

THE PRESBYTERY OF CAYUGA-SYRACUSE

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Special Meeting

July 30, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location: Online via Zoom

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is on file in the Stated Clerk's files and available upon request.

CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse was called to order by the Moderator, Rev. Dr. Shavonn Lynch, who confirmed that a quorum was present. The Moderator constituted the meeting with prayer. The Stated Clerk reminded the body that, as a Special Meeting, business was limited to the purposes for which the meeting had been called.

WORK OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

The proposed docket was moved and seconded. The docket was approved unanimously by Zoom poll.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee presented nominations for representatives to the Synod of the Northeast and readers for ordination examinations.

MOTION: That the Presbytery set aside the applicable rule in order to add Elder Sharye Skinner of First Presbyterian Church of Cazenovia to the Synod slate as the ruling elder representative.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously, satisfying the required three-fourths vote.

The Presbytery then elected the Synod slate: Rev. Adam Demetros, teaching elder representative; Elder Sharye Skinner, ruling elder representative; Rev. Ben Fitzgerald-Fye, teaching elder alternate; and Emma Hill, Young Adult Delegate. The Synod term was clarified as October 2026 through September 2028.

The Presbytery also elected readers for ordination examinations: Rev. Ben Fitzgerald-Fye, teaching elder reader; Elder Daniel Radcliffe, ruling elder reader; Rev. Michael Hill, teaching elder alternate; and Elder Linda VanBuskirk, ruling elder alternate. During consideration of the slate, the ruling elder reader's legal name was clarified as Daniel Radcliffe.

Report of the Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources Committee presented a revised contract for Communications Coordinator Sarah Buckshot. The committee reported that the revision reflected increased hours resulting from the workload associated with Presbytery communications and the upgrading of the Presbytery website.

MOTION: That the Presbytery approve the revised contract for the Communications Coordinator, effective immediately.

Following discussion, the motion was approved.

Church Transitions Committee

The Stated Clerk reported on the work directed by the Presbytery at its June Annual Meeting concerning the development of a structure to address financial and property matters associated with church closings, mergers, repurposing, and other significant congregational transitions. He clarified that the proposed Church Transitions Committee concerned institutional, property, and financial transitions and was distinct from ordinary pastoral transitions.

MOTION: That the Presbytery establish a Standing Committee on Church Transitions.

Following discussion, the motion was approved by 95% of those voting.

The proposed standing rule for the Church Transitions Committee was then presented. The rule provides for the Treasurer, Stated Clerk, and Chair of the Finance and Property Committee to serve ex officio, together with five members nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery. The committee is charged with assisting the Presbytery in matters involving the property, financial, and pastoral dimensions of church closings, mergers, yoking, redevelopment, and other significant congregational transitions. The committee does not possess independent authority to conclude such matters.

MOTION: That the Presbytery adopt the proposed Standing Rule for the Church Transitions Committee.
Following discussion, the motion was approved by 96% of those voting.

Investigating Committee Standing Rule

The Stated Clerk clarified that the Investigating Committee had already been established by previous action of the Presbytery; therefore, no motion to create the committee was necessary. The proposed standing rule governing the committee was presented for consideration.

MOTION: That the Presbytery adopt the proposed Standing Rule for the Investigating Committee.

During consideration of the motion, Rev. Courtney Steininger moved to amend the proposed rule by replacing the provision under which members would be appointed by the Stated Clerk with a process under which members would be nominated and elected in the same manner as members of the Church Transitions Committee. The amendment was seconded.

The amendment was approved by 86% of those voting.

Discussion followed concerning the qualifications and preparation of members who might serve on investigating committees. The Stated Clerk indicated that members would receive appropriate training before serving.

The motion to adopt the Standing Rule for the Investigating Committee, as amended, was approved by 96% of those voting.

ADJOURNMENT

With the business for which the Special Meeting had been called concluded, it was noted that adjournment was provided for in the adopted docket and no separate motion was required. Vice-Moderator Rev. Courtney Steininger closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Rev. Ben Fitzgerald-Fye, Stated Clerk