered by victims. It is important for the response coordination team to be sensitive to the victim's pain and need for healing, and to act by making appropriate pastoral care available.

The following are some of the needs of the victim:

1. To be heard and taken seriously. From the time that the victim is first able to indicate that sexual misconduct has occurred, that person should receive immediate attention and serious consideration from all church representatives.
2. To receive pastoral and therapeutic support. The victim may require spiritual and professional assistance as a result of sexual misconduct. The response coordination team should offer to help arrange for such support from a pastor and therapist, if the victim desires. Discussions with such people would be confidential, privileged conversations.
3. To be informed about church process and progress with regard to the accusation. One member of the response coordination team should be the church contact person for the victim. Frequently, this contact person will give the victim information as to what is happening in the church as a result of the accusation.
4. To receive legal advice. The response coordination team should suggest that the victim might benefit from independent legal advice. (Legitimate claims might be more effectively pursued and flimsy or false claims discouraged.) If requested, the response coordination team should suggest ways in which independent legal advice can be obtained.
5. To be assured of an advocate of one's own choosing. A victim may need continuing moral support from one individual who is present while the church process deals with the accusation. This advocate may be a relative, friend, or someone suggested by the response coordination team. This advocate could speak for the victim, if necessary.
 - To be assured that justice will be pursued. The victim needs to be told by the response coordination team, and shown by the processes of the church, that justice is being pursued through fact-finding, truth-telling, confrontation, and agreement that may include removal or temporary exclusion of the accused from office or adjudication of the complaint.
 - To receive healing and reconciliation. In addition to specific forms of restitution mentioned above, the victim needs to receive a sense of healing and reconciliation with all concerned—the self, the family, the church and, ideally, the accused. The response coordination team can help bring this about using the church's processes and resources. While the above are needs of the

victim, one recognizes that all of these needs may also not be met through a reasonable handling of a specific case, but may only occur over a lengthier period of time. All of these needs, however, should be taken seriously and compassionately, and the rights of the victim respected.

B. The Needs of the Accused

The Presbytery shall offer treatment and care for the accused as well as alleged victims and families. If the accused is a minister, this is the primary responsibility of the committee on ministry.

Feelings of guilt, shame, anger, mistrust, lowered self-esteem, depression, unworthiness, and feelings of alienation from God, self, the religious community, and family are often experienced by the accused. In addition, there may be fear of job loss, incarceration, and indignation if an allegation is false.

When a person is found not guilty of charges of sexual misconduct, it is important for the governing body or entity to see that the decision is disseminated as widely as possible within their power, unless doing so would further injure the person accused.

1. Personal Care

Whether the allegations about the accused are eventually found to be true or not, the accused deserves to be treated with Christian kindness and respect. The response coordination team may suggest that the accused seek spiritual support or professional counseling. People in staff positions, such as presbytery executives or stated clerks, should not engage in personal counseling of the accused because of their potential involvement in disciplinary process.

2. Economic Security and Care for Family of Accused

When an allegation of sexual misconduct has been made against a minister, the economic security of the accused is directly threatened, along with reputation, career, and family relationships. Again, the Commission on Ministry can be of assistance.

The response coordination team may alert the Commission on Ministry to the possible spiritual, emotional, and financial needs of the family of the accused and recommend expert resources.

C. The Needs of a Congregation in a Context of Sexual Misconduct

The Presbytery and response coordination team should be aware of the problems the Presbytery and congregations may experience following allegations of sexual misconduct by a teaching elder, ruling elder, officer, employee, or volunteer. The allegations may polarize the Presbytery or congregations, damage morale, create serious internal problems, and even limit the trust a congregation may place in succeeding pastors. Efforts should be taken to recognize and identify the problems and heal any damage that may be done to the Presbytery or congregation.

When there is sexual misconduct on the part of a teaching elder, ruling elder, non-ordained staff, or volunteer in a particular congregation, a number of needs unique to that congregation will emerge since sexual misconduct impacts congregations in different ways. Therefore, these needs will not necessarily emerge in the same sequence in each situation. Depending on the parties involved in the sexual misconduct, some of the needs may not emerge. In any event, those managing the church's response to the sexual misconduct will want to know that the following needs may emerge:

1. Pastoral Care

Members and staff of the congregation will need pastoral care. If it is the pastor who is involved in the sexual misconduct, care will need to be provided by another member of the ordained staff (if the church is a multiple-staff church) or by a trained interim pastor. If the pastor leaves as a result of sexual misconduct, in extreme cases a trained interim pastor or consultant in sexual misconduct may need to work with the congregation for an extended period of time.

If it is not a pastor who is involved in the sexual misconduct, then the pastor will provide the needed care for the congregation. The pastor, if not previously trained in this specialty area, will need to consult with denominational specialists who will advise him or her how to proceed and any anticipated problems.

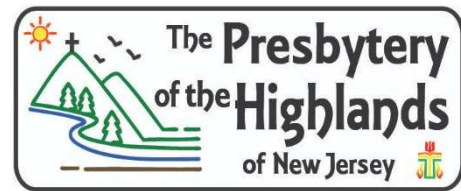
2. Information About the Case

Members of the congregation will need opportunities both to receive and give information. If a case of sexual misconduct becomes a matter of public knowledge within a congregation and if a pastor has been found guilty of sexual misconduct, the interim pastor or consultant may hold appropriate meetings with individuals, small groups, or with the whole congregation. Such meetings should provide information about sexual misconduct in general, Presbyterian polity and our judicial process, and how others who may have been victimized may be heard and ministered to. If the offender is not the pastor, then the pastor may perform these functions. At such meetings, one may expect members to vent their feelings. An opportunity for this to happen should be provided. If this venting does not take place, then it may create serious problems for the future of the congregation, for future pastors, and for the presbytery.

3. Resource Persons

In light of the above needs, the following are several resource persons whose services would be valuable to a congregation in the context of sexual misconduct: a trained interim pastor, a Commission on Ministry representative knowledgeable in polity and the effects of sexual misconduct in the church, a consultant or therapist with knowledge and experience in dealing with sexual misconduct, an attorney who can discuss legal aspects of a case, an insurance agent who can advise the congregation about their exposure to liability or coverage.

**COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION (COR)
PRESBYTERY OF
THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY**
August 26, 2025



Introduction

The Committee on Representation (COR) serves as an advocate for inclusivity, equity, and diversity within the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey. In alignment with the mandates of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Order, the COR is committed to encouraging practices that reflect the fullness of the body of Christ, ensuring that leadership across the Presbytery embodies the principles of unity and diversity.

Purpose

The purpose of the Committee on Representation is to:
Advise the Presbytery regarding the implementation of the principles of unity and diversity.

Advocate for the full inclusion and representation of diverse voices in leadership roles and decision-making bodies.

Consult on the employment of personnel in accordance with the principles of equity and inclusivity, as outlined in F-1.0403 of the Book of Order.

Create space for honest engagement with issues of diversity, inclusivity, and racism, promoting transformation in how the Presbytery lives into its identity as a diverse and unified body.

Membership

The Committee on Representation shall be composed of:
Six members, elected by the Presbytery and divided into three classes (two members per class), each serving a three-year term.

Members shall reflect the diversity of the Presbytery and demonstrate commitment to advancing equity and inclusion in the Church's life and leadership.

Position Description and Responsibilities

Members of the Committee on Representation are expected to:
Hold the Presbytery and its teams accountable for engaging in intentional conversations and actions around diversity, inclusivity, unity, and racism.

Fulfill the responsibilities outlined in G-3.0103 of the Book of Order by advising the Presbytery on how to implement the principles of unity and diversity in its structure and functioning.

Serve as advocates for diverse leadership, encouraging the nomination and inclusion of individuals from historically underrepresented groups.

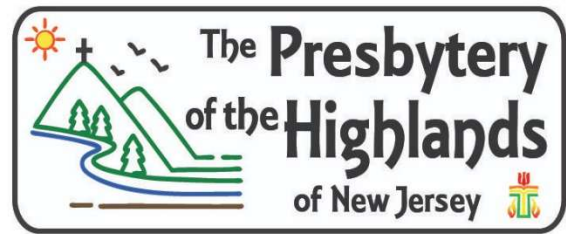
Consult with the Presbytery and its entities on personnel decisions to ensure alignment with denominational commitments to equity and representation.

Encourage a culture of belonging, helping the Presbytery and its teams to practice a new way of being Church—one that fully welcomes, engages, and values all voices at the table.

Through its work, the Committee on Representation seeks to ensure that the Presbytery lives into its calling to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive expression of Christ's body.

NOMINATING TEAM

PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY



Introduction:

The Nominating Team of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey serves a vital role in identifying and equipping leaders for service within the Presbytery. Committed to inclusive representation and alignment with the Presbytery's mission, the team ensures that commissions, teams, and elected offices are filled with individuals whose gifts and passions support the church's witness and ministry.

Purpose:

The Nominating Team is charged with identifying, discerning, and nominating individuals to fill all vacancies in elected positions within the Presbytery, as defined in the Manual of Operations. With intentionality toward diversity and equity, the team works to ensure broad representation across gender, age, race, ordination status, and geographic region, in accordance with the principles of participation and inclusivity set forth in the Book of Order.

Membership:

The Nominating Team ordinarily consists of six members, identified by the Administration and Coordinating Team and elected by the Presbytery. Membership shall include a balanced representation of:

Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders

Non-ordained members of congregations

Individuals of diverse ages, genders, and backgrounds

Persons from across the geographic and demographic spectrum of the Presbytery

Members serve three-year terms with the possibility of renewal for one additional term. A quorum for meetings is 50% of the membership.

Position Description:

Members of the Nominating Team are responsible for:

Identifying Leadership Gifts: Actively and creatively seek out individuals whose skills, experience, and passion align with the needs of Presbytery commissions, teams, and offices.

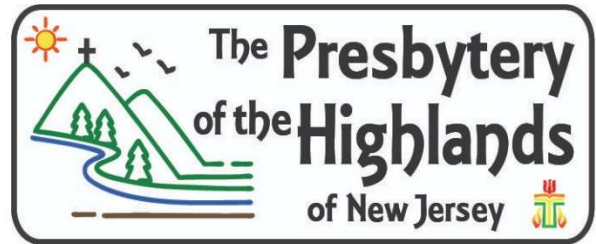
Engaging Potential Nominees: Initiate contact with potential nominees to discuss opportunities for service, assess interest and availability, and report back to the team chair.

Nominating Individuals: Formally nominate individuals to fill all vacancies in elected positions as outlined in the team descriptions within the Manual of Operations.

Consultation with the Committee on Representation : Engage in regular consultation (at least annually) with the Committee on Representation to ensure that nominations reflect the diversity and inclusivity goals of the Presbytery.

Members of the Nominating Team serve with the understanding that their work is critical to the ongoing health and vitality of the Presbytery, enabling strong and representative leadership across its ministries.

YOUNG LEADER FORMATION TEAM PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY



Introduction

The Young Leader Formation Team is a strategic ministry team within the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey, focused on equipping the next generation of faithful leaders. This team nurtures the spiritual formation and leadership development of youth and young adults across the Presbytery, cultivating vibrant discipleship and strengthening the future of the Church.

Purpose

The purpose of the Young Leader Formation Team is to:

Promote opportunities for spiritual growth and leadership development among youth and young adults.

Facilitate meaningful connections, programs, and events that form and empower young leaders.

Support a network of ministry leaders committed to youth and young adult ministry across the Presbytery.

Membership

The team shall consist of:

Six elected members of the Presbytery, serving in three classes (two members per class, for staggered three-year terms).

At least one team member shall be between the ages of 16 and 24 at the time of election.

One representative from Camp Johnsonburg, appointed annually by the Johnsonburg staff.

Position Description and Responsibilities

Members of the Young Leader Formation Team will collaborate to:

Facilitate, organize, and promote youth and young adult participation in denominational and regional events such as the Presbyterian Youth Triennium and other mission- and learning-focused gatherings.

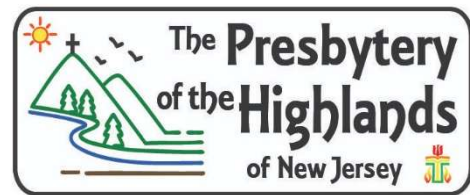
Develop and support local opportunities for spiritual formation and leadership training for youth and young adults within the Presbytery.

Encourage and nurture connections among youth and young adult ministry leaders, both paid and volunteer, fostering a collaborative network of support and shared learning.

Identify and recommend leadership development resources, programs, and tools relevant to congregational and Presbytery-wide ministries.

Advocate for the inclusion of young voices in the life and leadership of the Presbytery.

**ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICERS OF
PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS
OF NEW JERSEY
POSITION DESCRIPTION**



Introduction

The Presbytery elects officers to serve in leadership roles that ensure its faithful governance, orderly proceedings, and financial stewardship. These positions—Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer—are rooted in the polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and guided by the Book of Order, Robert's Rules of Order (latest revised edition), and the Presbytery's Manual of Operations.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the roles and responsibilities of the elected ecclesiastical officers of the Presbytery. These officers are called to serve both the Presbytery and the broader church by upholding order, fostering collaboration, and ensuring accountability in all aspects of Presbytery life.

Moderator

Election and Term: Elected for a one-year term beginning in January, with the election held at the third-quarter stated meeting.

Responsibilities:

Presides at all stated and called meetings of the Presbytery.

Presides at ordinations and installations of ministers of Word and Sacrament.

Serves as a member of the Administration and Coordinating Team (ACT) for up to three years (as Vice-Moderator, Moderator, and Past Moderator).

Vice-Moderator

Election and Term: Elected for a one-year term beginning in January, at the same meeting as the Moderator.

Responsibilities:

Ordinarily succeeds the Moderator the following year.

Assumes the Moderator's office in the event of resignation, death, or relocation, and remains eligible for election to a full term.

Presides at Presbytery meetings and services (at the Moderator's invitation).

Serves as a member of the ACT for up to three years.

Stated Clerk

Election and Term: Elected for a term determined by the Presbytery.

Responsibilities:

Fulfills duties as outlined in the Book of Order.

Carries out additional responsibilities as determined by the ACT and approved by the Presbytery.

Serves as an ex-officio member of the ACT.

Treasurer

Election and Term: Elected for a term determined by the Presbytery, beginning at the conclusion of the meeting at which the election occurs.

Responsibilities:

Acts as the financial officer of both the Presbytery and the Corporation.

Serves as custodian of all assets owned, held, and managed by the Presbytery.

Functions as an ex-officio member of the ACT and the Finance and Budget Team.

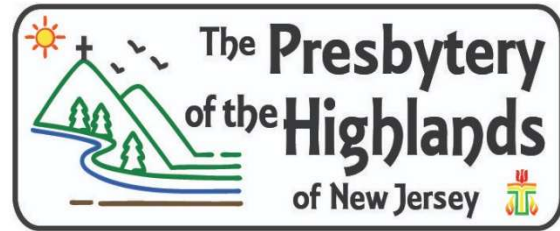
Fulfills specific responsibilities as determined by the ACT.

Summary

Together, the officers of the Presbytery serve as spiritual and organizational leaders, ensuring the effective functioning of the body in accordance with Presbyterian polity. They model collaboration, integrity, and accountability, supporting the Presbytery in its mission to equip, connect, and guide congregations and leaders for faithful ministry.

ELECTRONIC, VIRTUAL OR HYBRID MEETINGS POLICY

PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS OF NEW JERSEY



Introduction

The Presbytery recognizes that the work of the church increasingly requires the use of technology to connect members across distance and circumstance. While electronic meetings provide flexibility and accessibility, they must also preserve the spirit of fairness, order, and inclusivity that guides all Presbytery gatherings. This document establishes clear standards and procedures for conducting virtual and hybrid meetings, ensuring that they reflect the same integrity, accountability, and deliberative character as traditional in-person meetings. By outlining expectations for communication, participation, and decision-making, these guidelines safeguard the unity of the Presbytery while making space for faithful and effective ministry in a changing environment.

Purpose Statement:

This document sets the standards and procedures for conducting electronic meetings of the Presbytery and its entities. It ensures that these meetings maintain fairness, accessibility, and thoughtful deliberation, consistent with traditional meetings. It outlines requirements for technology, notification, quorum, participation, and record-keeping, safeguarding the integrity of decision-making and the inclusion of all members.

Scope of Application:

This policy applies to all electronic meetings of the Presbytery and its committees or entities. It defines the procedures, requirements, and standards for such meetings.

Accountability Statement:

All members of the Presbytery, its committees, and entities are responsible for following the provisions of this document when conducting electronic meetings. The moderator is especially accountable for ensuring that meetings adhere to these guidelines and uphold the integrity, inclusivity, and deliberative nature of the proceedings.

Process:

Virtual or electronic meetings of the Presbytery, its committees, or other entities may be conducted according to the following provisions:

Purpose of Meetings:

Virtual or electronic meetings may be held to conduct regular or special meetings when needed. They may also be conducted as hybrid meetings if the technology allows.

Communication Requirements:

Meetings must allow simultaneous audio communication among all participants to support full discussion of the issues; all must be able to “hear and be heard simultaneously” (G-3.0105).

Quorum:

A quorum for virtual or electronic meetings shall be a majority of members and must be declared at the beginning of the meeting.

Participation Rules:

The same participation rules apply as in traditional meetings. The body may grant, but is not required to grant, the privilege of the floor to guests. Guests may not vote or speak after debate has closed.

Meeting Policy:

Virtual or electronic meetings must adhere to the Constitution of the PC(USA) and Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised. Care must be taken to allow observers to attend, just as they would in a traditional meeting.

Minutes:

Minutes of the proceedings must be recorded and added to the official record.

Motions:

Motions shall be handled the same way as in traditional meetings. The moderator must also consider any technological issues that could affect participants' ability to fully engage and provide opportunities to resolve these issues before business begins.

Inclusivity:

The moderator is responsible for ensuring that all participants can hear, contribute to, and fully participate in the meeting.

Email Communication and Voting:

When email is used to share information and build consensus, the final decision must be confirmed or rejected by vote at the next meeting.

An email vote is only permitted if the matter has already been discussed in a traditional or electronic meeting. Such a vote must be unanimous. If any questions are raised or a negative vote is cast, the matter must be revisited in a traditional or electronic meeting.

Key Words Definitions

Electronic Meetings: "Meetings at which, rather than all participant members being physically present in one room or area as in traditional ("face-to-face") meetings, some or all of them communicate with the others through electronic means such as the Internet or by telephone" (RONR 9:31).

"In accordance with the requirement of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, councils and their commissions and committees may meet electronically, provided that the technology employed allows for all members present to hear and be heard simultaneously. This includes joining one or more persons electronically to an otherwise in-person meeting" (G-3.0105).

Presbytery: The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey.

Committee or Other Presbytery Entity: This policy pertains to the Presbytery, its authorized assemblies, and any bodies established according to the Presbytery's bylaws (RONR 9:35). The congregations of the Presbytery are required to establish their own electronic meeting policies in their bylaws if such meetings are to be held.

Moderator – person(s) elected or appointed to conduct the meeting and see that the rules are observed.

Quorum – A quorum must be declared at the beginning of the meeting, and it shall be determined by audio and/or visual means. Thereafter, the continued presence of a quorum shall be determined by the online list of participating members, unless any member demands a quorum count (RONR p. 639).

The Presbytery's approved definition of quorum for stated and special meetings of the Presbytery is eight minister member commissioners and eight ruling elder commissioners, for a total of sixteen commissioners, representing eight different congregations. For other bodies established by the Presbytery's bylaws, a quorum for virtual or electronic meetings shall be a majority of members.

Privilege of the Floor – To seek recognition by the Moderator, a member shall use the “raise hand” feature, and failing that, may unmute and speak to get the Moderator's attention. Other electronic reactions will not be recognized, and their use is strongly discouraged.

Guest – someone not a member of the body who is granted “privilege of the floor,” which means permission has been permitted to enter the meeting, in part or in whole, when ordinarily only members and staff could attend. It carries no right to speak or any other right of membership, except as determined by the body in its rules or action.

Such persons can be excluded at any time from part of all of a meeting, or from all of its meetings, by ruling of the chair, adoption of a rule, or by an appropriate motion as the need arises (RONR 3:31 fn 5; 61:7).

Technological Disruption – Each member is responsible for their own audio or Internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting (RONR p. 640).

Deliberative Character of Meetings –

When the number of participants is too large for all to be displayed simultaneously, a video of the Moderator shall be displayed throughout the meeting, as well as a video of the member currently recognized to speak.

A member seeking to gain privilege of the floor shall use the “raise hand” feature, and failing that, may unmute and speak to get the Moderator's attention. This same practice is to be employed when a member wishes to interrupt another when doing so is permissible under the rules.

The Moderator may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a member's connection if they are causing undue interference with the meeting. The Moderator's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes (RONR p. 640).

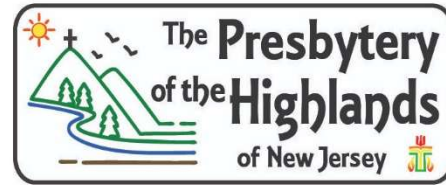
Motions and amendments shall be submitted in writing via the online area available for such communications.

Voting is ordinarily conducted by use of a green check mark (ü) to vote in favor and a red “X” to vote against.

Notice of Meeting – The Presbytery shall send by email to every member, at least 7 days before each Presbytery meeting, the time of the meeting, the address and codes necessary to connect to the meeting, and alternate phone numbers and access codes needed to participate by phone (RONR p. 639).

The meeting shall open at least five minutes prior to the start of the meeting.

ANTI HARASSMENT POLICY FOR PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS



Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements its decisions.

Administration enables the church to give effective witness in the world to God's new creation in Jesus Christ and strengthens the church's witness to the mission of the triune God. ... All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy. Each council's policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.

Excerpted from G-3.0106 - Administration of Mission (2023)

Introduction

The Presbytery of Highlands strives to create and maintain an environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency, and respect. When the Presbytery of Highlands gathers to do its work as a council, committees, commissions, or staff, it is committed to providing an environment that is characterized by mutual trust and is safe and free from harassment, bullying, and intimidation in any form. The Presbytery will not tolerate any type of harassment of its employees, minister members, ruling elders, volunteers, ministry partners, or church members. Through enforcement of this policy and by education of its members and employees, the Presbytery will seek to prevent, correct and discipline behavior that violates this policy.

All members and employees (details for employees need to be spelled out separately in the presbytery's employee handbook) of the Presbytery, regardless of their role or position, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action, in accordance with the Book of Order or the Presbytery Personnel Policy, will be taken against any member or employee of the presbytery who violates this policy. Based on the seriousness of the offense, disciplinary action may include removal from a role or position.

Prohibited Behavior

As used in this policy, the term "harassment" includes sexual as well as actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected characteristic.

Any action may be considered harassing if it:
creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment,
unreasonably interferes with an employee's or Presbytery member's work performance; or

adversely impacts an individual's employment or volunteer opportunities.

Examples of prohibited conduct include:

Microaggressions

A microaggression is a verbal or nonverbal slight that impacts an individual who might identify as being from a marginalized or non-mainstream community. Microaggressions are typically indirect, subtle, even unintentional, but nonetheless are considered discriminatory to the recipient.

Bullying

Bullying is a pattern of behavior in which the bully attempts to intimidate their victim. Examples of bullying behavior range from teasing, to extortion, to physical assault. In addition to physical interactions, bullying includes any form of interpersonal, including electronic, communication.

Workplace Violence

Workplace violence is acting or using words to make an individual feel endangered. This includes actions that create actual harm to another individual or words that result in another individual having a reasonable belief that they are in danger.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, presbytery member, or a member of the public at any time will not be tolerated, this includes any form of electronic communication.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. This includes any form of electronic communication.

Prevention Practices

The Presbytery of Highlands provides regular anti-harassment training to ensure an environment free of sexual and other unlawful harassment. Minister members, commissioners, committee/commission members, Presbytery employees (and other categories of presbytery leaders) are expected to complete an initial training event/program and participate regularly in anti-harassment education training opportunities.

All persons covered by this policy shall participate in presbytery approved training/program at least every 36 months. Documentation of participation and completion of the training/program will be included in a file at the presbytery office.

Reporting Procedures

The Presbytery has established the following procedure for lodging a complaint of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The Presbytery will treat all aspects of the procedure confidentially to the extent reasonably possible.

Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing.

Complaints should be submitted to the COM co-moderator(s) or the Presbytery Leader. Normally the complaint will be shared with COM co-moderators who will determine if the complaint is forwarded to the COM Response Team or to the Stated Clerk for disciplinary action.

A Complainant has the right to initiate the disciplinary process established in the Book of Order by sending the complaint directly to the Stated Clerk, as outlined in D-7.0102

Responding Procedures

The responding procedures depend on who is making the complaint.

Elders, church members, deacons, volunteers should first consult with the session.

Staff members should consult the organization's personnel policy/committees

minister members should consult the Committee on Ministry.

If none of those takes actions, the complaint should be brought to the Presbytery leader or Stated Clerk.

Matthew 18:15-17

“If your sibling sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If you are listened to, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector.”

Remembering that Jesus continued to associate and eat with gentiles and tax collectors, the recommended means of response is to focus on grace rather than judgment, and education more than discipline, in all but the most intentional acts of harassment.

To err on the side of grace is

not to dismiss or diminish the offense, but to name it, gently rather than in anger;

to recognize that people come into this subject matter from a variety of backgrounds and history;

to acknowledge that, consequently, the time, length, and intensity of new understanding will vary from person to person.

This requires mutual conversation, and formal or informal courses of study, designed to equip more than reprimand or punish.

As a final resort one can turn to appropriate measures within the Constitution's Church

Discipline. It is incumbent upon us to remember, however, that despite its title, “The power that Jesus Christ has vested in his Church, a power manifested in the exercise of church discipline, is

one for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it, for redeeming, not for punishing. It should be exercised as a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath, so that the great ends of the Church may be achieved, that all children of God may be presented faultless in the day of Christ.” (D-1.01 Power Vested in Christ’s Church).

We trust that, just as Jesus associated and ate with gentiles and tax collectors, so too does he in all of our contemporary failings, including intentional and unintentional demonstrations of harassment.

RESPONDING STRUCTURE

The Committee on Ministry shall maintain a team of trained Conflict management facilitators and mediators who will assist the presbytery, pastors and congregations in times of disagreement.

The Conflict Response Team will be called upon to assist in the resolution of a harassment complaint that has come before the COM attention. They will also be available to assist session and church leaders with the resolution of conflicts within a congregation.

The Conflict Response Team will report to the Stated Clerk and the COM moderators the outcome of the resolution process. All complaints and outcomes of the complaints will be confidential.

PREVENTION PRACTICES

The Presbytery of Highlands Presbytery shall provide regular anti-harassment training to ensure an environment free of sexual and other unlawful harassment. Minister Members are expected to complete the initial training and participate regularly in anti-harassment education training opportunities. Anti-Harassment Training will be part of the required Boundary Training for minister members, Certified Ruler Elders, presbytery staff, and elders/non-clergy on the pulpit supply

Definitions and Examples of Harassment

Microaggressions

A microaggression is a verbal or nonverbal slight that impacts an individual who might identify as being from a marginalized or non mainstream community. Microaggressions are typically indirect, subtle, even unintentional, but nonetheless are considered discriminatory to the recipient.

Examples of microaggressions include, but are not limited to:

Asking a new acquaintance, “Where were you born?” Implication: “You don’t belong here. You are not one of us.”

Saying, “I guess you like Korean/Mexican/soul/American food.” Implication: “I have identified you in terms of a racial/ethnic stereotype.”

Asking the youngest member of the worship team to provide contemporary music. Implication: “We assume you won’t participate in worship unless we have something non-traditional, and we’re not interested enough to work with you to make worship relevant.”

Bullying

Bullying is a pattern of behavior in which the bully attempts to intimidate their victim. Examples of bullying behavior range from teasing, to extortion, to physical assault. In addition to physical interactions, bullying includes any form of interpersonal, including electronic, communication.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

Yelling, shouting, gesturing, “getting in someone’s face.”

Directing, demanding, or ordering a council, committee, or commission to do what the leader or a small group of individuals wants.

Standing in the doorway to the room or office while talking to staff, physically blocking their exit.

Arbitrarily changing work hours or meeting times

Workplace Violence

Workplace violence is acting or using words to make an individual feel endangered. This includes actions that create actual harm to another individual or words that result in another individual having a reasonable belief that they are in danger.

Examples of workplace violence amounting to behavioral misconduct include but are not limited to

verbal or physical threats

assaults or other violence

any behavior that causes others to feel unsafe such as bullying, shouting, or name calling

belligerent, threatening or offensive comments

hitting, pushing, or other similar physical contact, including touching or threats to take such action

gestures or the display of offensive signs or pictures

other aggressive behavior

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, presbytery member, or a member of the public at any time will not be tolerated, this includes any form of electronic communication.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. This includes any form of electronic communication. The following is a partial list of sexual harassment examples:

Unwanted sexual advances.

Offering anything in exchange for sexual favors.

Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.

Visual conduct that includes leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters.

Verbal conduct that includes making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes.

Verbal sexual advances or propositions.

Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, or suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations.

Physical conduct that includes touching, assaulting, or impeding or blocking movements.

Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

(1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;

(2) submission or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for making employment or volunteering decisions; or,

(3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

2026 BUDGET CREATION WORKSHEET Assumptions 9,705 Number of
 Members 9/2/2025 Version \$44.00 Per Capita Rate
 Mission & Ministry withdrawal 5.5% of (7/31 balance plus \$1.5 million from East Hanover)
 11% of Total Revenue to IUA
 \$6,270,952.00 4% of Total Revenue to Synod
 Target withdraw rate 4% of Chesnutt Acct (7/31/25)18% Uncollectible Per Capita
 \$221,024.00 2.7% Ordained Staff
 2.7% Non Ordained Staff

Accounts	Proposed 2025 Budget 2026 Revenues	
Per Capita		
140100 Current Year Per Capita	449,007	427,020
140101 CY Uncollected Per Capita	-80,821	-76,864
140200 Prior Year Per Capita 140300	- -	
Future Year Per Capita	- -	
Total Per Capita	368,186	350,156
Missional Giving		
PRESBYTERY Missional Giving		
140132 Undesig Presbytery Missional Giving	27,000	20,000
Total PRESBYTERY Missional Giving	27,000	20,000
Interest Revenue		
140510 Interest	300	
Total Interest Revenue Other Revenue	300	0
Reserve Draw		
140899 Chesnutt Fund Draw	8,314	8,840
140999 Presby Operating Reserve	244,985	344,902
Total Reserve Draw	253,300	353,742
Endowment Income		
140997 Endowment Income	8,658	10,594
Total Endowment Income Misc	8,658	10,594
Revenue		
140490 Vanco fee offset given	- -	
Total Misc Revenue Total Other	- -	
Revenue	261,958	364,336
Total Revenues Expenses	657,444	734,493
Administration		
Admin		
150111 Master Liabililty Insurance	2,671	2,704

150112 Umbrella Insurance Policy	1,133	1,336
150113 Worker Comp Insurance Policy	1,200	1,654
150114 Cyber Liability Insurance	400	528
150115 Managment Liability Insurance	184	255
150116 FSA Admin fees	100	250
150220 Fees/Payroll fees	1,650	1,650
150230 Presbytery Fin Review Fees	6,500	6,800
Total Admin	13,838	15,177
Facilities		
150120 Supplies	1,500	2,200
150130 Postage	650	650
150140 Communication	5,000	5,500
150150 Equipment	5,000	5,500
150160 Utilities	6,000	6,700
150170 Condo Association Dues	16,600	16,600
150190 Software & Technology	6,560	7,000
150210 Cleaning Services	2,200	2,200
150240 Facilities Repairs &	1,000	1,000
Improvements		
Total Facilities	44,510	47,350

Compensation		
Presbytery Leader/EP		
151300 PL Salary	64,356	66,094
151301 PL Housing	43,350	44,520
151310 PL Professional Expense	5,000	5,000
151330 PL Pension/Medical	39,259	47,237
151340 PL Continuing Education	2,000	2,000
151350 PL Travel	6,000	6,000
151380 PL SECA	8,174	8,462
Total Presbytery Leader/EP Financial	168,139	179,313
Administrator		
151410 FA Salary	67,376	53,404
151411 FA 403b	12,128	9,613
151420 FA Social Security/MED	5,154	4,085
151430 FA Group Term Life	120	120
151440 FA Continuing Education	300	1,000
151450 FA Travel	750	
Total Financial Administrator Office	85,828	68,222
Manager		
151510 OM Salary	46,223	63,295
151511 OM 403b	8,320	11,393
151520 OM Social Security/MED	3,536	4,842
151530 OM Group Term Life	120	120
151540 OM Continuing Education	300	300
151550 OM Travel	300	
Total Office Manager	58,800	79,949
Resource Staff/Stated Clerk 151710		
RSS/SC Salary	48,537	49,847
151712 RSS/SC Housing	28,681	29,455
151713 RSS/SC Pension/Medical	33,204	37,272
151714 R&SC SECA	5,907	6,066
151740 RSS/SC Continuing Ed	1,500	1,500
151750 RSS/SC Travel	2,000	2,000
151751 RSS/SC Professional Expense -	-	-
Total Resource Staff/Stated Clerk	119,829	126,142
Communications Coordinator CC		
Salary		42,900
CC 403b		7,722
CC Social Security/MED		3,282
CC Group Term Life		120
CC Continuing Education		300
Total Communications Coordinator		54,324

Staff Travel		2,000
Total Compensation	432,596	509,950
Total Administration	490,944	572,477

Presbytery Teams

Administrative Coordinating Team		
150201 ACT - Committee Expense	2,000	2,000
150206 ACT - Presbytery Meetings	4,000	4,500
152021 ACT- Vice-Moderator	1,000	1,000
Training		
152024 ACT - Discernment Process	2,000	0
152310 Johnsonburg Camp & Conference Ctr	30,000	30,000
154110 Worship Committee Expense	1,500	1,500
Total Administrative Coordinating Team	40,500	39,000

Committee on Ministry

150221 COM Committe Expenses	500	400
152225 COM Boundary Training	2,500	2,500
152240 COM Conferences & Retreats	3,000	3,000
15xxxx COM Background Check		200
Total Committee on Ministry	6,000	6,100

Committee on Prep for Ministry

150231 COPM Committee Expenses	100	100
152360 COPM Career Counseling	1,000	1,500
Total Committee on Prep for Ministry	1,100	1,600

Youth Development

154250 Young Leadership Development	-	-
154260 Triennium	6,000	6,000
155260 Workshops/Training	2,000	2,000
Total Youth Development	8,000	8,000

Church Development 154440

Workshops	2,000	2,500
154450 Exploring Online Community	3,000	2,500
Total Church Development	5,000	5,000
Total Presbytery Teams	60,600	59,700

Missional Partners

Per Capita Paid to GA

153010 Per Capita Paid TO GA	98,617	80,794
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Total Per Capita Paid to GA Per Capita	98,617	
Paid to Synod		
153020 Per Capita Paid TO SYNOD	26,298	29,380
Total Per Capita Paid to Synod Shared	26,298	
Missional Support -Syn/ GA		
153120 Shared Missional Support -	2,400	
SYNOD		
Total Shared Missional Support -Syn/	2,400	
GA		
Total Missional Partners	127,314	110,174
Total Expenses	678,858	742,351
Net Total	-21,414	-7,858

**FUNDS DEVELOPMENT REPORT
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN UPDATE -
SEPTEMBER 9, 2025**

Submitted by the Funds Development Team of the ACT

The Presbytery's Financial Sustainability Plan was initiated in 2016 with the vision that, within ten years, we could become financially stable and self-sustaining. The premise was simple but critical: if the presbytery is not financially healthy, then our congregations will struggle as well.

The plan was built on several key elements:

Developing and clarifying funds and related policies.

Modeling and promoting a Legacy Giving program.

Creating a communication strategy to share the Presbytery's story.

Establishing new financial resources, including the Chesnutt Fund and the Mission and Ministry Fund.

Working with the General Assembly to explore a more sustainable funding model beyond per capita contributions.

Equipping congregations to strengthen their own financial health.

Increasing the number of congregations contributing to the presbytery's shared mission.

Since 2016, progress has been steady though slowed a bit because of the Pandemic. We have learned that many of these elements are not tasks that can simply be checked off. They require ongoing attention and commitment.

Highlights of our work to date:

Funds and Policies: We created a clear Funds Policy and defined descriptions for each fund to ensure that resources are used effectively in service to congregations and the presbytery.

Legacy Giving: A Legacy Giving program was launched and initially gained momentum, though energy waned during the pandemic. Revitalizing this effort is on the agenda for the upcoming season.

Communication Strategy: We have improved how we tell the Presbytery's story, though we recognize there is still room to grow. This commitment is reflected in the upcoming budget, which dedicates resources to communications and a communications coordinator.

Financial Planning and Funds: The Chesnutt Fund has been established with the threshold of \$200,000 before income is drawn. The Mission and Ministry Fund is steadily moving toward its \$6.5 million goal, at which point it will generate income to support the presbytery without additional contributions.

General Assembly Funding Model: In 2017, we successfully overtured the General Assembly to reassess per capita as a funding model. This led to the creation of a GA Funding Model Team, which continues to develop a more sustainable approach to funding the larger church. Our presbytery's work in financial sustainability is part of this broader denominational effort.

Congregational Resourcing: We continue to resource congregations in their own financial health, knowing that healthy congregations strengthen the presbytery and vice versa. Through workshops, projects, and the Financial Sustainability Project, we have provided guidance and tools for congregational vitality. We know more is needed.

Increased Participation: More congregations now contribute to the presbytery's funding. This growth has been fostered by stronger relationships and leadership that emphasize collaboration and shared responsibility.

Overall, the Financial Sustainability Plan remains a living, ongoing project. While not all elements are complete, we have made significant progress, and the work continues to ensure a healthy, sustainable future for our presbytery and its congregations.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

The Nominating Committee submits the following recommendations for election:

Moderator for 2026: Rev. Ryon Herin, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway

Vice Moderator for 2026: Elder Donna Rahmann, Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon

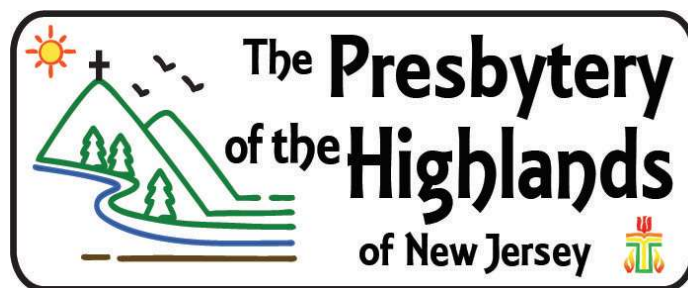
Items to Report:

In addition, the Nominating Committee reports that applications for Commissioners to the 227th General Assembly (2026) and for the Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) will be received during the months of September and October. Elections will be held at the November Presbytery meeting. Applications will be accepted using the online form only. The link for the application will be available soon.

Information from the Office of the General Assembly regarding service as a Commissioner to the 227th General Assembly:

- Committee Meetings: June 22–24, 2026, conducted online via Zoom. Attendance is required.
- Travel Days: June 25–26, 2026, for most commissioners and advisory delegates.
- Orientation/Preparation: June 27, 2026, is a full day of commissioner activities.
- Plenary Sessions: June 28 – July 2, 2026, held in person at the Baird Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Attendance in person is required; there is no Zoom option.

Please note: Service as a commissioner requires full participation in both the online committee sessions and the in-person plenary sessions. If you are unable to commit to both, you cannot serve as a commissioner.



NOMINATIONS FOR 2026 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(For yourself or another to be considered by the Presbytery)

June 22 - July 2 , 2026

June 22 – Convenes online (plenary and Committees)

June 23 – 24 – Committee Meetings Online

June 25 -26 – Plenary Prep and Travel

June 27 – Community Day

June 28 -Worship in local Congregations and Plenary

June 29 – July 2 Plenary and Moderator Election

Name _____

Address _____

Teaching Elder _____ Ruling Elder _____ or Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAD) _____
(age 17 – 24 by first day of

Assembly)

Church _____

Local Church Involvement

Presbytery Involvement

Have you attended General Assembly as a Commissioner before? If so, when?

Have you attended General Assembly on your own before? If so, when?

Tell us about yourself:

What excites you or concerns you about G.A.?

What excites you or concerns you about the church today?

Notes:

If you are nominating someone other than yourself, please make sure your nominee is willing to serve and will be available to serve if elected.

Expenses for commissioners are paid by General Assembly.

This form will be submitted to the Presbytery Nominating Committee. All submissions will be reviewed by the committee and evaluated on the basis of involvement in the work of the church, number of times nominee has served as a commissioner, and balance in reference to church membership and representation criteria. The committee will then make recommendations to the presbytery for elections. All nominees will be on the ballot.

Please return this form electronically to office@highlandspresbyteryj.org by Friday, November 3, 2023

Expectations – Necessary to report back to the Presbytery

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT TEAM REPORT SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

CDT-1

June 2025

The Church Development team met at the new church development, 1001 Worshipping Community: Sanctuary and Seed, located at the former Christ Presbyterian Church in Martinsville on Wednesday June 18.

We received a tour of the facility and grounds and discussed ways in which CDT can support this new ministry.

Goals from this gathering:

appoint a CDT member as a liaison to S&S

approve a covenant between S&S and Highlands Presbytery, similar to the one that S&S has with the Boundbrook Presbyterian Church.

CDT-2

July 2025

On Wednesday, July 16, CDT held their monthly meeting.

We reviewed the draft covenant that was provided to us from S&S and made a few modifications. Attached.

Motion made and approved: Covenant between S&S and Highlands Presbytery.

This covenant has been passed along and should be available to the ACT.

CDT-3

Sarah Green will serve as the liaison between CDT and S&S. Merideth will also remain involved with supporting S&S. Other members of the team also expressed a willingness to support this ministry, such as providing music once of month if so desired.

CDT-4

CDT feels strongly about providing financial support to this new church development. At one point in this history of Newton Presbytery, money from the sale of church facilities was set aside for NCD and the Church Development Team.

CDT-5

CDT would like to present the following motion to the ACT

Motion made and approved at the CDT July 16 stated meeting: Motion to reserve 10% of funds from church closures for the purpose of supporting new worshipping communities within the presbytery.

CDT-6

Other items to share:

Ray Jones will lead a webinar on: church development trends in the post-pandemic world, evangelism, and innovation. Thursday, Oct. 2 at 7:00

CDT-7

Summer Book Study: led by Sarah Green on Thursdays at 11:00 via zoom

["Becoming a Future-Ready Church: 8 Shifts to Encourage and Empower the Next Generation of Leaders"](#) by RNS Projects Editor and National Reporter Adelle M. Banks, Daniel Yang and Warren Bird.

CDT-8

New Grant Program: Who is my Neighbor? Who is My Neighbor is a process of using your congregation's demographics to learn about the people in your neighborhood and ministry opportunities. Complete the Who is My Neighbor program and your session can apply for a \$1000 grant to reach out in mission and ministry to your neighbors.

CDT-9

CDT provides Liaisons to congregations in transition and helps support them with their discernment studies (Turn the Page). This discernment study and additional resources can be found on the Presbytery webpage.

CDT-10

CDT is currently supporting five congregations that are in transition.

Submitted by:

Rev. Carie Stanely-Morgan Co-Chair of CDT

COVENANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN SANCTUARY + SEED (S+S) AND THE PRESBYTERY OF THE HIGHLANDS

*APPROVED BY THE CHURCH DEVELOPMENT TEAM
WITH SLIGHT MODIFICATIONS*

JULY 16, 2025

I. Theological Foundation

Sanctuary + Seed (S+S) is a validated ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), formally recognized as a 1001 New Worshiping Community under the care and jurisdiction of the Presbytery of the Highlands. As an innovative ministry rooted in eco-theology, land stewardship, and creative worship, S+S embodies an alternative yet faithful expression of Christian discipleship and witness, grounded in a theological commitment to the tending and care of the earth as entrusted by God in Genesis 2:15. This commitment includes care for soil, water, plants, people, and more-than-human creation, reflecting a symbiotic relationship that is mutually beneficial and offered as an act of worship to the Lord, honoring the interconnectedness woven into the creation story.

This covenant affirms the Presbytery of the Highlands' role as the ecclesial body providing oversight, care, and support for S+S as a ministry of Word and Sacrament within its geographic bounds and under its governance.

II. Statement of Relationship

This covenant formalizes the relationship between S+S and the Presbytery of the Highlands as one of mutual accountability, pastoral care, and collaborative mission. The Presbytery serves as the mid-council overseeing S+S's standing as a validated ministry while affirming its operational and programmatic independence.

III. Presbytery Liaison

The Church Development Team of the Presbytery of the Highlands will appoint a liaison or team of liaisons who will:

Serve as the primary point of contact between the Presbytery and S+S.

Provide guidance on matters of polity, governance, and compliance.

Offer pastoral care, counsel, and support to S+S leadership.

Facilitate access to denominational and Presbytery resources.

IV. Presbytery Support and Shared Resources

The Presbytery of the Highlands commits to exploring and clarifying ways it can assist S+S's ministry through:

Information and Insight: Offering guidance on Presbyterian polity, governance, and best practices for validated ministries.

Media/Publicity: Providing access to Presbytery communications channels (website, newsletter, social media) for promotion of S+S events and programs.

Invitations to Presbytery-led trainings and workshops relevant to ministry and leadership development.

Facilitating connections to committees, resources, and congregational networks.

Providing introductions to denominational and Presbytery grant opportunities that could sustain S+S's financial viability.

Financial Support: The Presbytery will entertain requests for financial support for specific needs and grant opportunities.

V. Shared Commitment to Creation Care

In mutual recognition of the church's call to care for God's creation, this covenant affirms a shared commitment to address the urgent realities of climate change and ecological justice. The Presbytery of the Highlands and S+S will:

Foster opportunities for learning, dialogue, and collaboration about the health and well-being of all creation, especially the land and watersheds in our region.

Explore joint initiatives that help congregations and ministries become better stewards of the earth.

Encourage faithful action by the broader Presbytery to contribute to ecological restoration, sustainability practices, and education.

Promote participation and advocacy for the health of soil, the earth, water, more-than-human creatures, and humanity as interconnected parts of God's creation.

VI. Reporting and Accountability

S+S will provide regular updates to the Church Development Team to ensure transparent communication and mutual trust. The frequency and format of these reports will be determined in consultation with the Church Development Team liaison. Options may include:

quarterly written reports summarizing key ministry activities, financial status, partnerships, and emerging needs. Report levels of engagement, ministry impact.

An annual presentation to the Presbytery gathered body.

VII. Mutual Participation

S+S ecclesial representative commits to participating as appropriate in the life and mission of the Presbytery of the Highlands, including:

Attendance at Presbytery meetings.

Offering workshops, retreats, or presentations that highlight the ministry of S+S and its contributions to the Presbytery's wider mission.

The Presbytery encourages its members and leaders to attend S+S events and worship gatherings as a sign of mutual support and connection.

VIII. Review and Renewal

This covenant will be reviewed annually to reflect on the relationship, clarify expectations, and address any changes in circumstances. Either party may propose amendments at any time.

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda

None.

Items for Action

None.

Items for Report

From the May 12, 2025 meeting:

CPM-1

Laura Choi (Candidate): Laura will graduate from New Brunswick Theological Seminary on May 24. Laura's annual consultation with CPM will be held on September 8.

CPM-2

Tricia Hayes (CRE Aspirant): Tricia will apply to the Morristown Medical Center CPE Program and continue her field ed at the Community Presbyterian Church of Chester.

CPM-3

Ben Willans (Candidate): Ben's Annual Consultation was held. Ben has accepted a position as the Health and Social Care Chaplain for NHS Highlands (Scotland) beginning on June 9.

CPM-4

CPM will lead worship at the May Presbytery meeting. Rev. Chris Doyle will preach and elders Susan Vigilante-Williams and Craig Barth will assist.

CPM-5

CRE Form 1d (Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding an Aspirant for CRE) was developed.

CPM-6

The Synod's documents on their CRE and CEP (Congregational Equipping Plans) were discussed (further discussion will be ongoing).

Respectfully submitted,

Kathi Heath and Chris Doyle, CPM Co-Moderators

PROPERTY AND INSURANCE TEAM REPORT SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

P&I-1

Wharton (WUCC) lease with the Morris Community Church (MCC)

At its May 19 meeting, after the Stated Clerk reviewed it for compliance with the Book of Order, the Property & Insurance Team approved a lease agreement for WUCC to provide space for MCC worship services.

P&I-2

Old Clove Cemetery

Also at its May 19 meeting, the Property and Insurance Team endorsed the Cemetery Board and/or ACT reviewing historical transactions to determine who owns, and is therefore responsible for upkeep, of the Old Clove Cemetery.

P&I-3

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Safety Training

At its July 21 meeting, the team endorsed the plan to host safety training provided by PDA in the Presbytery of the Highlands. It was subsequently determined that the training will be provided on Saturday, November 1, at the Community Church of Chester, estimated time 8:30am – 4pm with lunch included.

P&I-4

Franklin Manse Sale

At its August 18 meeting, the team approved sale of the Franklin Presbyterian Church manse, stipulating ACT's directive that the proceeds be allocated with \$100,000 invested for future pastoral housing and the remainder used to enhance church programs.

Youth Leader Formation Team Report

September 9, 2025



Triennium 2025:

A group of 12 youth and 3 chaperones from the Highlands Presbytery joined with delegations from the Presbytery of North East NJ and the Hudson River Presbytery to attend Triennium 2025! Many thanks to Mae Martella, Steve Gaden and Craig Barth for serving as chaperones.

The group gathered at Morris Plains Presbyterian Church on Sunday, July 27 and returned on Friday morning, August 1st. Despite initial challenges with the bus company, the chaperones and youth stayed positive and had a wonderful time! Mae Martella, Triennium Registrar for the Presbytery of the Highlands, has shared that almost all of the youth expressed a desire to go again in 3 years, either a second time as a high school participant or as a college volunteer. We hope you will begin encouraging the youth of your church to join the Triennium delegation in 2028.

The chaperones felt that most of the changes made for the Triennium event this year were positive: all events and activities were in a more centralized location, they provided time for delegations to meet and strengthen their own connections and they provided options for the youth to choose what activities/groups were of interest to them to attend. The worship experiences were impactful and engaging.

Triennium resources including complete videos of the worship services are available at:
<https://presbyterianyouthtriennium.org/>

On 8/24 the YLF team hosted a workshop for those involved in children and youth ministry. The event drew 21 participants and was held at Flemington Presbyterian Church. Dr. Clarence Wright, Pastor and Inaugural Fellow in Theology and Ministry at the Fred Rogers Institute engaged us around the theme of: “Be My Neighbor: Community Building as Faith Practice.” Through a series of thought and heart provoking questions, Dr. Wright modeled how to support youth and adults in connecting around questions about where we are from and how the neighborhoods we have lived in helped to form and continue to form who we are. He invited us to consider “Communion” as a verb and to broaden our understanding and practice of communing with one another as we center the act of gathering, eating together while remembering who Jesus is and sharing our own stories together. More information about the workshop and the questions that Dr. Wright opened up to the group will

be available soon on the YLF webpage: <https://highlandspresbytery.org/young-leader-formation-team/>.

Next YLF meeting will be Friday, October 3rd at 9 am.

If you are interested in joining the YLF team, please contact Steve Shussett. We would be happy to welcome you!

2026 BUDGET CREATION WORKSHEET

9/2/2025 Version

Mission & Ministry withdrawal 5.5% of
(7/31 balance plus \$1.5 million from East Hanover)

\$6,270,952.00

Target withdraw rate 4% of Chesnutt Acct (7/31/25)

\$221,024.00

Assumptions 9,705 Number of Members
\$44.00 Per Capita Rate
11% of Total Revenue to IUA
4% of Total Revenue to Synod
18% Uncollectible Per Capita
2.7% Ordained Staff
2.7% Ordained Staff
2.7% Non Ordained Staff

Accounts	Proposed	
	2025 Budget	2026
Revenues		
Per Capita		
140100 Current Year Per Capita	449,007	427,020
140101 CY Uncollected Per Capita	-80,821	-76,864
140200 Prior Year Per Capita	-	-
140300 Future Year Per Capita	-	-
Total Per Capita	368,186	350,156
Missional Giving		
PRESBYTERY Missional Giving		
140132 Undesig Presbytery Missional Giving	27,000	20,000
Total PRESBYTERY Missional Giving	27,000	20,000
Giving Interest Revenue		
140510 Interest	300	
Total Interest	300	0
Revenue Other		
Revenue Reserve		
Draw	8,314	8,840
140899 Chesnutt Fund Draw		
140999 Presby Operating Reserve	244,985	344,902
Total Reserve Draw	253,300	353,742
Endowment Income		
140997 Endowment Income	8,658	10,594
Total Endowment Income	8,658	10,594
Misc Revenue		
140490 Vanco fee offset given	-	-
Total Misc	-	-
Revenue Total	261,958	364,336
Other Revenue		
Total Revenues	657,444	734,493
Expenses		
Administration		
Admin		
150111 Master Liability Insurance	2,671	2,704
150112 Umbrella Insurance Policy	1,133	1,336
150113 Worker Comp Insurance Policy	1,200	1,654
150114 Cyber Liability Insurance	400	528
150115 Managment Liability Insurance	184	255
150116 FSA Admin fees	100	250
150220 Fees/Payroll fees	1,650	1,650
150230 Presbytery Fin Review Fees	6,500	6,800
Total Admin	13,838	15,177
Facilities		
150120 Supplies	1,500	2,200
150130 Postage	650	650
150140 Communication	5,000	5,500
150150 Equipment	5,000	5,500

150160 Utilities	6,000	6,700
150170 Condo Association Dues	16,600	16,600
150190 Software & Technology	6,560	7,000
150210 Cleaning Services	2,200	2,200
150240 Facilities Repairs & Improvements	1,000	1,000
Total Facilities	44,510	47,350

Compensation

Presbytery Leader/EP

151300 PL Salary	64,356	66,094
151301 PL Housing	43,350	44,520
151310 PL Professional Expense	5,000	5,000
151330 PL Pension/Medical	39,259	47,237
151340 PL Continuing Education	2,000	2,000
151350 PL Travel	6,000	6,000
151380 PL SECA	8,174	8,462
Total Presbytery	168,139	179,313

Leader/EP Financial

Administrator

151410 FA Salary	67,376	53,404
151411 FA 403b	12,128	9,613
151420 FA Social Security/MED	5,154	4,085
151430 FA Group Term Life	120	120
151440 FA Continuing Education	300	1,000
151450 FA Travel	750	
Total Financial Administrator	85,828	68,222

Office Manager

151510 OM Salary	46,223	63,295
151511 OM 403b	8,320	11,393
151520 OM Social Security/MED	3,536	4,842
151530 OM Group Term Life	120	120
151540 OM Continuing Education	300	300
151550 OM Travel	300	
Total Office Manager	58,800	79,949

Resource Staff/Stated Clerk

151710 RSS/SC Salary	48,537	49,847
151712 RSS/SC Housing	28,681	29,455
151713 RSS/SC Pension/Medical	33,204	37,272
151714 R&SC SECA	5,907	6,066
151740 RSS/SC Continuing Ed	1,500	1,500
151750 RSS/SC Travel	2,000	2,000
151751 RSS/SC Professional	-	-
Expense Total Resource	119,829	126,142

Staff/Stated Clerk

Communications Coordinator

CC Salary	42,900
CC 403b	7,722
CC Social Security/MED	3,282
CC Group Term Life	120
CC Continuing Education	300
Total Communications Coordinator	54,324

Staff Travel

2,000

Total Compensation

432,596 509,950

Total Administration

490,944 572,477

Presbytery Teams

Administrative Coordinating Team

150201 ACT - Committee Expense	2,000	2,000
150206 ACT - Presbytery Meetings	4,000	4,500
152021 ACT- Vice-Moderator Training	1,000	1,000
152024 ACT - Discernment Process	2,000	0
152310 Johnsonburg Camp & Conference Ctr	30,000	30,000
154110 Worship Committee Expense	1,500	1,500
Total Administrative Coordinating Team	40,500	39,000

Committee on Ministry

150221 COM Committe Expenses	500	400
152225 COM Boundary Training	2,500	2,500

152240 COM Conferences & Retreats	3,000	3,000
15xxxx COM Background Check		200
Total Committee on Ministry	6,000	6,100
Committee on Prep for Ministry		
150231 COPM Committee Expenses	100	100
152360 COPM Career Counseling	1,000	1,500
Total Committee on Prep for Ministry	1,100	1,600
Youth Development		
154250 Young Leadership Development	-	-
154260 Triennium	6,000	6,000
155260 Workshops/Training	2,000	2,000
Total Youth Development	8,000	8,000
Church Development		
154440 Workshops	2,000	2,500
154450 Exploring Online Community	3,000	2,500
Total Church Development	5,000	5,000
Total Presbytery Teams	60,600	59,700
Missional Partners		
Per Capita Paid to GA		
153010 Per Capita Paid TO GA	98,617	80,794
Total Per Capita Paid to GA	98,617	
GA Per Capita Paid to Synod		
153020 Per Capita Paid TO SYNOD	26,298	29,380
Total Per Capita Paid to Synod	26,298	
Shared Missional Support -Syn/ GA		
153120 Shared Missional Support - SYNOD	2,400	
Total Shared Missional Support -Syn/ GA	2,400	
Total Missional Partners	127,314	110,174
Total Expenses	678,858	742,351
Net Total	-21,414	-7,858