

MINUTES
STATED MEETING OF HOLSTON PRESBYTERY
August 3, 2024
First Presbyterian Church, Kingsport
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MINUTES
STATED MEETING OF HOLSTON PRESBYTERY
August 3, 2024
First Presbyterian Church, Kingsport

The stated meeting of Holston Presbytery was called to order by the Moderator, Kathi Cary, who read the Land Use Acknowledgment and opened the meeting with prayer. First time commissioners and guests were welcomed, and the Rev. Mike Shelton brought greetings to the assembly from the host church. A quorum was present.

ENROLLMENT:

TEACHING ELDERS PRESENT/ABSENT:

Name	Present	Absent
Adams, Collin	X	
Alderman, Brian		X
Amstutz, Sharon	X	
Anderson, William	X	
Askew, Catherine Clasen		X
Austin, Richard C.		X
Barron, Earle		X
Bement, Gary		X
Bier, Tom		X
Blackwelder, Andy		X
Bohn, Christine		X
Cartwright, Gregory		X
Cave, Payne		X

Chapman, Alan		X
Christian, H. Martin	X	
Clark, Dan		X
Clements, Lee	X	
Cobb, Harrell L.		X
Coggin, Mitch		X
Davis, Brandon	X	
Donaldson, Dan	X	
Fifield, Richard L.		X
Florence, Kaye	X	
Greene, Bishop	X	
Hazelwood, Deven		X
Helphinstine, Paul	X	
Hollingshead, Glenda	X	
Hopper, Barron	X	
Huff, Allen		X
Hutchison, Ralph		X
Hyers, William D.		X
Jenkins, Todd	X	
Johnson, Khayla		X
Jordan, Greg		X
Kendall, Teresa		X
Kestner, C. Phillip		X
Knisley, Mark	X	
Locke, Patricia		X
Marcos, Ramy	X	
Martin, James		X

Martin, John L.		X
Mays, James		X
Meredith, Tim W.		X
Moore, Diana		X
Norris, Rodney	X	
Randolph, J. David	X	
Raum, Richard		X
Rolling, George L.		X
Russell, Karen	X	
Rust, Maggie	X	
Schaus, Samuel	X	
Scruggs, Glen		X
Sharrett, Lawrence		
Shaw, Angus	X	
Shelton, Mike		X
Steinle, Marshall	X	
Sutherland, Terry		X
Weisz, Stephen R.		X
Welch, David	X	
White, Katherine		X
White, Ray	X	
White, Robert		X
Willard, Pat		X
Wintringham, John		X
Wyatt, Brian	X	
Young, William		X

MINISTERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS PRESENT/ABSENT:

Name	Present	Absent

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS PRESENT/ABSENT:

Name	Present	Absent
Austin, Jim		X
Ballinger, Calvin		X
Barnette, Anthony		X
Cagle, Tracy		X
Catts, John		X
Cobb, Marci		X
Culbertson, Mike		X
Dalton, David		X
Farmer, Mary Jane		X
Freshour, TJ		X
Helton, Gary	X	
Johnson, Nancy		X
Light, David	X	
Morelock, Jeff		X

Rice, Cheryl		X
Stevens, Betty		X
Tucker, John		X
Wilcox, Becky		X
Wise, Scott		X

Wright, Kathleen		X
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RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS:

Congregation	Principal	Alternate	Visitor/Other
Amity			
Barton Springs			
Bethel, Dandridge			
Bethel, Kingsport		Stephen Arthur	
Blountville			
Bristol, First	Peggy Hill, Ann Abel	Charles Webb	
Cedar Creek			
Cedarview			
Chuckey			
Clinton			
Cold Spring		Mary Jane McClellan	
Colonial Heights			
Cove Creek			
Covenant	Ann Freeman	Kathi Cary	
Cross Anchor			
Elizabethton, First			
Erwin			
Greeneville, First			
Hebron			
Hopewell			
Jefferson City, First			
Jennie Moore			
Johnson City, First			

Jonesborough	Michael Floyd		
Keystone			
Kingsport, First	Morris Hadden		
Leesburg			
Magill Memorial			
Morristown, First			
Mountain City	Linda Moon	Chris Dandurand	
Mt. Hermon			
New Bethel			

New Ebenezer			
New Market			
New Providence			
Newport			
Oakland			
Old Kingsport			
Philadelphia			
Piney Flats			
Preston Hills	Gale Manley		
Reedy Creek, Bristol			
Reedy Creek, Kingsport			
Rock Creek			
Rogersville			
Salem	Rev. Ray White		
Shady Valley			
Shenandoah	Dave Light		
St. Paul			
Strawberry Plains			

Tabernacle			
Timber Ridge			
Tri City Korean			
Watauga Avenue			
Waverly Road			
Weaver Union			
West Ridge			
Zion			

PRESBYTERY MODERATOR: Kathi Cary (RE, Covenant Presbyterian)

PRESBYTERY VICE-MODERATOR: Collin Adams (TE, Waverly Road PC)

PRESBYTERY STAFF: Karen Russell TEP, Sharon Amstutz, Acting Stated Clerk; John Golden, UKirk Director; Andi White, Administrative Manager.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

VISITING/CORRESPONDING TEACHING ELDERS/MINISTERS:

Name	Presbytery
Rev. Sandra Moon (Presbyterian Foundation)	Mid-Kentucky

VISITORS:

Name	Location
Anthony Cole, Gail Cole, Mark Plemmons, Jane Boyd, Bill McClure, Jim Amstutz, Sarah & Rowan Good, Allen & Becca Wright, Kevin Heindselman, Nancy P. Knisley, Gerry Morie, None-Anne Watts	First Presbyterian- Kingsport
Gwen Hunter, Dave Cohn	Covenant & Holston Camp & Retreat Ctr.

Aaron Caton	First Presbyterian - Greeneville
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CONSENT AGENDA

The Moderator appointed Revs. Lee Clements and Todd Jenkins to the Committee on Thanks, and The Revs. Dan Donaldson and Brian Wyatt to the Bills and Overtures Committee. The below Consent Agenda was adopted:

Consent Agenda

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be in the normal course of business by the Presbytery and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. Any item requiring discussion will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

- Approve enrollment
- Declaration of quorum (at least 3 ruling elders and 3 teaching elders from 3 different congregations)
- Seating of Corresponding Members and New Commissioners
 - Rev. Sandra Moon, Presbyterian Foundation
- Approve giving voice to visiting teaching elders
- Approve minutes of May 7, 2024, Stated Meeting (Appendix 1, p. 4751)
- Treasurer’s Report and Financials
- Appointment of Committee on Thanks - Revs. Lee Clements and Todd Jenkins
- Appointment of Bills & Overtures Committee- Rev. Dan Donaldson and Brian Wyatt
- Adoption of Docket

The moderator entertained a motion to grant visitors speaking privileges, subject to the rules of debate. The motion was approved. The Acting Stated Clerk informed the assembly she appointed Collin Adams to be the meeting's parliamentarian.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT

The committee brought the following motion to the floor:

Under the provisions of Book of Order G-2.0610 Accommodation to Particular Circumstances, recommend that the presbytery grant a waiver of the time requirements found in G-2.0602 and certify Russ Pearson as ready to seek a call. The recommendation was approved.

WORSHIP SERVICE – Russ Pearson preached during worship, continuing the year’s theme, It Takes All of Us to Be Us: Building Communities of Faith, Hope, Love, and Witness – LOVE. The 5-

Cents- a-Meal offering was received, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated with Rev, Mike Shelton presiding at the table.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY REPORT, part 1

Upon approval by the assembly, the committee presented Candidate Russ Pearson to be examined for ordination and installation as Associate Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Kingsport. Russ competently and thoughtfully answered questions from the floor. There being no further questions, Russ was excused, and the motion was made to sustain the examination and approve Russ for ordination and his call as Associate Pastor. That motion was unanimously and enthusiastically approved.

The COM's recommendation to approve the following persons to serve as Russ Pearson's ordination commission also passed: London Williams, RYE FPC Kingsport (chair); Sharon Amstutz, TE Holston Presbytery; Karen Russell, TE Holston Presbytery; Blair Adams, RE Waverly Road; Collin Adams, TE Waverly Road; Greg Cartwright, TE FPC Greeneville; Aaron Caton, RE FPC Greeneville; Mark Knisley, TE Holston Presbytery; Kim Fifield, RE Preston Hills, to ordain and install Russ Pearson as the Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Kingsport. COM chair Maggie Rust recognized the church's Associate Pastor Nominating Committee, the members of FPC- Kingsport in attendance, and closed with a prayer for Mr. Pearson.

(Russ Pearson's Statements of Faith and Call appear in Appendix 3, p. 4763)

WORKSHOPS

Rev. Sandra Moon, of the Presbyterian Foundation led one workshop on Stewardship, and Rev. Brian Wyatt another one on writing terms of call for considering upcoming changes to the benefits program offered by the Board of Pensions. The workshops were well received, and one of the highlights of the day.

Following lunch, fellowship and air conditioning, the Moderator called the assembly back to order at 1:15.

DECLARATION OF NEW BUSINESS: NONE

REPORTS, CONT...

REPORT FROM GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONERS

Maggie Rust (TE commissioner) and Kathi Cary (RE commissioner) provided verbal and written reports of their experiences at General Assembly

(REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY appear in Appendix 3, p. 4765)

GENERAL MISSION BOARD

The following motion was brought by GMB chair, Rodney Norris:

That Sharon Amstutz' employment agreement to serve as Stated Clerk of Holston Presbytery be modified from June 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, at a monthly salary of \$1000 (\$12,000 annually). It is further recommended that Sharon Amstutz be elected Stated Clerk for a term ending December 31, 2024.

The motion was approved.

ACTING STATED CLERK, Sharon Amstutz, reported on communications that had been received that the Bethel (Kingsport) congregation intended to request to be dissolved, then delayed that request pending the sale of their property and distribution of assets, and reminded the body that there would be one more session records review session on September 21 at the Hopewell Church in Dandridge.

The clerk reported the following decision of the permanent judicial commission in the case of Holston Presbytery v the Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington and read aloud the censure.

(THE PJC CENSURE IS FOUND IN APPENDIX 3, p. 4774)

TRANSITIONAL EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER Karen Russell highlighted the General Mission Board planning retreat in June, including upcoming events for the presbytery and the establishment of a few goals for the next 3-5 years. (The TEP's full report can be found in Appendix 3, p. 4778)

Other recommendations:

- That the General Mission Board ask the Presbytery to approve changing committee membership terms to one year renewable terms; moderators will still serve for 3 years;
- Approve vacation dates for TEP;
- Approve suggested dates for training sessions and other events;

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY REPORT, part 2

The committee's recommendation to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Rev. Allen Huff and the Jonesborough Presbyterian Church was approved.

The motion was made to approve the attached Dissolution Agreement between the Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington and FPC Bristol. As no questions of clarification or discussion ensued, the vote was taken, and the motion approved. Vice-Moderator Collin Adams offered prayer for Allen and Sam, and for the two churches as they enter a time of transition and discernment.

The attached 2025 Compensation Guidelines were presented to the presbytery as a committee recommendation. A time for clarifying questions was offered by the moderator, followed by discussion. The motion was approved, and the guidelines have been adopted.

(DISSOLUTION AGREEMENT & 2025 COMPENSATION GUIDELINES are found in Appendix 2, p. 4767, & p. 4771)

ADMINISTRATION & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: No new business.

DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

John Golden spoke for the **UKIRK CAMPUS MINISTRY SUB-COMMITTEE**, inviting ministers to help lead the Ukirk studies on the Confessions this fall. A request was made for copies of the *Glory to God* hymnal, and numerous copies were secured by the end of the meeting.

FINANCE, BUDGET AND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

RE Aaron Caton reported, asking all committee chairs to have their 2025 budget requests in by September 20, 2024.

MISSION AND OUTREACH REPORT

The committee presented a new application for Five-Cent-A-Meal grants, as well as new guidelines for awarding them. These documents can be found on the presbytery website. It should be noted that the applications are now due in October, rather than in July.

REPRESENTATION & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Recommendation: That Stephen Patrick (RE, Watauga Avenue) be elected to the CMP, class of 2025, and Gary Helton (RE, Bethel, Kingsport) be elected Vice-Moderator of Holston Presbytery for 2025. The motion was approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

Dan Donaldson reported for the commission that is tasked with the property resolution issues of four church buildings and requested that two additional persons be appointed to the AC following the resignation of one member and the need for additional assistance. John Morrell (RE) and Bishop Green (TE) were appointed.

TRUSTEES REPORT

Trustees chair, David Light brought two recommendations before the presbytery. The first concerned the proposed sale of the Bethel, Kingsport property.

Recommendation:

That Holston Presbytery ratify and approve the actions of the Trustees regarding the Bethel, Kingsport, sale of the property located at 1593 Warpath Drive and 1522 Miller St, Kingsport, TN. The

terms of sale are as follows: The Believers' Church will purchase the property at 1593 Warpath Dr. and 1522 Miller St. Kingsport, TN for the sum of \$150,000. The sales agreement will specify that should Believer's Church seek to sell the property at any point during the ten years immediately following the sale, Holston Presbytery will have the right of first refusal to purchase the property for the sale price (\$150,000).

Background: Believer's Church and Bethel Presbyterian Church have been sharing space for more than four years, and have often worshipped together, fellowshiped together, and engaged in projects together. As Bethel sees the congregation age and dwindle in numbers and financial stability, the upkeep on the building will become difficult to undertake. The congregation of Bethel plans to continue to worship in the building on Saturdays, beginning the first Sunday in July. The session will continue to function until the remainder of the congregation's assets are distributed, at which point the congregation will request to be officially dissolved.

Proceeds of the Sale: the proceeds of the sale of the property will be distributed in the following manner:

- 10% Holston Presbytery
- 10% Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee
- 10% Salvation Army of Greater Kingsport
- 15% Grace House (homeless housing in Kingsport)
- 15% Family Promise of Greater Kingsport
- 10% Providence Medical Clinic
- 5% Recovery Resources
- 10% Bridge to Shore Recovery
- 15%: Veterans support group for Northeast Tennessee

The following motion to amend the recommendation was made from the floor:

The sales agreement will specify that should Believer's Church seek to sell the property at any point during the ten years immediately following the sale, Holston Presbytery will have the right of first refusal to purchase the property for the sale price (\$150,000). Holston Presbytery retains for ten years the right of first refusal for any future sale of the property at the price of purchase.

Motion was seconded, approved, and became the main motion.

A time for questions of clarification concerning the property value, distribution of proceeds, and the financial position of Bethel was held before the debate and discussion, and passionate debate followed. The vote was taken on paper ballots with the following results:

Ayes: 19
Nos: 22
Abstentions: 1

The motion failed.

The motion was made from the floor that Presbytery assume original jurisdiction and an Administrative Commission appointed. Again, the vote was taken by paper ballot with the following results:

Ayes: 20

Nos: 19

Abstentions: 2

The motion passed, and the Moderator will appoint members of the AC.

The second recommendation concerned a lot separate from the Tabernacle property that was deeded separately:

Recommendation: The Trustees request that Holston Presbytery ratify granting the Administrative Commission control of that parcel of property deeded to Holston Presbytery at Tabernacle Presbyterian Church.

The motion was approved.

BILLS & OVERTURES COMMITTEE: No new business.

There being no new business, the Committee on Thanks reported, and commissioners were invited to promote their church's projects and events, the Vice-Moderator asked for prayer requests and offered the closing prayer.

The next stated meeting of Holston Presbytery will be held on Tuesday, November 12th at Holston Camp and Conference Center in Banner Elk, NC.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon H. Amstutz, Acting Stated Clerk

Appendix 1

MINUTES of HOLSTON PRESBYTERY

MAY 7, 2024 – Stated Meeting Jonesborough Presbyterian Church

CALL TO ORDER:

The stated meeting of Holston Presbytery was called to order at 10:00 by Moderator Kathi Cary, and the meeting was opened with a land acknowledgement and prayer. The moderator recognized Rev. Allen Huff, pastor of Jonesborough Presbyterian Church, who welcomed the assembly on behalf of the host church. Visitors and first-time commissioners were introduced. A quorum was present.

ENROLLMENT:

TEACHING ELDERS PRESENT/ABSENT:

Name	Present	Absent
Adams, Collin	X	
Alderman, Brian		X
Amstutz, Sharon		X
Anderson, William	X	
Askew, Catherine Clasen		X
Austin, Richard C.		X
Barron, Earle		X
Bement, Gary		X
Bier, Tom		X
Blackwelder, Andy		X
Bohn, Christine	X	
Cartwright, Gregory	X	
Cave, Payne		X

Chapman, Alan		X
Christian, H. Martin		X
Clark, Dan		X
Clements, Lee	X	
Cobb, Harrell L.		X
Coggin, Mitch		X
Davis, Brandon	X	
Donaldson, Dan	X	
Fifield, Richard L.		X
Florence, Kaye	X	
Greene, Bishop	X	
Hazelwood, Deven		X
Helphinstine, Paul	X	
Hollingshead, Glenda	X	
Hopper, Barron	X	
Huff, Allen	X	
Hutchison, Ralph		X
Hyers, William D.		X
Jenkins, Todd	X	
Johnson, Khayla		X
Jordan, Greg		X
Kendall, Teresa	X	
Kestner, C. Phillip		X
Knisley, Mark		X
Locke, Patricia		X
Marcos, Ramy	X	
Martin, James		X

Martin, John L.		X
Mays, James		X
Meredith, Tim W.		X
Moore, Diana	X	
Norris, Rodney	X	
Randolph, J. David	X	
Raum, Richard	X	
Rolling, George L.		X
Russell, Karen		X
Rust, Maggie	X	
Schaus, Samuel	X	
Scruggs, Glen		X
Sharrett, Lawrence		X
Shaw, Angus	X	
Shelton, Mike	X	
Steinle, Marshall	X	
Sutherland, Terry		X
Weddington, Sam		X
Weisz, Stephen R.		X
Welch, David	X	
White, Katherine		X
White, Ray		X
White, Robert	X	
Willard, Pat		X
Wintringham, John		X
Wyatt, Brian	X	
Young, William		X

MINISTERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS PRESENT/ABSENT:

Name	Present	Absent
Diddle, Mark	X	
Kizer, Lew		X
Playl, Steve		X

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS PRESENT/ABSENT:

Name	Present	Absent
Austin, Jim		X
Ballinger, Calvin		X
Barnette, Anthony	X	
Cagle, Tracy	X	
Catts, John		X
Cobb, Marci		X
Culbertson, Mike		X
Dalton, David		X
Farmer, Mary Jane	X	
Freshour, TJ		X
Helton, Gary	X	
Johnson, Nancy		X
Light, David		X
Morelock, Jeff		X

Rice, Cheryl		X
Stevens, Betty		X
Tucker, John		X
Wilcox, Becky		X
Wise, Scott		X

Wright, Kathleen		X
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RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS:

Congregation	Principal	Alternate	Visitor/Other
Amity			
Barton Springs	Elizabeth Tucker		
Bethel, Dandridge			
Bethel, Kingsport	Donna Sade		Bill Sade
Blountville			
Bristol, First	Laura Ong		
Cedar Creek			
Cedarview			
Chuckey			
Clinton			
Cold Spring	John Meyer	Hunter Watson	
Colonial Heights	Sharon Pugh		
Cove Creek			
Covenant	Cynthia Erdee	Kathleen Cary	
Cross Anchor			
Elizabethton, First	James Sutton		
Erwin	Grace-Katherine Bowen		
Greeneville, First	Robert Lodge		Aaron Caton
Hebron			
Hopewell	John Manney		Harrell Webb, Marcia Hostler, Jane Schule
Jefferson City, First	Peggy Hypes		

Jennie Moore			
Johnson City, First			
Jonesborough	William H. Andrews, Jr.		Ruth Verhegge, Karen Welch
Keystone	Kay Stout		Wilma Glass
Kingsport, First	Claudia Mihovk		
Leesburg			
Magill Memorial			
Morristown, First	Bill Hale		
Mountain City			
Mt. Hermon			
New Bethel	Larry Smith	Dickie Torbett	

New Ebenezer			
New Market			
New Providence			
Newport			
Oakland			
Old Kingsport			
Philadelphia			
Piney Flats			
Preston Hills	Carolyn Russ		
Reedy Creek, Bristol			
Reedy Creek, Kingsport	Patty Jarrard	Melissa Hauk	
Rock Creek			
Rogersville	Jason Hobbs		
Salem			

Shady Valley			
Shenandoah			
St. Paul			
Strawberry Plains			
Tabernacle			
Timber Ridge	Marilyn Brumley		Charles Brumley
Tri City Korean			
Watauga Avenue			Mike Miyamoto, Sue E. Shanks
Waverly Road	Linda Russell _____		
Weaver Union			
West Ridge			
Zion			

PRESBYTERY MODERATOR: Kathi Cary (RE, Covenant Presbyterian)

PRESBYTERY VICE-MODERATOR: Collin Adams (TE, Waverly Road)

PRESBYTERY STAFF: Acting Stated Clerk, Sharon Amstutz; Andi White, Administrative Manager; John Golden, Ukirk Director

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

VISITING/CORRESPONDING TEACHING ELDERS/MINISTERS:

Name	Presbytery
Tom Gomola	ECO West

VISITORS:

Name	Location
John W. Golden	Ukirk ETSU
Keenan Rodgers	Board of Pensions

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The motion was made to elect Rev. Sharon Amstutz as Acting Stated Clerk for a term no longer than six months. **Approved.**

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BUSINESS: None

Consent Agenda:

The below consent agenda was adopted:

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be in the normal course of business by the Presbytery and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. If discussion is required from the floor of Presbytery, the item in question will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

- Approve enrollment
- Declaration of quorum
- Approve giving visiting ministers voice
- Appointment of Brian Wyatt and Maggie Rust as Committee on Thanks
- Appointment of Diana Moore and Tracy Cagle to Bills & Overtures Committee
- Adoption of Docket
- Approve minutes from the February 7, 2023 Stated Meeting (Appendix 1, p. 4686)
- Receive Financial reports for Quarter 4 2023, and Quarter 1 2024 (Appendix 2, p. 4703)

Worship

Worship was led by Fred Sauceman, (RE) Jonesborough Presbyterian Church. Rev. Todd Jenkins, (TE) First Presbyterian, Greenville, preached and presided at the table for the sacrament of communion. Vice Moderator Rev. Collin Adams led the service to commission CREs Gary Helton and Tracy Cagle; Rev. Maggie Rust as GA Teaching Elder Commissioner, Kathi Cary, RE as Ruling Elder Commissioner, and Maggie Jacobs as the Young Adult Delegate. \$614.50 was received in the 5 Cents a Meal Offering.

After a fifteen-minute break the meeting was reconvened at 11:15. The Moderator introduced the four guests presenting information from their respective ministry settings as follows:

SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTATIONS

Watauga Ave Presbyterian Church Rev. Brandon Davis informed the gathering about the church's project to install solar panels on the roof of the education building. The community will be invited to a celebration in June at the completion of the project.

Holston Camp & Conference Center Director Dave Cohn gave an update on the coming summer camp program. Scholarship monies remain available for children who live within the bounds of the presbytery (but don't have to be a church member. The need still remains for 4 people to serve as camp chaplains. A joy: the camp received a \$20,000 matching grant for new van, and on the same day, received an additional \$20,000 from an individual donor.

Ukirk Director John Golden introduced the student speaker, Grace Feltis, and the body warmly congratulated Grace on their recent graduation. Grace spoke about their positive experience with the ministry of Ukirk at this significant point in their life.

Board of Pensions Keenan Rodgers gave a brief overview of the restructuring of the benefits place that will take place next year, citing sustainability and the changing financial needs of congregations as the basis for it. Details will be given during a 1-hour workshop after lunch.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Ministry.....Maggie Rust

Information was given about a training class for elders to be authorized to serve communion in their congregations on Saturday, May 18 from 10:00-12:30 at Watauga Avenue Presbyterian Church. This training is intended for elders in congregations without regular pastoral leadership.

Full report attached, Appendix 3, pg. 4719.

PROMOTIONS

Prior to the lunch break PROMOTIONS were given. Following a blessing by the moderator, the meeting was adjourned for lunch from 11:45-1:00. Commissioners were then dismissed to attend their choice of workshop.

WORKSHOPS

Rev. Teresa Kendall led a workshop entitled *Small Church Vitality: Foundations & Experiments*, and Keenan Rodgers of the Board of Pensions detailed upcoming changes to the plan benefits.

Following the workshops and a fifteen-minute break, the moderator reconvened the meeting at 2:15, continuing with committee reports not requiring action.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, cont.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry Rev. Sam Schaus

Written report is attached. Appendix 3, pg. 4719

Mission and Outreach.....

..... .Rev. Marshall Steinle

Written report is attached. Appendix 3, pg. 4715

Discipleship and Evangelism Rev, Greg Cartwright

Written report is attached. Appendix 3 pg. 4719

Transitional Executive Presbyter's Report Rev. Karen Russell

Written report is attached. Appendix 4, pg. 4726

Finance, Budget and StewardshipRev. Rick Raum

Recommendation:

That funds from the Hawkins County reserve funds be released to reimburse New Providence Presbyterian Church for building repair expenses.

Approved

Full report attached, Appendix 2, pg. 4703

General Mission Board.....Rev. Rodney Norris

Recommendation: *That the presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission be expanded from 7 to 9 individuals; that the standing rules of the presbytery be changed from 7 to 9 persons, and that the relevant section of the manual of operations on this matter be suspend until it can be brought into conformity with the current Book of Order.*

Approved by 2/3 Vote

Full report attached, Appendix 3, pg. 4720

Trustees.....Dan Donaldson

Recommendations: *That the transfer of cemetery property from Reedy Creek Presbyterian Church, Kingsport, to family members of those buried in the cemetery, at a sale price of \$1 be ratified.*

Approved

Full report attached, Appendix 3, pg. 4720

Representation & Nominations.....Rev. Bill Anderson

Recommendation: *that the additions to the slate of committee members Ramy Marcos (Committee on Preparation for Ministry), Russ Pearson (Discipleship) and Jeanne Stokes (Finance, Budget and Stewardship) be approved for vote by the Presbytery. Additionally, that Pat Willard be removed from the Mission & Outreach Committee.*

Approved

Full report attached, Appendix 3, pg. 4722

Acting Stated Clerk’s Report.....Rev. Sharon Amstutz

Recommendations:

1. *That the following dates and locations for Session Record Reviews be approved.*

June 29 (First Presbyterian Church, Johnson City)

July 20 (Erwin Presbyterian Church), and

September 21 (Hopewell Presbyterian Church)

Approved

2. *That that the following persons be appointed to an Administrative Commission for the purpose of managing property and other issues related to Zion, Amity, and Tabernacle Presbyterian*

Churches: Dan Donaldson, John Smith, John Grindstaff, Pam Pope.

Approved

Full report attached, Appendix 4, pg. 4727

BILLS & OVERTURES REPORT- None

COMMITTEE ON THANKS – Reported

JOYS AND CONCERNS were shared by commissioners and prayer was led by Collin Adams.

Thanksgiving for the faithful lives of Rev. Dr. Richard Ray, Rev. Bob Armistead, and John Tucker, RE, and God's blessing on their families; Estelle Armistead's health and grief; Celebrations include the publication of Ramy Marcos' new book, a successful fundraiser for the camp (\$19,000), Rodney Norris' new grandchild, and a baby on the way for Sam and Jessica Schaus.

Adjournment:

There being no further business the moderator adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon H. Amstutz
Acting Stated Clerk

Appendix 2

Committee Reports

Committee on Ministry – Russ Pearson

Statement of Faith
Charles Russell Pearson (Russ)
First Presbyterian Church Kingsport, TN
July 2024

I believe that God creates, redeems, sustains, and finds joy in us.

As creator, I believe God is uniquely involved in our lives and the world. I believe humankind is created in the image of God and called to be stewards of the rest of God's creation. I believe that God calls us away from our tendency to destroy towards a life that is in harmony with all of creation.

As redeemer, I believe God came down in the person of Jesus, who is fully human and fully God. Jesus came as Savior of the world, pointing to the coming Kingdom, and inviting us all to join him in sharing God's love by loving our neighbors more fully. When we fail to follow Christ and sin, Christ is there to redeem us, wiping away our sin through his death and resurrection. I believe individual and corporate confession of sin humbles us and reminds us of our redemption through Jesus. Our freedom from sin invites us to a new life founded and sealed in the life, death, and resurrection of our risen Lord, Jesus the Christ. This new covenant is life-giving pointing to God's amazing grace.

As sustainer, I believe God the Holy Spirit swept over the chaos and brought a beautiful order to creation. I believe God spoke through the prophets of the Old Testament, calling people to a new way of living, centered on worship of God and love of neighbor. I believe God the Spirit began the Church at Pentecost, ushering in a new way for our relationship to flourish grounded in the person of Jesus. The Spirit maintains and upholds our faith and God's promise of steadfast love.

I believe God finds joy in our lives. Throughout Scripture God reaches out to be with humankind and continually restores the broken relationship between us. This good news of God's steadfast love and grace is greater than we can imagine or put to words. For this I am thankful.

I believe the Church is the body of Christ for the world, called and equipped for ministry today. We are called to love all our neighbors through word and deed and love God through worship, observing the sacraments, the study of Scripture, and service to our neighbor. As the church, we must work together for peace and unity for all of God's children out of thanksgiving for all God has done for us and for the world.

The further in life I get, the more excited I am to be a part of God's work in the world. I hope to share that excitement with others as we all walk this journey of life and faith together.

Statement of Call
Russ Pearson
July 2024

My faith journey began at my baptism at First United Methodist Church in Winnsboro, SC long before I knew of God's presence in my life. I grew up in a small, dedicated congregation that nurtured me through Sunday school, worship, and vacation Bible school. I remember a feeling of warmth walking into the Sunday school wing of my church. As I grew up in church, I had different opportunities to serve as liturgist and as a weekly acolyte during my middle school years. In high school, I had the opportunity to help out with vacation Bible school. I believe these moments began to wake me up to God's calling to ministry.

One of my mentors in my youth was my pastor, Bundy Bynum. He showed me what kind of pastor I want to be. He was always present and had a calming personality that made you feel at home around him. Bundy made the Bible real through storytelling that kept my youth mind interested and focused on his sermons. He was my confirmation teacher and was the first to talk to me about going into ministry. He truly pointed to Jesus and God's amazing grace in all he did.

Throughout my summers in college I worked at Camp Fellowship in Greenwood, SC. I grew up going to this camp as a child and always wanted to work there. During my time as a counselor I learned that I truly enjoyed teaching the Bible to children and youth. I loved to see them make connections as they learned stories about Jesus. I also learned how to work within a ministry team with my fellow counselors. These summers were invaluable to my understanding of God's call on my life, even though I didn't fully understand that during my time there.

My junior year at Presbyterian College I joined the chaplain's ministry team. This decision literally changed my life. The chaplain, David Lindsey, became a mentor and a friend. He was a great listener and had an open-door policy that allowed students to come in and talk about anything they felt they needed to. He also gave me plenty of room to explore my faith and leadership skills through the ministry team. I felt God's calling into full time ministry during a Christmas worship service led by the chaplain's office. After that worship service, I walked around campus in tears, praying to God for guidance. I had struggled with my future plans, focused on computer science, for some time and after that evening I had a clear direction. The next day I changed my major to religion, and I dove headfirst into my call to ministry. My senior year I accepted a call to be a full-time youth director, feeling seminary and ordination would come later.

The past 18 years I have worked at First Presbyterian Church in Kingsport, TN. I have had the blessing of watching kids be baptized, leading them through confirmation, and blessing them when they go to college. Walking alongside children and youth as they grow in their faith is inspiring. Through the years at FPC I have had multiple opportunities to stretch my experience through leading sermons, planning worship services, and teaching Bible studies. Each season of the church offers a new path of ministry and I enjoy encouraging others to use their gifts to God's glory.

Working at FPC Kingsport has been a blessing and helped solidify my call to ordained ministry. The people here are full of grace and without them I feel I would not be where I am today. I have worked with some amazing pastors that have continued to encourage me to pursue

ordination. People like David Cagle, Sharon Amstutz, Kemper Huber, and Mike Shelton all gave me opportunities to explore my calling through their leadership. For all of them and more I am thankful. I look forward to becoming ordained in the PC(USA) as I continue to walk along my faith journey

REPORTS FROM GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Report from GA226 – Teaching Elder Commissioner Rev. Maggie Rust

The 226th General Assembly of the PC(USA) gathered in Salt Lake City from June 29-July 4, after three full days of online committee meetings by Zoom the week before.

We received a warm welcome from the Presbytery of Utah, whose 20 congregations across the Beehive State wanted to make it clear that, though they are in the minority compared to their Mormon neighbors, they are thriving in beautiful and creative ways. The historic Japanese Presbyterian Church of Salt Lake City was particularly highlighted, and many commissioners enjoyed their hospitality for Sunday's worship service and the music of their traditional Taiko Drum group at the open and close of our gathering.

It was a joy to be together for plenaries, and many felt the significance of participating in the first in-person gathering of the national Church since 2018. Worship was simple but meaningful as 1300 siblings in Christ sang together, celebrated the sacrament of communion, and heard stirring sermons from the co-moderators of GA225 Revs. Ruth Santana-Grace and Shavon Starling-Louis and the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Rev. Dr. Jerry Pillay, among others.

With the election of new Co-Moderators Revs. Tony Larson and CeCe Armstrong (both of whom moderated the meeting well and will, in this commissioner's opinion, be great ambassadors for the Church in the coming two-year term), we were ready to begin the business of the Assembly.

Rev. J. Herbert Nelson was honored for his work as Stated Clerk of the PCUSA from 2016-2023, and the Rev. Bronwen Boswell was thanked for the year she has spent in the post (the first woman to ever hold the highest ecclesial office in the denomination). One of the first items of business for the 226th GA was to elect Rev. Jihyun Oh to the role. She is the first Korean American to serve in this office, and the Assembly celebrated her election.

In the five days of our plenary meetings, the General Assembly took up 108 items of business in the form of overtures, reports, and recommendations. 70 of these passed on the consent agenda, and while they may not receive much attention, it's important to note that the Church is making statements about and creating resources to faithfully engage current issues such as student debt, artificial intelligence, plastic pollution, pay equity, prison reform, the crisis in Israel/Palestine, Christian Nationalism and Christian Zionism, among others.

On the floor, commissioners and advisory delegates passionately discussed and debated other issues. On Tuesday, we spent nearly 7 hours on two different overtures concerning divestment from the fossil fuel sector. Young Adult Advisory Delegates spoke ardently about the climate crisis their generation faces, and the complexity of fiduciary responsibility in investment and how the Church ethically engages in economic systems while maintaining our mission to care for creation and be

advocates for justice and those whom Matthew 25 would label the “least of these” was all on full display. The MRTI (Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment) continues to work with the PC(USA) and its Agencies to seek ways to be faithful stewards of both creation and the Church’s funds.

The only unanimous vote of the Assembly was the approval of DOE-03, an Overture Calling for Action that Children May Live Free from Gun Violence, notable both for its content and the complete support it received.

Two other items that are worth highlighting as those that will likely continue to prompt further conversation across the denomination were POL-01 and FIN-12.

As you may have heard, POL-01, also called the Olympia Overture, had two parts and was handled as such. Part 1 added “gender identity and sexual orientation” to the list of “race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, and theological conviction” in F-1.0403, which “guarantees the full participation and representation [in the Church’s] worship, governance, and life” to all persons. This passed both the committee and Assembly by overwhelming margins (389-24). Part 2 was more contentiously debated and amended multiple times before its eventual approval. It involves a change to G-2.0104b, regarding examinations of candidates for ordination, and would require they include “a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.0404), the Historic Principles of Church Order (F-3.01), and in the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403.” As these are changes to the Book of Order, both parts will have to be ratified by the presbyteries before taking effect next year.

FIN-12 was a report from the Taskforce to Review the Special Offerings. Substantial changes are coming in 2026, which will see the denomination-wide offerings go from 4 to 3: Christmas Joy, One Great Hour of Sharing, and World Communion (eliminating the Pentecost offering, but incorporating children and youth ministry into Christmas Joy). No part of these offerings will now be kept by the local congregation or presbytery, but 100% will go to the shared mission funds of the national church, another significant change.

The Assembly concluded its business with a report from the Unification Commission handling the merger of the Office of the General Assembly and Presbyterian Mission Agency (whose final report is due at the next GA in 2026), including the proposed unified budget for the next two years. GA Per Capita was set at \$10.84 for 2025 and \$11.26 for 2026; this funds the ministry and mission work of the national Church.

More information about GA226 and the actions taken can be found at pc-biz.org, and as your Teaching Elder Commissioner for Holston Presbytery, I’m happy to have further conversation and answer questions about this year’s Assembly. I’m honored to have been able to serve.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Maggie Rust

Report from GA226 – Ruling Elder Commissioner Kathleen Cary

I was humbled and honored to be a commissioner to the 226th General Assembly in Salt Lake City, Utah. Each morning, the plenary was opened with worship. The services were varied but based on the theme “Live into Hope.” God’s presence was felt through the music and spoken word of these services. The one service that stands out was the one in which we celebrated communion together. It was an emotional moment sharing this sacrament with 500+ people.

Immediately following worship, the business portion of the meeting began. The process of the meeting was done electronically. For example, to submit an amendment, be recognized to speak, and vote, all had to be done through the GA Meeting Tools portal. The portal worked well, until it didn’t. On the brief occasions it glitched the moderators paused the meeting and we literally danced in the aisles. I learned the Electric Slide! Nothing like dance brings a group together.

The newly elected moderators, along with the stated clerk and parliamentarian efficiently and fairly ran the meetings. An effort was made to be sure all views were heard and considered before voting. I listened the Advisory Delegates (Young Adult, Theology Student, Mission and Ecumenical) speak passionately and articulate their views. When it came time to cast my vote, I felt I had heard all sides of the issue on the floor.

It is an exciting time to be the member of the PCUSA! God is doing new things and is calling each of us to live into hope!

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Cary
Moderator, Holston Presbytery

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY: DISSOLUTION AGREEMENT:

DISSOLUTION AGREEMENT

First Presbyterian Church of Bristol gives thanks to God for the service of Rev. Dr. Samuel T. Weddington as Pastor. Mutually the Pastor, the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Bristol and Holston Presbytery agree that the best concern of each is now served by the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. The Rev. Dr. Samuel T. Weddington and First Presbyterian Church of Bristol agree to request that Holston Presbytery dissolve the Pastoral relationship that exists between them with the following terms:

Terms of Dissolution

I. Financial Terms:

For a period of six (6) months ending on February 28, 2025:

Salary	\$25,500.00
Housing allowance	12,000.00
Self-employment benefits	2,868.42

For a period of twelve (12) months ending August 31, 2025:

Provision for medical and pension benefits estimate	<u>32,990.18</u>
TOTAL FINANCIAL PACKAGE:	\$73,358.60

Pension dues will be paid on all severance payments

Severance payments will be made:

Through the church payroll service

Compensation for unused annual leave estimate

\$562.8

9 (Vacation, personal, sick, and continuing education days to be paid
in lump sum via August 2024 paycheck.)

II. Logistical Arrangements:

Effective date pastoral duties will terminate Effective Immediately

Date pastor will return all church property
and vacate church office August 31, 2024

Other Terms

- A. The pastor, acknowledging receipt of financial payments under this agreement, covenants and agrees that he or she waives all rights to demand and/or secure a civil court and/or jury trial with respect to adjudication of the matters contained in this Dissolution Agreement, in matters that pertain to his/her ministry in the Congregation, and/or the negotiations that have led up to this agreement.
- B. All unaccrued financial payments to the Pastor shall cease at the date, before the end of financial payments under this agreement, the Pastor accepts another position of full-time employment or shall be adjusted if the Pastor accepts a part-time position.
- C. All parties must sign the attached Covenant of Closure of Holston Presbytery. Repeated failure to conform to and abide by the Covenant shall result in a forfeiture of financial payments under this Dissolution Agreement

It is understood that this Dissolution Agreement is a final disposition of all matters between the Pastor and First Presbyterian Church. This Dissolution Agreement contains the entire agreement

between the parties hereto and any representations made before or during negotiation are hereby merged in their entirety and this agreement may not be modified.

The undersigned parties have negotiated this agreement in good faith and have every intention of being faithful in fulfilling it and further agree to the releases contained herein, representing that they understand its contents and sign it as their own free act after a full review of the contents.

APPROVED BY:

Pastor _____
(upon conclusion of negotiations)

Date _____

Clerk of Session _____
(upon approval of session)

Date _____

Moderator or Clerk of
Congregational Meeting _____
(upon approval of congregation)

Date _____

Chair of COM _____
(upon approval of COM)

Date _____

Copies of final, signed document to: Pastor, Clerk of Session, Executive Presbyter, Presbytery Stated Clerk, Chair of Committee on Ministry

COVENANT OF CLOSURE HOLSTON PRESBYTERY

The Rev. _____, the _____ Presbyterian Church, and the Committee on Ministry of Holston Presbytery, enter into the following covenant:

I, the Rev. agrees:

- a) not to become involved in any leadership or advisory role (public, private or through social media) in the _____ Presbyterian Church congregation and
- b) not to intervene, support, or give advice to anyone involved in a congregational disagreement or dispute;
- c) not to officiate in any special events in the lives of former parishioners or of the congregation, including weddings, funerals, baptisms, worship leadership, church anniversary activities, etc. unless expressly invited by the Moderator of the Session;
- d) to refuse requests for pastoral services made by members of the congregation, unless previously approved by the Moderator of Session;
- e) to consult with the Moderator of Session and the Presbytery (through the Executive Presbyter and/or COM) prior to visiting the congregation, attending worship or attending a special event;
- f) to refrain from giving opinions or directions regarding church business;
- g) to explain and affirm the above principles to the congregation in writing (by letter or newsletter) and/or the pulpit before departing.
- h) It is understood that this policy does not affect or require termination of friendships with individuals in the _____ Presbyterian Church congregation, but that pastoral services shall not be rendered.

The Session of the _____ Presbyterian Church agrees:

- i) to respect the terms of the Covenant agreed upon by Rev. _____ outlined above; and
- j) to interpret the terms of the Covenant to the congregation and to incorporate this agreement in the minutes of the congregational meeting when the pastoral relationship is dissolved; and
- k) to incorporate this agreement in the Session Minutes.

Signature, Pastor

Signature, Clerk of Session

Signature, COM Representative

Date

2025 COMPENSATION GUIDELINES:

Holston Presbytery – COM Recommendation for 2025 Compensation Guidelines

The Committee on Ministry of Holston Presbytery would seek to change the way we set standards of minimum compensation in 2025. While we have previously used a minimum “effective salary” as the key metric, this Board of Pensions term has caused some confusion and reflects neither a pastor’s taxable income nor the actual impact on a congregation’s budget. Taking this into account, while also keenly aware of the changes in how the Board of Pensions is restructuring medical benefits, COM is now suggesting that we primarily focus on the **Total Cost to the Congregation** when discussing terms of call.

The goal of setting a minimum Cost to the Congregation is to allow as much flexibility as possible in structuring a pastor’s terms of call for maximum benefit, while still maintaining a standard expectation of fair compensation to support those “laboring in ministry among us,” acknowledging that the needs of each pastor, their family situation, and their congregational context is unique.

ALL Terms of Call and Temporary Supply Contracts for the coming year must be submitted to COM annually, no later than January 15th.

Beginning in 2025, we are also encouraging congregations to re-evaluate the way in which “full-time” and “part-time” work is defined in the context of ministry. Rather than a model defined by hours/week, we would encourage a model built on “**units**” (each unit representing a morning, afternoon, or evening period, and typically counting a Sunday morning as 2 units). Full-time work would be defined as 12 units, and part-time work would be appropriately pro-rated. *See the examples below.*

Minimum Compensation

1. All Pastoral Leaders (Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, or those serving in Temporary Pastoral Service) working full-time (12 units/week) in a congregation of Holston Presbytery shall have a salary and benefits package with a total cost to the congregation of no less than **\$75,000** inclusive of salary, housing (allowance or manse value), deferred compensation, pension, medical coverage, SECA offset, professional reimbursements, and any other benefits extended to the pastor. At a minimum this package shall include:
 - a. Professional Reimbursements of at least \$4,000 (mileage, con. Ed., etc)
 - b. Vacation Leave of at least 4 weeks & Continuing Education Leave of at least 2 weeks, including Sundays.
 - c. Up to 12 weeks paid family leave and participation in the pension and medical coverage plan through the Board of Pensions, in compliance with G-2.0804
 - d. A policy permitting a Sabbatical leave after six continuous years of service

In order to calculate the total cost & benefit of a Pastoral Leader’s Compensation Package, we strongly encourage the use of this [Terms of Call Calculator](https://fpce.church/toc):
fpce.church/toc.

Notes:

- Congregations should factor in a 2.7% COLA increase for 2025 (based on the SSA).
 - All pastors who are eligible for the Transitional Plan offered by the Board of Pensions are encouraged to enroll for 2025, as the presbytery is still researching options and recommendations for spouse/family coverage.
 - Unused vacation does not typically accrue.
 - Unused continuing education leave and unspent related reimbursement funds may roll over into the following year, up to a maximum availability of 6 weeks in one year, upon session action to approve the accrual.
 - Congregations that give extra weeks of vacation or continuing education leave may count those weeks as part of the Total Cost to the Congregation at a rate of 2% of the Total Effective Salary.
 - The cost of pulpit supply should not be included in a Pastor’s Compensation Package.
2. All Pastoral Leaders and Christian Educators working less than full-time in a congregation of Holston Presbytery shall have a compensation package that is pro-rated based on the “Units” expected to work, with **each unit being calculated at a minimum \$5000** in total cost to the congregation.

%of Full-Time	#of Units	Annual Minimum Cost to Congregation
25%	3	\$15,000
50%	6	\$30,000
75%	9	\$45,000

Positions that are at least half-time (6 units) should include participation in the pension plan of the PCUSA and an exploration of the benefits available. Vacation and Continuing education leave should not be pro-rated at less than 4 weeks annually.

3. If a Pastoral Leader is engaged in Shared Ministry (serving more than one congregation simultaneously), the compensation of all congregations served will be added together to determine if the minimum standard has been met, as reviewed by the COM.
4. The compensation rate for Sunday morning Pulpit Supply is at least \$150 for anyone traveling less than 25 miles, \$175 for anyone traveling between 25 and 50 miles, and no less than \$200 for anyone traveling more than 50 miles. Expected compensation should be communicated with the invitation to preach, and mileage should be estimated in advance. Preachers may choose to donate all or part of the fee back to the congregation at their discretion.

Understanding Units

Recognizing the value of trained and educated pastoral leaders, honoring the unique mental/emotional energy that ministry can require, and seeking to encourage all our congregations to see compensation of these leaders as more than a transactional “cost of doing business” and rather a relational investment in the shared ministry, mission, and life of the church, the COM is trying to find new metrics to discuss the time, energy, and work a pastor’s vocation requires.

The idea of ‘Units,’ dividing each day into 3 – morning, afternoon, and evening, rather than the rigidity of counting hours worked per week, seems a better reflection of the flow and flexibility ministry often requires. It also allows you to account a double value for those activities that are especially taxing emotionally or spiritually. The energy required to lead worship, make a hospital visit, or lead a contentious meeting can all be different, even when they take the same hour of time.

If we consider 12 units to be full-time: A pastor could reasonably be expected to lead worship on Sunday morning (2 units), spend 4 days in the office (morning and afternoon, 8 units), and still have 2 units spent on evening meetings, Bible study, or recognizing the additional time spent thinking about/praying over the sermon, even at home. If a pastor’s weekly schedule needs to include more evenings for meetings, perhaps some of the ‘morning’ units are traded out. Or in seasons like Advent/Christmas, when there might be additional church commitments or special services, keeping a ‘12 unit per week’ guideline can help ensure that pastoral leaders are appropriately balancing church work with time for renewal and rest.

Those in ministry part-time should also evaluate their work with an honest assessment of how many ‘units’ it takes them to adequately prepare a sermon, complete administrative tasks, make pastoral visits, or any other assignments included in their job description. The session and other church leaders should be aware of the time and energy a pastoral position requires and be prepared to sufficiently compensate those who have been called to serve. If we consider half-time to be 6 units, it needs to be understood that a third of that pastor’s time/energy is spent just on preparing and leading Sunday morning worship. Expectations need to be adjusted accordingly.

All of us are called to share in ministry and show grace to one another. It is our hope that these guidelines can help our pastoral leaders and our congregations flourish together.

Appendix 3

Staff Reports

ACTING STATED CLERK REPORT: PJC COMMISSION DECISION:

THE PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION
of
HOLSTON PRESBYTERY
of
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

DECISION

Holston Presbytery
For
The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

v.

Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington,
Minister of Word and Sacrament

This is a Disciplinary case which has come before the Permanent Judicial Commission as a result of accusations submitted against Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington , a minister of the Word and Sacrament and a member of the Presbytery of Holston.

The Holston Presbytery has elected and installed a permanent judicial commission in accordance with the *BOOK OF ORDER*, D-3.0101. Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington is a minister of the Word and Sacrament and a member of the Holston Presbytery and is thus subject to this commission's jurisdiction.

The Permanent Judicial Commission finds that it has jurisdiction, that the charges against Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington were filed with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Holston within the required time limits.

HISTORY

The Investigating Committee was appointed by the Presbytery to investigate allegations of an inappropriate relationship between Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington and a married woman who was a member of the congregation in which he served. The investigative committee found grounds to believe that the offense had been committed and initiated a complaint on April 4, 2024. The complaint was delivered to the permanent judicial commission on June 4, 2024.

----- CHARGES AND VERDICT -----

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) charges you, Samuel Weddington, a teaching elder, with the following offense:

From March 2022 through February of 2023, you, Samuel Weddington, engaged in an improper relationship with a married woman and member of your congregation. This action is in violation of the vow taken at ordination and at installation to 'further the peace, unity, and purity of the church.' *Book of Order W 4.0404 g*

It also is in conflict with the charge to elders given in 1 Peter 5:1-3: "I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it—not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock."

----- ALTERNATIVE RESOLUTION -----

Pursuant to *BOOK OF ORDER*, D-7.1606 the permanent judicial commission received a signed alternative resolution which was approved by a unanimous vote of the commission.

The agreed upon terms of the alternative resolution are:

- The Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington agrees to plead guilty to one count of disturbing the peace, unity, and purity of the Church (W-4.0404g)
- The Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington agrees to undergo a term of supervised rehabilitation in which he will work on understanding boundaries appropriate to a Minister of Word and Sacrament more clearly, as well as continuing in counseling. The supervised rehabilitation will be completed when the following documentation has been submitted to the Executive Presbyter (who will certify its completion):
 - That Rev. Dr. Weddington provide documentation that he is currently engaged in counseling and other treatment with a licensed counselor or therapist chosen by him to address his personal struggles. This requirement will be deemed satisfied upon delivery to the Executive Presbyter of a letter from a licensed counselor or therapist confirming that Rev. Dr. Weddington is under such person's care and participating in counseling and treatment. The counselor or therapist providing such confirmation shall not be required to disclose any information concerning the content of the counseling or treatment.
 - That Rev. Dr. Weddington participate in and provide documentation that he has completed boundary training appropriate to a Minister of Word and Sacrament to provide the skills to avoid a similar future offense. This boundary training can be through Leaderwise or another group or therapist that emphasizes boundary training that is unique to ministers and pastors. It is understood that Rev. Dr. Weddington is currently enrolled in a Leaderwise program to occur on August 7 and 8, 2024, and agreed that this requirement will be deemed satisfied upon delivery to the Executive Presbyter of a certificate or other documentation from Leaderwise that he has completed that program.
 - That a letter of censure be addressed to Rev. Dr. Weddington, which shall be read at a regular stated meeting of Holston Presbytery and entered into the minutes; this letter shall also be read at either a regular or called meeting of the session of First Presbyterian Church, Bristol, TN. Text of the letter is below.

Letter of censure:

“Whereas, you, Rev. Dr. Samuel Weddington, have plead guilty of the offense of disturbing the peace, unity, and purity of the Church (W-4.0404g) and by such offense you have acted contrary to the Scriptures and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); now, therefore, the Permanent Judicial Commission of Holston Presbytery, in the name and authority of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), rebukes you, and orders you to complete a program of supervised rehabilitation as described below:

1. Continue the counseling treatment in which you are currently engaged and provide documentation to the Executive Presbyter of this continued care.

2. Participate in Boundaries Training from LeaderWise or another group or therapist that emphasizes boundary training that is unique to ministers and pastors and provide documentation to the Executive Presbyter of this training.

This rebuke is given not with malice or vindictiveness but in Christian love to offer you correction in error and the possibility of full community restoration. You are enjoined to be more watchful and avoid such offense in the future. We urge you to use diligently the means of grace to the end that you may be more obedient to our Lord Jesus Christ.”

ORDER

THIS PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION, ACTING AS A COURT OF THE CHURCH, THEREFORE IMPOSES THE CENSURE OF REBUKE WITH SUPERVISED REHABILITATION *BOOK OF ORDER*, D-9.0101.

----- [ABSENCES] -----

Jim Austin, John Smith, and Samuel Weddington, members of the Permanent Judicial Commission, were not present and took no part in the proceedings.

[DATE]

Dated this 10th day of July, 2024

[signed]
Rev. Samuel Schaus
Moderator, Permanent Judicial Commission

[signed]
Douglas Payne
Clerk, Permanent Judicial Commission

TRANSITIONAL EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER REPORT:

July 16, 2024

Spring into summer 2024 has been busy for Holston Presbytery. Committees have been meeting, plans have been made, and churches are in transition. During this quarter, I have **met with or worked with folks** at Waverly Road, Jonesborough, Cold Spring, Bethel Kingsport, Strawberry Plains, New Bethel, Hebron, and First Bristol on a variety of things. I have been with several committees as they meet: Discipleship, Mission/Outreach, Finance, Trustees, COM.

We have several churches actively seeking pastoral leadership. Jonesborough, Strawberry Plains, Rock Creek, and Cold Spring are actively seeking – and the CLC site is currently not all that helpful. The number of candidates with active files in the system right now is low, and we have experienced trouble getting the Ministry Discernment Profiles uploaded and working correctly. It behooves us to **look into other ways of recruiting leadership**, using classified ads in the Outlook, Presbyterians Today, Linked In, or possibly using consulting groups to recruit leadership. Our location as a target for retirement does give us a pool of possible recruits in the coming years, as there is a wave of retirements of pastors on the way.

I spent a week outside of Omaha, NE, with the **Presbytery Leader Formation**, learning, worshipping, and trading ideas and stories with other presbytery execs. We are not all that unique in the world of presbyteries in the challenges we face, especially with declining resources, closing churches, non-engaged congregations, and general anxiety about the future. **Conversations were lively** around sharing staff, merging with another presbytery, how to structure a streamlined staff and other options available. Use of property, creative ways of congregations cooperating, and forming pastoral leaders from within congregations were all top-of-mind topics. By far, the hottest topic was the changes to the Board of Pensions Medical Plan. I will summarize that by saying this: there were a bunch of angry execs at that meeting.

I also travelled to **General Assembly in Salt Lake City**, where the weather was hot, the air was dry, and the Presbytery of Utah really showed up. With less than 3,000 members statewide, the presbytery managed to have people wearing blue vests everywhere, and were a great example of hospitality, getting things done, and just generally being nice. Our commissioners were GREAT – they were engaged, and prepared, and took the job seriously. Maggie Jacobs is a great example of the kind of young people who are the next generation of leaders in the church and world. And Kathi Carey wants to have a debate where we must perfect the amended motion by voting to amend the amendment before we debated the amended main motion.

While in Salt Lake, I **met with the presbytery execs of East TN and Midsouth (Memphis) presbyteries** to talk about options and recommendations for **addressing the changes in the Board of Pensions medical coverage**. We do not want churches to simply stop providing dependent and family coverage, but we also don't want churches to take a \$20,000 hit to their annual budget to provide that coverage. Our recommendation is that if a church currently has a pastor requiring family/spouse coverage, that they take advantage of the transitional plan for 2025 while we explore options available outside the Board for churches and individuals. We also discussed a plan to have asking churches that will save money with the changes contribute to a fund that will help offset costs for churches and pastors facing difficult decisions.

Holston Presbytery will also need to make a decision about medical benefits for the TEP in 2025 – I am no longer eligible to participate in the Pastor Participation Plan. I will be covered by Medicare and not eligible for a Medicare Advantage plan if I am still working. Will medical coverage still be provided? It's less of an issue for me, but any future EP may not be covered by Medicare.

On a personal note, I had an unsuccessful surgery in May to remove a parathyroid gland. It was unsuccessful because they could not locate it. Plan b is to undergo annual infusions of a drug that may have some side effects that might keep me at home for up to a week. I picked up some sort of viral bug while recovering from that, which hung around for a couple of weeks. My mother spent a day in the hospital recently – she is fine now – and this showed me the need for a contingency plan for her care. I apparently was exposed to Covid at General Assembly and experienced my first case of the Covid. It was mild, but it did keep me at home for a week. I am calling this the summer of my distemper, for all those things combined with the heat have kept me cranky.

At our called June meeting, the General Mission Board identified **three things that we could do between now and the end of the year to help engage congregations**. Those three things were: have 3 community building events; change committee membership (not leadership) to one year renewal terms from three years; to work to “brand” the presbytery as a “value add” to congregations. The community building events could be fellowship and/or training sessions/workshops. To that end, I would like to get some **dates on the calendar** for the remainder of the year:

- TEP vacation: August 12-25, 2024
- Pastors' Lunch: August 1, September 17, October 14, November 13
- Boundary Training with Leaderwise at Holston Camp: October 8-9 (with option to stay the night of the 9th)
- Clerk of Session Training: Sunday November 17, 3 pm, location TBD

- Boundary Training: Three Saturdays (September 7, September 21, October 5), 9 am - 12 pm. The first session will fulfill requirements for Session members; Sessions 1, 2 and 3 fulfill requirements for Teaching Elders engaged in any type of active ministry or validated ministry, as well as Commissioned Lay Pastors (or CRE's as they used to be known), and inquirers/candidates under care of the Presbytery. Anyone else is welcome to attend these trainings which will cover misconduct prevention, relationship boundaries, financial boundaries, and racism/discrimination prevention (among other things). This boundary training is required for nearly anyone in any type of leadership or ordered ministry every 36 months. Remaining in good standing requires completion of this training. It will be offered annually – and you can do it more than every 36 months.
 - o There are other options to complete the training, but some are better than others, and most have some costs associated with them. There are good online options, but Teaching elders and commissioned pastors are encouraged to take these trainings, or training through Leaderwise, which will provide the training in October.
- Post GA town hall meetings: one in person, August 10, 1 pm, location TBD; one via Zoom, Monday August 5, 6 pm.
- Small Church Gathering: Saturday September 28, 10 am – 12 pm, location TBD

Other recommendations:

- That the General Mission Board ask the Presbytery to approve changing committee membership terms to one year renewable terms; moderators will still serve for 3 years;
- Approve vacation dates for TEP;
- Approve suggested dates for training sessions and other events;

Appendix 4

Some Meeting Guidelines

Who can speak and vote at presbytery meetings:

- Teaching elders who are active members, which includes
 - Teaching elders engaged in validated ministry though installed or contracted congregational ministry in Holston Presbytery
 - Teaching elders engaged in approved validated ministries outside the congregation or outside the Presbytery
 - Teaching elders who have been designated retired
- Teaching elders who have been designated members-at-large
- Primary ruling elder commissioners
- Ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service by Holston Presbytery who are under contract with a congregation
- The presbytery moderator and vice-moderator, if ruling elders, for the term of office

Who can speak at presbytery meetings:

- Corresponding members
- Certified Christian educators
- Others permitted by the presbytery (e.g. committee moderators, staff, guests)

Rules for Debate for Matters before the Presbytery

(Adopted by Holston Presbytery, June 9, 1990)

- Up to (30) minutes will be allowed for debate for a given issue. The time can be extended if Presbytery votes to give additional time for debate.
- In debates on any pending matters, no member of the Presbytery shall be allowed to speak for more than three (3) minutes until all other members who desire to speak on the matter have been heard. The Moderator will balance debate between pro and con. The member presenting a motion or submitting a report has a right to open and close debate.
- At the end of the thirty minutes, Presbytery will proceed to vote on the matter at hand or extend the debate for a definite time.
- Distributing materials at a Presbytery meeting is a privilege, not a right.
- Materials should come from Presbytery committees, General Assembly or Synod, or one of our Institutions.
- Permission from Council is required to distribute materials at the Presbytery meeting that come from one of the various advocacy groups in the PC(USA).

Appendix 5

Guidelines for Presbyterians during Times of Disagreement

- Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus Christ;
- We will keep our conversations and communications open for candid and forthright exchange,
- We will not ask questions or make statements in a way which will intimidate or judge others.
- Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.
- State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding.
- Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus' teachings.
- Focus on ideas and suggestions. We will not engage in name calling or labeling of others.
- Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.
- Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.
- Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension; we will be ready to forgive and be forgiven.
- Follow these additional Guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies:
 - Urge persons of various points of view to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously;
 - Seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement;
 - Be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their freedom of conscience;
 - Abide by the decision of the majority, working for change in ways that are consistent with these Guidelines.

Revised: September 11, 2007

Appendix 6 – Future Events

Dates for the General Mission Board and Presbytery meetings in 2024 and 2025:

2024

General Mission Board

October 22, 2024 (Tues)

Presbytery

November 12, 2024 (Tues) - TBD

2025

General Mission Board

January 14, 2025 (Tues)

April 15, 2025 (Tues)

July 15, 2025 (Tues)

October 21, 2025 (Tues)

Presbytery

February 1, 2025 (Sat) – Covenant Presbyterian

May 6, 2025 (Tues) – Colonial Heights Presbyterian

August 2, 2025 (Sat) – First Pres, Elizabethton

November 4, 2025 (Tues) – Vacant