

The 24th Stated Meeting of The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey

February 24, 2026

*(to be approved at the 25th 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 24th Stated Meeting on February 24, 2026 on the ZOOM platform.

The Moderator, Teaching Elder Ryon Herin (Rockaway), called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the opening prayer.

The Vice-Moderator, Ruling Elder Donna Rahmann (Fairmount), introduced the meeting's theme and informing Scripture, Isaiah 55:9-11.

INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

The Moderator introduced the Zoom Meeting Process. In the absence of business to be voted on, it was unnecessary to review the voting process.

FORMATION OF THE ROLL

The roll was formed as Commissioners logged onto the meeting. Resource Staff/Stated Clerk, Rev. Dr. Steven H. Shussett, certified that a quorum was present.

<u>Congregation</u>	<u>Teaching Elder</u>		<u>Ruling Elder</u>	
Allamuchy, Panther Valley	Rev. James Vespoli	A		A
Alpha	Vacant	V		A
Andover	Rev. Pamela Osborne	P	Sandra Wozniak	P
Basking Ridge (3)	Rev. Dennis Jones	P	Scott Lakefield	P
	Rev. Dr. Maureen Paterson	P		A
				A
Bedminster, Lamington (2)	Rev. Scott Stolte	P	Bisham Singh	P A
Belvidere	Rev. Dr. Pamela Szurek	A		A
Blairstown	Rev. David Harvey	P	Lisa Besser	P
Boonton	Rev. Nathaniel Fryer	A	Meg Meyer	P
Bound Brook (2)	Vacant	V	Jamie Breeding	P
				A

Branchville (2)	Rev. Adrienne Poissant	P	Sandra Carlisle	P A
Califon, Fairmount	Rev. Mike Atzert	P		A
Califon, Lower Valley	Rev. Tex Culton	P	Warren Newman	P
Cedar Knolls, Hildale Park	Rev. Ross Lang	A		A
Chatham Township (3)	Rev. Thomas Brown	P	David Whitman	P A A
Chatham, Ogden Memorial	Rev. Kathi Heath	P	Douglas Kent	P
Chester	Rev. Christopher Scrivens	A		A
Clinton	Rev. Dr. Tracey Henry	P	Pete Peterson	P
Delaware	Vacant	V		A
Delaware, 1st Oxford	Vacant	V		A
Denville, Union Hill	Rev. Timothy Clarkson	P	John Ware	P
Dover, First Memorial	Rev. Alan Schaefer (HR)	E	Roger Lindahl	P
East Hanover, Kitchell	Rev. Hannah Allred	A		A
Flanders (2)	Rev. Cliff Acklam	P	Diane Wood	P A
Flemington (3)	Rev. Amy Lincoln	P	Jamie Evans Christopher Rowland Robert Seneman	P P P
Florham Park, Calvary	Rev. Carie Stanley	P	Jerri Bonosky	P
Franklin (2)	Rev. Julie Raffety	E		A A
Frenchtown	Rev. Emily McCachren	P	Jennifer Campbell	P
Gillette, Meyersville	Rev. Stefanie Muntzel	P		A
Hackettstown (2)	Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook	A	Sharon Heil	P A
Hampton, Musconetcong Valley	Stephanie Farley, CRE	A	Tom Fisher	P
Hillsborough, TAFPC	Rev. Eric Lai	P		A
Lambertville	Vacant	V		A
Lambertville, 2nd English	Vacant	V	Pat Materson	P
Long Valley (2)	Rev. Heather Morrison Yaden	P	Tricia Hayes	P A
Long Valley, Highlands	Vacant	V	Ruth Babula	P
Madison	Rev. Carol Howard	P	Becky Moody	P

Martinsville, Seed & Sanctuary	Rev. Lissette Gonzalez-Sosa	A		A
Mendham	Rev. Scot McCachren	P		A
Milford	Rev. Dr. Linda Erkert-Bullock	A		A
Milford, Alexandria	Rev. Nicholas Hatch	P		A
Milford, Holland Bible	Rev. Geoff Stanley	A		A
Mine Hill	Vacant	V	Jane Smith	P
Morris Plains	Rev. Donald Brown	A		A
Morristown (3)	Rev. Daniel Vigilante	E		A
	Rev. Audrey Webber	A		A
				A
New Vernon	Rev. William Stone	A	Donna Miller	P
Newton (2)	Rev. Michael Cuppett	A	Gerald Chandler	P
				A
Newton, Yellow Frame	Rev. Michael Nelms	P		A
Oak Ridge	Rev. Dr. Christopher Doyle	P	Dave McDonald	P
Parsippany	Rev. Donald Bragg	A		A
Phillipsburg, Harmony	Vacant	V		A
Phillipsburg, Pilgrim	Vacant	V	Debra McGuinness	A
Pittstown, Bethlehem (2)	Rev. Linda Gaden	E	Ralph Fader	P
				A
Pluckemin	Rev. Ian Rankine	A		A
Port Murray, Rockport	Rev. Jeff Walters	E		A
Ringoes, 1st Amwell	Vacant	V		A
Ringoes, Kirkpatrick	Rev. Dr. Barbara Booth-Jarmon	P	Pat Wright	P
Ringwood (2)	Rev. Arlene Romaine	A		A
				A
Rockaway (2)	Rev. Ryon Herin	P	Vivian Santos	P
				A
Somerset	Rev. Nancy Nalepa-Skibo	P	Tom Hauck	P
Sparta (2)	Rev. Robin Miller Curras	E		A
				A
Stanhope	Rev. Pamela Osborne	P	Carol Barry	P
Stewartsville	Rev. Stephen Choi	P	Cindy Bowman	P
Stewartsville, Old Greenwich	Rev. Mary Beth Mardis-Lecroy	P		A
Stirling	Rev. Stefanie Muntzel	P		A
Stockton	Rev. David Snyder	A	Irene McKnight	P

Succasunna	Rev. Timothy Clarkson	P	Natalie Lowry	P
Sussex	Rev. Barry Young	P	Charles Bates	P
Titusville	Vacant	V		A
Wantage, Beemerville	Rev. Barry Young	P		A
Warren, Trinity United	Rev. Amy Sandlin	P		A
Washington	Rev. James Scovell	A		A
West Milford	Rev. Dr. Christopher Doyle	P		A
Wharton	Rev. Sarah Green	A		A
Wharton, Berkshire Valley	Vacant	V		A
Wharton, Hungarian	Vacant	V	Karen Lance	P
Whippany	Rev. Sarah Cairatti	A	Josh Willans	P

Teaching Elders Engaged in a Validated Ministry

Rev. Dr. Edwin Aponte (<i>Dean & Professor at Drew University</i>)	P
Rev. Joanne Miller	E
Rev. Christine Davies	P
Rev. Lissette Gonzalez Sosa (<i>Seed + Sanctuary</i>)	P
Rev. John C. Kile	A
Rev. Jeanne Radak (<i>Presbytery Leader – Highlands Presbytery</i>)	P
Rev. Chad Rodgers (<i>Director of Activities - Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center</i>)	P
Rev. Dr. Steven Shussett, Stated Clerk (<i>Highlands Presbytery</i>)	P
Rev. Dr. Angella Son (<i>Professor – Drew University</i>)	P
Rev. Caroline Unzaga	A
Rev. Benjamin Willans	A

Members at Large

Rev. Peter Billings	A
Rev. M. Elizabeth Blythe	A
Rev. Justin Choi	P
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	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 Crouner	E
Rev. William Culton	P
Rev. James D'Angelo	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. 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. Linda Owens	E
Rev. Barbara Peters	E

Rev. John Potter	P
Rev. Donald Prytherch	P
Rev. Bronc Radak (<i>serving Rockport</i>)	P
Rev. Jack Roan	E
Rev. Lorrie Rowland-Skinner	E
Rev. Diane Ruffle	E
Rev. Alan Schaefer (<i>serving Dover</i>)	E
Rev. Bruce Schundler	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	P
Rev. Dr. Nancy Young	E

Ruling Elders by Virtue of Office

John Crozier, First Presbyterian Church of Boonton, Member of ACC	
Alan Ford, Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Pittstown, Past Presbytery Moderator	
Lisa Gray, Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church, Stewartsville, Past Presbytery Moderator	
Alec Jain, First Presbyterian Church of Mendham, Member of ACC	
Joe Martinoni, First Presbyterian Church of Rockaway, Past Presbytery Moderator	
Ken Nickel, First Presbyterian Church of Boonton, Past Presbytery Moderator	
Donna Rahmann, Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon, Member of ACC	

Others in Attendance

Sonja Gaertner, Office Manager & Attendance Clerk, Presbytery of the Highlands	
Zayn Silva, Communications Coordinator, Presbytery of the Highlands	
Diane Reed, Frenchtown Presbyterian Church	
Phil McCloughan, First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville	
Donald Pidock, First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville	

Total in Attendance – 100

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

ENROLLMENT OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS AND GUESTS

Guests: Don Pidcock, First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville
 Phil McCloughan, First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville
 Elise Bates Russell, Executive Director, Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center.

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

EXPLANATION OF UNANIMOUS CONSENT

The Stated Clerk explained Unanimous Consent before the Moderator presented the following:

ITEMS FOR 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 November 11, 2025.

SC-2

Approved the minutes of the Special Called meeting held on January 13, 2026.

SC-3

Approve excuses for the Presbytery meeting of February 24, 2026.

SC-4

Receive the 2025 Annual Reports for the Presbytery of the Highlands of NJ.

SC-5

Receive the report of the Administration and Coordinating Commission.

SC-6

Receive the report of the Commission on Ministry.

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

The Stated Clerk's Report was received as follows:

Items for Consent Agenda:

SC-1

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SC-3

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SC-4

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SC-6

Receive the report of the Commission on Ministry.

Items for Action:

None

Items to Report:

SC-7

The Stated Clerk advised the Presbytery on a matter concerning G-2.0509 “Renunciation of Jurisdiction,” as follows:

On the Renunciation of Jurisdiction of Scott Foster

G-2.0509, the paragraph entitled, “Renunciation of Jurisdiction,” reads:
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.

In summary:

On August 19, 2021, allegations of offense by then-Rev. Scott Foster were received. Following a thorough investigation and an attempt at mediation, the matter went to the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission, where Mr. Foster was found guilty on three of four charges, for which he received the censure of Temporary Exclusion, the second most severe of the four degrees of censure. It is applied for a more aggravated offense

and shall be either for a definite period of time, or, as in this case, for a period defined by completion of supervised rehabilitation imposed by the permanent judicial commission. Mr. Foster appealed this verdict, and the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission denied his appeal.

Since February 2023, the now Commission on Ministry has sent multiple certified letters to Mr. Foster, each repeating the terms by which that temporary exclusion might be removed. There has been no response to any of these letters, including the last of September 11, 2025.

According to G-2.0508 “Failure to Engage in Validated Ministry,” there is no standard amount of time or number of opportunities to meet the terms of censure. If a minister *wants* to be restored, the Commission on Ministry would work with the person until some conclusion is reached.

In this case, however, when a person is intentionally **not** pursuing removal of the censure, the Presbytery would determine what amount of time is reasonable, per G-3.0306 which states, “Each presbytery determines the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are its members and validates the ministries in which they are to be engaged.”

Therefore, relying on G-2.0508, it is determined that, as quoted, “If after three years the minister of the Word and Sacrament does not meet the criteria for validated ministry or membership-at-large, the presbytery may delete that person’s name from the roll of membership”

The September 11, 2025 letter notes the three-year time frame and repeats the terms by which the temporary censure might be removed, before concluding:

With this certified letter, if the Presbytery receives no response by 30 January 2026 from you indicating your intent to follow the process detailed above, and to be restored to active membership as a validated member or member-at-large, the Commission on Ministry will consider that you have renounced the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). At that time it will be recommended that you be removed from the rolls permanently at the stated meeting of Presbytery immediately following that deadline.

Having received no response by the stated deadline, the Commission on Ministry, by virtue of the commission powers designated by the Presbytery, removed Mr. Foster from the Presbytery’s rolls at its meeting of February 3, 2026. His renunciation of jurisdiction

has been reported to the Interim Unified Agency of the Presbyterian Church (USA), fulfilling the administrative action required by the Constitution.

In conclusion, to quote the final paragraphs of G-2.0509 “Renunciation of Jurisdiction”:

No congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be permitted to employ, for pay or as a volunteer, a former minister of the Word and Sacrament (teaching elder) who has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a disciplinary proceeding as the accused.

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, in which case the provision of Church Discipline shall apply.”

SC-8

The Presbytery’s Manual of Operations for the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey is available on the Presbytery’s website. It includes:

1. The Presbytery Bylaws and Guidelines (November 11, 2025), including:
 - a. Child and Youth and Adults with Vulnerabilities Protection Policy (September 9, 2025)
 - b. Sexual Misconduct Policy, including Boundary Training (September 9, 2025)
 - c. Electronic Meeting Policy (September 9, 2025)
 - d. Personnel Policy and Practices
2. Committee and Team Descriptions
3. Ethical Standards for Ministers
4. Commission on Ministry Policies and Terms of Call, including:
 - a. Family Leave Policy
 - b. Dissolution Agreements
 - c. Background Check Application
 - d. Criminal Background Check
 - e. Ethical Standards for Ordained Officers
 - f. Ethical Standards for Ministers (November 11, 2025)
 - g. Commissioned Ruling Elder Policy (September 9, 2025)
5. Property and Insurance Policies and Resources
6. Commission on Preparation for Ministry Handbook and Policies (September 9, 2025)
7. Presbytery Staff and Volunteer Position Descriptions
8. Financial Management Policies and Guidelines

SC-9

D-3.0602 Quorum for a Permanent Judicial Commission

b. Roster of Former Members

“The stated clerk shall keep a current roster of those members of the permanent judicial commission whose terms have expired within the past six years. The names shall be arranged alphabetically within classes beginning with the most recent class. The stated clerk shall report the roster annually to the council or councils.”

Class of 2023

- Rev. Dr. Jefferson Hatch HR
- Elder Alec Jain (Morris Plains/Presbyterian)
- Rev. Dennis Jones (Basking Ridge/Presbyterian)
- Elder Ray Smickle (Belvidere/United)

Class of 2025

- Rev. Barbara Aspinall HR
- Elder Donna Keoppel (Boonton/First)
- Elder Stuart Ours (Washington/First)
- Elder Mel Prestamo (Long Valley/Presbyterian)

SC-10

The Presbytery is reminded that the rolls and registers of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey are kept at the Presbytery Office.

SC-11

The Presbytery is reminded that, for the period of June 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026, the Presbytery's insurance carrier is Guide One, and its agent is Brown & Brown. This arrangement is through the Presbytery's relationship with the New Jersey Partnership Insurance Program.

INVITATION TO DIGITAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Assuming the gavel, Vice-Moderator Rahmann invited participants to place their announcements in the Chat Function.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS

Vice-Moderator Rahmann welcomed the following new ruling elder commissioners: Pat Wright, Ruling Elder, Kirkpatrick Memorial

INTRODUCTION OF ZAYN SILVA, COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Taking the gavel, Moderator Herin introduced the Presbytery's new Communications Coordinator, Zayn Silva, who then offered words of greeting.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

Moderator Herin invited Commission on Ministry Co-Moderator Jacqui Van Vliet (HR) to the podium, who then introduced two persons in new pastoral relationships:
The Rev. Adrienne Poissant, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Branchville
The Rev. Scott Stolte, Pastor, Lamington Presbyterian Church, Bedminster.

COMMISSIONING OF PERSONS TO COMMISSIONED PRESIDING ELDER

Rev. Van Vliet then presented to the Presbytery two persons for commissioning to Commissioned Presiding Elder:

Don Pidcock, First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville

Phil McCloughan, First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville.

Having completed both the *Preaching God's Word in the World* and *Presiding at the Table: A Class for Ruling Elders* classes, by their inclusion on the Presbytery's Pulpit Supply List, and as approved by the Commission on Ministry at its February 2026 meeting, Moderator Herin presided over the commissioning liturgy.

DIGITAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Vice-Moderator read the Digital Announcements that were collected from the chat.

CONTEMPLATIVE PAUSE

Vice-Moderator Rahmann led the Presbytery in a time of quiet reflection.

JOHNSONBURG CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

Taking the gavel, Moderator Herin introduced Elise Bates Russell, Executive Director of the Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center, to bring greetings and information to the Presbytery.

DISCERNMENT PROCESS AND FUNDING MODEL PRESENTATION

The Moderator introduced Rev. David Young (HR) to update the Presbytery on the Discernment Process and Funding Model (attached). He spoke on behalf of Presbytery Leader Jeanne Radak.

NECROLOGY

Moderator Herin and Vice-Moderator Rahmann honored those ruling elders and teaching elders who died in 2025.

NEW BUSINESS

There being no new business, a motion was requested to adjourn the meeting. By means of **UNANIMOUS CONSENT**, this was **MOVED, SECONDED, AND CARRIED**.

ADJOURNMENT

Moderator Herin closed the meeting with prayer at 8:05pm.

Attested:

Steven H. Shussett, Stated Clerk

Recording Secretary: Jamie Evans (Flemington)

ATTACHMENTS:

Updates from the Discernment Process & Funding Model Initiative

Prepared by Presbytery Leader Jeanne Radak, and presented by Rev. David Young (HR), due to Jeanne's illness.

Discernment Process Update

Over the past several months, we have continued to move thoughtfully and intentionally through the work of discernment.

In the fall of 2025, we:

- Updated many of our governing and guiding documents to reflect the new **Vocation Statement**. We still have more to go.
- Revised or created position descriptions for our committees, teams, and commissions to ensure clarity of purpose and accountability. The teams are encouraged to be creative and work collaboratively with other teams.
- Elected new members to these teams in November. Only two teams do we still need members. Permanent Judicial Commission and COM

During January and February 2026

- Co-moderators of our teams and commissions gathered at Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center for shared learning focused on leadership formation and community-building — including the memorable experience of baking bread together as a metaphor for collaborative ministry.
- Most teams have now met in person for orientation to build community and to review their team descriptions.
- Each orientation was designed to reflect the team's unique responsibilities. Creative tools were used to spark imagination and build relationships:
 - Some teams built with Legos to explore structure and collaboration.

- One team painted images of what innovation might look like for our presbytery.
- Another team will be quilting together to discuss how we are connected to our past, present and future.

This has not been symbolic work alone. There are many concrete action steps emerging from the discernment process, and assignments are already underway.

As the year progresses, we will continue to share updates and measurable outcomes from this work.

Funding Model Initiative

Last year, the **Presbytery of the Highlands'** project, *Developing a Financial Sustainability Program for Your Church*, served as a pre-pilot for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Funding Model Team as they designed a nationwide experiment to explore new approaches to church funding.

We are pleased to share that:

- The GA Funding Model Team is now launching the national version of our project.
- A team from our presbytery will participate in cohort groups and training events.
- Online workshops will be available to our congregations.

Many of you have expressed a desire for additional resources and assistance in developing sustainable financial plans. We will continue to provide resources for our sessions and congregations with:

- Practical tools for financial planning
- Guided cohort learning for those who wish to have conversations with other congregations
- Financial Sustainability planning support
- An opportunity to refine or expand work begun last year

This is not simply about budgets — it is about sustainability, ministry alignment, and faithful stewardship for the future.

If your congregation is interested in participating or exploring this opportunity further, please reach out.

In the past the late winter presbytery meeting has been the annual meeting. There are still some elements to that in this meeting which is in February instead of March this year. You will see in the documents that we have a new format for the annual report. Fancier than in the past. With a communications coordinator and a communications team, we will be seeing some changes in the format of how we communicate.

We look forward to upcoming presbytery gatherings and meetings. In April we will gather for worship at our New Church Development – Sanctuary and Seed. In May we will be celebrating our 5th anniversary with a Hybrid Presbytery meeting at Johnsonburg. More creative opportunities are in the planning stages.

I am sorry I not able to speak to you tonight because of illness and loss of voice. I am thankful for David for stepping in for me to provide this update. The goal is to continue to provide more updates and stories about our progress as the year moves forward.

Administration and Coordinating Commission Report February 24, 2026

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

From the December 11, 2025 Special Meeting:

ACC-1

Called Special Presbytery Meeting:

The ACC approved a request from the Commission on Ministry (COM) to call a special presbytery meeting for the examination of Benjamin Willans for ordination to a validated chaplain ministry. The special presbytery meeting will be held on January 13, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

ACC-2

Authorized Signers:

The ACC approved the following individuals as authorized signers for corporate/legal and financial documents:

Corporate and Legal Documents:

- President of the Corporation – Rev. David Harvey
- Secretary of the Corporation – Rev. Dr. Steven H. Shussett
- Treasurer – Elder Rebecca A. Moody

Financial Documents:

- President of the Corporation – Rev. David Harvey
- Secretary of the Corporation – Rev. Dr. Steve Shussett
- Treasurer – Elder Becky Moody
- Presbytery Leader – Rev. Jeanne Radak
- Co-Moderator of the ACC – Rev. Stefanie Muntzel

ACC-3

Terms of Call:

The ACC approved the 2026 Terms of Call for Presbytery Leader Rev. Jeanne Radak and Stated Clerk Rev. Dr. Steven Shussett.

ACC-4

Communications Coordinator Appointment:

The ACC approved the appointment of Zayn Silva as Communications Coordinator. The compensation package was reviewed and is included in the approved 2026 budget.

ACC-5

Financial Review:

The ACC reviewed the preliminary financial statements

ACC-6

Young Adult Advisory Delegate:

It was reported that a candidate for Young Adult Advisory Delegate to the 227th General Assembly (2026) has not yet been identified. The deadline to submit a name is December 24, 2025.

From the January 7, 2026 Meeting:

ACC-7

Financial Report:

Elder Becky Moody presented the preliminary 2025 financial report.

ACC-8

Team Formation:

The ACC reviewed team descriptions, and members volunteered for or were assigned to presbytery work teams.

ACC-9

Personnel Committee:

The Personnel Committee reported that its work on hiring a Communications Coordinator has been completed.

ACC-10

2026 Stated Presbytery Meetings:

The Stated Clerk reported the following dates and formats for the 2026 stated meetings:

- February 24 – Zoom
- May 12 – Hybrid
- September 9 – Hybrid
- November 17 – Zoom

ACC-11

General Assembly Commissioners:

The Stated Clerk reported that the names of General Assembly Commissioners were submitted to the General Assembly.

ACC-12

Overtures Submitted:

Following the Presbytery's vote on November 11, the approved overtures "*Preventing Conflicting Ordinations*" (OVT-14) and "*On Paid Administrative Leave*" (OVT-15) were submitted.

ACC-13

Authorization to Celebrate the Lord's Supper:

The ACC approved the annual authorization for Presbytery Leader Rev. Jeanne Radak, Stated Clerk Rev. Dr. Steve Shussett, and Specialized Minister Rev. Chad Rodgers to celebrate the Lord's Supper in 2026 as required by their responsibilities, in accordance with W-3.0410.

ACC-14

Consent of Presbytery for Officers to Act:

The ACC requested approval of the Consent of Presbytery for designated officers to act on its behalf, in accordance with the Bylaws of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey. The following officers are authorized to sign on behalf of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey in matters relating to the corporation and/or real estate transactions:

- President of the Corporation
- Secretary of the Corporation
- Treasurer of the Corporation
- Moderators of Administrative Commissions when real estate matters and/or congregational dissolution fall within their charge

ACC-15

Certification of Email Vote:

The ACC certified its email vote approved on November 1, 2025, to forward the revised Blair Academy Bylaws to the Presbytery for approval. This action was taken in accordance with the Presbytery bylaws, which state:

“When e-mail is used for sharing information and coming to consensus on a matter, the resulting decision shall be confirmed or rejected by vote at the next meeting of the Presbytery, committee, or other Presbytery entity.”

From the February 4, 2026 Meeting:

ACC-16

Treasurer’s Report:

Treasurer Elder Becky Moody reported that the 2025 budget closed very close to the budgeted amount. She noted that these figures are preliminary and do not represent the audited financial report, which will be completed during February and March.

ACC-17

Presbytery Planning Team:

The Planning Team reported that they are developing themes to guide each presbytery meeting.

ACC-18

Moderator’s Report:

Presbytery Moderator Ryon Herin reported that the first of two presbytery gatherings will be held at Sanctuary and Seed on Saturday, April 4, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

ACC-19

February Presbytery Meeting Agenda:

The ACC reviewed the proposed agenda for the February Presbytery meeting.

ACC-20

Communications Team:

The Communications Team reported that the Presbytery of Highlands has a strong presence across multiple social media platforms, including YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook.

ACC-21

New Jersey Presbytery Insurance Partnership (NJPIP):

Scot McCachern reported that the NJPIP team has met with representatives from Brown

& Brown Insurance. The insurance renewal cycle is currently underway.

ACC-22

Personnel Team:

It was reported that Chad Rodgers will be joining the Personnel Team. Annual staff reviews are still pending and need to be completed.

ACC-23

Worship Team:

The Worship Team reported that they are preparing a worship service for the February presbytery meeting that aligns with the meeting theme and fits within the required time constraints.

ACC-24

Overtures Related to Earth Care:

ACC Co-Moderator Stefanie Muntzel reported that the ACC received a request to approve three overtures related to earth care. At present, the ACC does not have a policy for receiving overtures that do not originate from a session or a presbytery team. The overtures, submitted by Presbyterians for Earth Care, were presented by two minister members of the presbytery but were not generated within the Presbytery of Highlands. Due to timing and process considerations, the ACC recommended that the overtures not be brought to the February presbytery meeting. The overtures have been approved by another presbytery and will be considered by the 227th General Assembly.

ACC-25

Stated Clerk and Resource Staff Report:

Steve Shussett reported that the New Jersey+Long Island presbyteries' "Presiding at the Table" program currently has nine participants, five of whom are from Highlands Presbytery.

He also reported that MissionInsite recently offered an extensive webinar on using demographic data for church planning. The recording and related materials are available on the presbytery website.

Additionally, he reported that a congregation within the presbytery has begun a judicial process, and the stated clerk is assisting with the necessary steps.

ACC-26

Presbytery Leader's Report:

Jeanne Radak reported that moderators of all commissions, teams, and committees have completed orientation. In addition, the ACC, the Commission on Ministry (COM), and the Church Vitality and Discernment Team have completed their orientations. Orientation sessions for remaining teams have been scheduled or will be scheduled

soon.

ACC-27

ICE Resource Development:

Following a conversation during the ACC orientation, it was recommended that a small group be formed to develop a resource sheet for congregations regarding the presence of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on church property. A team has been formed to undertake this work.

ACC-28

Pastors' Reading Group:

The ACC approved a request from Steve Shussett to develop a pastors' reading group centered on *For Such a Time as This: An Emergency Devotional* by Hanna Reichel. Members of the ACC volunteered to work with him on this initiative.

ACC-29

The ACC voted that the Spring (May 12) and Summer (September 9) presbytery meetings will take place at Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center.

Commission on Ministry Report February 24, 2026

Items for Consent Agenda:

None.

Items for Action:

None.

Items to Report:

From the December 2, 2025 Meeting:

COM-1

Moderator Appointment

- Appointed Rev. David Young as Moderator for the December Session meeting of Alpha Presbyterian Church.
- Reminder: Beginning January 2026, the Moderator honorarium will be \$100 per Session or Congregational meeting.

COM-2

Clergy Care Fund

Approved a request to the Clergy Care Fund in the amount of \$1,500.

COM-3

Special Presbytery Meeting Request

Requested that ACC call a special Presbytery meeting in early January to examine Ben Willans for ordination.

COM-4

Terms of Call Approved

- Rev. David Snyder – Stockton Presbyterian Church

COM-5

Administrative Updates

- Received an update on the development of the online 2026 Terms of Call (TOC) form.
- Beginning January 2026, COM will use Google Drive exclusively for meeting documents.

COM-6

Ordinations and Installations Reported

- Adrienne Poissant (Branchville) was ordained on Sunday, November 16, at Wallingford Presbyterian Church by the Presbytery of Philadelphia on behalf of the Presbytery of the Highlands.
- Rev. Scott Stolte was ordained and installed on November 23 at Lamington Presbyterian Church, Bedminster.

COM-7

Membership and Pulpit Supply

- Approved Rev. Peter Billings as a Member-at-Large.
- Approved Elder Carl Klein for inclusion on the Pulpit Supply list.
- Approved an amendment to the COM Pulpit Supply Policy requiring completion of Presbytery Boundary Training every 36 months in order to remain on the Pulpit Supply list.

COM-8

Boundary Training Compliance

- Those who have not completed Boundary Training for 2025 will receive an email from the Presbytery Leader.

- If Boundary Training is not completed by year's end, the Stated Clerk will notify the Session that the pastor is no longer in compliance with Presbytery policy, and the church's insurance company will be notified.

From the January 6, 2026 Meeting:

COM-9

Transfer of Membership

Approved the transfer of Rev. Robin Palmer-Burton to the Presbytery of the Coastlands to serve as Pastor of Old Tennent Presbyterian Church, Manalapan, NJ.

COM-10

Special Appointment

Appointed a team to plan a recognition of the 70th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women.

COM-11

Terms of Call Approved

- Rev. Heather Morrison Yaden – Long Valley Presbyterian Church
- Rev. Dr. Barbara Booth-Jarmon – Kirkpatrick Memorial Presbyterian Church, Ringoes
- Rev. Sarah Green – Wharton United Community Church
- Rev. Michael Nelms – Yellow Frame Presbyterian Church, Newton
- Rev. Carol Howard – Presbyterian Church of Madison
- Rev. Linda Gaden – Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Pittstown

COM-12

Separation and Dissolution

Received and approved the Separation Ethics and Dissolution Agreement between Rev. Robin Palmer-Burton and Highlands Presbyterian Church.

COM-13

Exit Interview

Completed the exit interview with the Session of United Presbyterian Church of Alpha.

COM-14

One-Year Session Exemptions Approved

- Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon
- Mine Hill Presbyterian Church
- First Presbyterian Church of Berkshire Valley, Wharton

COM-15

Memorandum of Understanding

Approved the 2026 Memorandum of Understanding between the First Presbyterian Church of Succasunna and Union Hill Presbyterian Church, Denville.

From the February 3, 2026 Meeting:

COM-16

Moderator Appointments

- Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook – Highlands Presbyterian Church, Long Valley
- Rev. Jim Scovell – Musconetcong Valley Presbyterian Church, Hampton
- Rev. Jeff Walters – Rockport Presbyterian Church, Port Murray
- Moderator is still needed for Second English Presbyterian Church of Amwell (Mt. Airy)

COM-17

Renunciation of Jurisdiction

Mr. Scott Foster did not meet the required deadline for response despite repeated attempts to contact him, including certified letters. In accordance with the terms outlined in the September 11, 2025 letter, he has renounced the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of the Highlands and was removed from the rolls effective February 3, 2026.

COM-18

Commissioning and Pulpit Supply

Approved the commissioning of:

- Elder Phil McCloughan (Lambertville/First)
- Elder Don Pidcock (Lambertville/First)

Upon completion of required boundary training, they will be authorized to preside at Communion, and their names will be added to the Pulpit Supply list. They will be commissioned at the February Presbytery meeting.

COM-19

Administrative Commissions Approved

- Service of Ordination for Ben Willans
- Installation of Rev. Adrienne Poissant

COM-20

Terms of Call Approved

- Rev. Dennis Jones – Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church
- Rev. Dr. Maureen Paterson – Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church
- Rev. Barry Young – First Presbyterian Church of Sussex and Beemerville Presbyterian Church, Wantage
- Rev. Ross Lang – Hildale Park Presbyterian Church, Cedar Knolls
- Rev. Tom Brown – Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township

- Rev. Dr. Tracey Henry – Clinton Presbyterian Church
- Rev. Alan Schaefer – First Memorial Presbyterian Church, Dover
- Rev. Mike Atzert – Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Califon
- Rev. Arlene Romaine – Community Presbyterian Church of Ringwood
- Rev. Robin Currás – First Presbyterian Church of Sparta
- Rev. Pamela Osborne – First Presbyterian Church of Stanhope and Andover Presbyterian Church
- Rev. Amy Sandlin – Trinity United Church, Warren

COM-21

Pastoral Actions

- Approved the Interim Pastor position for the Presbyterian Church in Harmony, Phillipsburg.
- Approved the request from Bound Brook Presbyterian Church to change from an Interim Pastor search to a Covenant Supply Pastor position, pending Session approval.

COM-22

One-Year Session Exemptions Approved

- Andover Presbyterian Church
- Presbyterian Church in Harmony, Phillipsburg