

**PRESBYTERY OF NORTHERN KANSAS
APRIL 25, 2026 -- MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

The Presbytery of Northern Kansas (PNK) met on Saturday, April 25, 2026, at **Sunrise Presbyterian Church** in **Salina, Kansas**. The following are the highlights of the meeting.

Worshiped together. Rev. **P. Alex Thornburg, III** (pastor, Heartland Presbyterian Church, Clive, Iowa and author, *Being Presbyterian in a Dysvangelical America*) preached the sermon and Rev. **Deb Schmidt** (Salina Sunrise) served as the celebrant for the Lord's Supper. Elder **Sue Draper** (Colby First) served as liturgist. Elder **Rhoda Frasier** (Junction City First) served as accompanist.

Received an offering for **Heartland Presbyterian Center's Aquatic Center Expansion campaign**. **Karen Claycamp** (Blue Rapids United) shared a Moment for Mission about the experiences her family and the congregation have enjoyed through the camps and programs at Heartland Presbyterian Center. See instructions at the end of this publication if you wish to participate in this giving opportunity.

Commissioned Rev. **Meredith Kemp-Pappan**, Elder **Steve Crouch**, Rev. **James Hawley** (alternate), Elder **Rhoda Frasier** (alternate) and **Thomas Lushington** to serve as commissioners and young adult advisory delegate to the 227th General Assembly that will take place June 22-July 2, 2026. **Commissioned** Elder **Sue Ann Seel** to serve as Commissioned Lay Pastor for the Oregon Trail Presbyterian Ministry while their pastor is on sabbatical leave.

Shared in a service of celebration of the ministry of Rev. **James Hawley** who was designated as Honorably Retired effective March 1, 2026.

Introduced Rev. **Julius Mutembei** (Great Plains United Methodist Conference) who serves as the pastor of the United Church of Bennington.

Heard from Rev. **Ted Foote, Jr.** (Professor in the Louis H. and Katherine S. Zbinden Distinguished Chair of Pastoral Ministry and Leadership, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary) and Rev. **P. Alex Thornburg, III** during their program entitled: "**Being Presbyterian in a Dysvangelical America**" based on their book of the same title.

Received an update from **Heartland Presbyterian Center** from their Executive Director, **Dan Scheneman** who thanked the presbytery for generous support through our annual gift for operational expenses, scholarships for campers from all of our PNK congregations, and receiving the offering for the Aquatic Center expansion fund.

Learned from Stated Clerk **Bob Frasier** that 100% of our PNK churches completed their annual reports this year. **CONGRATULATIONS, Clerks of Sessions!!! Announced** Session Records Review and Clerks' Training dates for 2026: May 16th (United Church, Bennington), May 30th (Riley First), June 6th (Wilson First), June 13th (Topeka Oakland).

Recognized ordination anniversaries of the following ministers: **Christine Wagner** (10 years), **Meredith Kemp-Pappan** and **Debra Schmidt** (15 years); **Michael Sorsen** and **Phyllis Stutzman** (20 years); **Marilyn Sweet** and **Carolynn Winters-Hazelton** (30 years); **Amy Jo Hawley** and **Martha Murchison** (35 years); **Paula Bremer**, **Patty Brown-Barnett**, **Tom Reid**

and **Carol Shannahan** (40 years); **Marc Giedinghagen** (45 years); **Richard Glasgow** (55 years); **Robin Kash** (60 years) and **Don Schroeder** (65 years).

Heard from the 2026 **Synod Moderator Bob Frasier** that the 2026 Higher Education Grant application process is now open. Bob also announced a new cycle of the Swanigan Scholars program and thanked the Synod for a \$1,000 leadership grant that will help fund our all-Presbytery Retreat in November.

Heard a report from the **Administrative Commission** working with the Phillipsburg congregation and **approved** the transfer of the **United Presbyterian Church of Phillipsburg** to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) pending the approval of the EPC.

Approved authorization for trained ruling elders to administer the Lord's Supper for the **Lawrence Clinton, Manhattan Trinity, Topeka Westminster and WaKeeney** congregations and **approved** a waiver to allow officers to be elected for terms totaling more than six consecutive years for the **Osage City** congregation.

Validated the ministries of Rev. **Carmen Raines** (hospital chaplain), Rev. **Kelly Pittman** (hospice chaplain), Rev. **Christine Wagner** (spiritual direction) and Rev. **Carolynn Winters-Hazelton** (PDA national response team volunteer) for 2026.

Announced Rev. **Amy Jo Hawley** (Ellsworth First) as the winner of the **Pastor's Appreciation Weekend** award.

Received a report from Finance Committee Chair **Joe Anderson** that an audit of the Presbytery's 2025 financial records has been completed and was found to be without exception. **Announced** the **2026 Legacy Fund grants** awarded to: Colby First, Hays First, Salina Sunrise, Topeka Second, Topeka St. Andrews, Wamego First and Washington First United.

Announced the 2025 **Top Ten Mission Giving** Congregations: 10) **Lawrence West Side** (\$75.47/person; \$4,000); 9) **Wakarusa** (\$75.76/person; \$5,000); 8) **Colby First** (\$77.16/person; \$2,700.75); 7) **Concordia First** (\$82.35/person; \$4,200); 6) **Cottonwood Falls First** (\$83.33/person; \$2,500); 5) **Salina Sunrise** (\$85.40/person; \$11,443); 4) **Oak Hill** (\$93.75/person; \$3,000); 3) **WaKeeney** (\$100/person; \$2,000); 2) **Ellsworth First** (\$101.01/person; \$30,000); 1) **Salina First** (\$123.46/person; \$40,000).

Heard about the upcoming **PNKS Middle and High School Youth Trip** to Ghost Ranch for a week of worship, service, friendship, and adventure: June **20-27**.

Received information about the **Adult Volunteer Work Trip** to Madisonville, KY to assist with work being done there in the aftermath of 2021 and 2025 EF-4 tornadoes: **June 21-26**.

Celebrated God's Work in our Congregations by hearing from:

- **Julius Mutembei** re: how the **United Church, Bennington**, connected with their community when they hosted a community dinner during Lent.
- **Adrian Hunley** as she shared how the **First Presbyterian Church, Delphos** is feeding the hungry in the Delphos community and the resources they are using for this mission.

Highlighted written reports from the **Clerks' Records and Reports Committee, Mission Ministry Team, Preparation 4 Ministry Committee, Presbyterian Women, Presbytery Council and Resource Center Committee.**

Heard joys and concerns from the PNK family. **Remembered** those Ruling Elders whose deaths were reported in 2025 as the **necrology report** scrolled on the screens.

Prayed our **PNK Breakthrough Prayer** together: Holy Creator, Fill the Presbytery of Northern Kansas with Your Spirit of connection and partnership. Empower us to see beyond scarcity, offer our gifts, and share Your abundant love for the sake of the gospel. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Enjoyed refreshments and fellowship following the meeting getting to visit with old friends and making new connections.

Remember: More information on all these items can be found in the **Presbytery Reports** for this Presbytery Meeting which can be found by going to the Presbytery's website at www.pnks.org and clicking on *Our Presbytery* and then on *Presbytery Meeting Information* - look in the *Current Meeting* folder. (don't have a password? Contact your church office or the Presbytery Office)

Remaining 2026 Presbytery Meeting Dates:

Tuesday, August 25, 2026 – Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Tuesday, November 17, 2026 – Acorns Resort, Milford Lake

(Fall PNK Retreat will take place preceding the November meeting beginning late afternoon November 15th at Acorns Resort)

If you would like to donate to this offering, scan the QR code:

or go to www.pnks.org and click on the GIVE NOW button to give online or send your check to the Presbytery Office – be sure to note “Presbytery Offering” in the memo. (Proceeds benefit the Heartland Presbyterian Center Aquatic Center Expansion campaign)

As of the printing of this publication, our offering totals \$1,157.00.



Be sure to notify the PNK office at office@pnks.org if you are not receiving the PNK Newsletter so we can add you to the mailing list.

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