

Every Good Gift: The Presbytery of Northern Kansas

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights

The Presbyterian Church (USA) consists of four levels of governance: the Session, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. Emporia Presbyterian Church belongs to the Presbytery of Northern Kansas and the Presbytery of Northern Kansas is one of six presbyteries comprising the Synod of Mid-America (16 Synods total). The Presbytery of Northern Kansas consists of 52 congregations and 4,208 members covering 29 counties including rural, urban, and suburban areas of northern Kansas.

The Presbytery's Statement of Purpose is

The Presbytery of Northern Kansas encourages, supports, equips, inspires, and celebrates with congregations within its bounds to carry the Good News to the world and to become the hands of Christ to a hurting world. The presbytery is the shepherd/servant to its congregations. The congregations are God's "mission outposts" in the world. God calls us to work together as congregations and as presbytery, combining energy and vision for being in mission.

The presbytery's dual role of shepherd and servant to its congregations is its essence. In the shepherd role, the presbytery examines and ordains candidates to become Ministers of Word and Sacrament; prepares members to become Authorized Pulpit Supply and prepares ruling elders to become Commissioned Lay Pastors; ensures that all voices are equitably represented on presbytery commissions, committees, and task forces; presents amendments to the Book of Order for approval; authorizes ruling elders in a church to administer the Lord's supper; establishes minimum compensation requirements for

pastors; and plans four presbytery meetings annually (two in person and two via zoom in 2025) and a biennial Education Day.

In the servant role, presbytery offers the pnks.org website full of supports and information; operates the Presbytery Resource Center with books, Christian education curricula, and other worship material available to loan to all members and clergy; funds partnership grants for Matthew 25 projects, mission work, and Heartland Traveling Day Camp; plans adult mission trips; provides grants for children to attend Heartland Camp and the national Presbyterian Youth Triennium; works with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to alert congregations to local, regional, and national needs; supports congregations without pastors, experiencing conflict, or decreasing membership; supports pastors through retreats and training; offers an annual book study, and selects four pastors each year to receive the “Pastor Appreciation Weekend” providing the financial means for an extra sabbath Sunday away.

Overseeing the mission and work of the presbytery is the Presbytery Council, the Commission on Ministry, and pastors, elders, and members of congregations who serve through the committees and other entities of the presbytery. The presbytery is staffed by General Presbyter Melanie Hancock, Stated Clerk Bob Frasier, Program and Resource Coordinator Amanda Littell, and Executive Administrative Assistant Gail Frazier. The presbytery is funded by a portion of the per capita each of the 52 churches pays annually along with 82% of the Shared Mission Giving each congregation pledges.

We are the Presbytery of Northern Kansas. Emporia Presbyterian Church has a rich history of active participation at the presbytery level. Our members have served over the years on a variety of committees, task forces, and on the Permanent Judiciary Committee (church court). In 2025, Pastor Phyl is serving on the Commission on Ministry; Elder Kathie Buckman is serving on the Session Records and Review Committee; and Elder Ken Weaver is serving as Moderator of the

Presbytery with ex officio duties on Presbytery Council and the Presbytery Meetings and Events Committee. Elder Lois Schrock just completed two three-year terms on the Commission on Ministry and Rev. Pat Ireland HR recently serving on Stewardship Mission Team. As a connectional church, Presbyterians build relationships and share our gifts, talents, and resources to follow Jesus in serving God and others. The Presbytery of Northern Kansas is a prime place to connect with others “locally” in our denomination.

Stewardship and Finance Committee (Rhonda Gordon, Carolyn Turney, Ken Weaver)