

The Presbytery of New Covenant Stated Meeting



The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church

4881 WEST Panther Creek Dr., The Woodlands

March 28, 2026

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Acknowledgement of Native Lands and Peoples

We begin this gathering by recognizing that the land upon which we meet is the location of the ancestral homelands of many different nations, which include Alabama Coushatta, Anadarko, Biloxi, Caddo, Chickasaw, Karankawa, Kichai, Pankana Muskogee, Shawnee, Tawakoni, and Tonkawa, as well as our Hispanic neighbors to our south. We recognize that the state of Texas once belonged to Mexico.

We declare our respect for these children of God and our desire to honor them and the truth of their lives and their history, our shared history including the broken promises and other sins for which the dominant culture must repent. We affirm our responsibility to those who are still here, sometimes unseen, and we look for opportunities for true reconciliation, which we acknowledge will involve further action by, and change for, those in the dominant culture. Among our transgressions are the harmful stereotypes created for our entertainment.

We honor our Native siblings and seek to work for healing and justice that is truly “for all.”

Proposed Docket

10:05 am Welcome Moderator Chuck Johnson

Opening Prayer and Business

- Opening Prayer and Declaration of Quorum
- Acknowledgement of Native Lands and Peoples
- Adoption of the Docket and Omnibus Motion
- Welcome to First Time Commissioners, Corresponding Members, New Minister Members, Celebration of Ministry presenters, Visitors
- Moderators Remarks and Appointments of Parliamentarian and Tellers

10:15 am Worship, Rev. Greg Han, preaching

11:15 am Administration RE Charlie Bradbury

Celebration of Ministry, Austin Seminary Rev. Ted Foote

General Council/Innovation & Vitality Rev. Hector Rivera-Velez and friends

Nominating RE George James

Commissioning the 227th General Assembly Commissioners

Greetings from our Synod Leader Rev. Mitch Miller

Celebration of Ministry, Synod Youth Workshop RE Leah McFadden

- Rev. Kevin Keaton would like to update the commissioners on recent decisions from the Board of Pensions. He will be arriving late, and hopes to be part of the docket.

Motion to Adjourn/Closing Prayer

12:30 pm LUNCH

There is a Session Records Review scheduled after lunch.

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of New Covenant will be on ZOOM on Saturday, July 18, 2026. Our fall meeting will be on November 21 at St Philip, 4807 San Felipe, Houston.

Omnibus Motions

From the Stated Clerk for Administrative Process

1. To approve the minutes from stated meeting held on November 15, 2026.

COM MOTIONS TO PRESBYTERY:

1. COM recommends and moves that the minutes be received and the following installation commission be dismissed with our thanks: Rev. Guy ‘Coby’ Cagle, Associate at Clear Lake, February 15, 2026. For information, the candidate answered the questions of installation in the affirmative.
2. COM recommends the following to be Ordination Examination Readers from our Presbytery: RE Kevin Snowden (Webster), Rev. John Park (Mosaic Village NWC), Rev. Pam Morgan (HR), RE Debbie Battise-Kleinman (Livingston, Indian).

Table of Motions

From Administration

1. To approve the proposed budget for 2026.
2. To accept as a first reading the revised Sexual Misconduct Protection Policy.
3. To accept as a first reading the revised Child, Youth, Vulnerable Adult and Participant Protection Policy.

From Nominating Committee

To elect RE Elizabeth Schweers (Pearland, First) to the class of 2028 on the Administration Committee.

To elect Rev. Lynn Hargrove (Pby) to serve as a TE Commissioner to the 227th General Assembly to be held online and in Milwaukee from June 22 – July 2, 2026.

Displays Today

Austin Seminary; Earth Care; Mo-Ranch; Palestine Justice Network; Presbyterian Childrens’ Homes and Services (PCHAS)

Worship Liturgy

Call to Worship Intro

Good morning and welcome to this place where you belong. Welcome to this place that will love you for whose you are. Welcome to this place that invites you to share the good news of welcome with the world. Welcome to the worship of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. Would you please stand in body or in Spirit me and join in worshiping our welcoming God beginning with the Call to Worship.

***Call to Worship**

One Voice: We come to worship with joy,
trusting God's holy word will inspire us.

**All Voices: We lean into God for understanding,
anticipating the Spirit's blessing.**

One Voice: May God hear our praise!
May we be counted among the great congregation.

**All Voices: May the words of our mouths
and the meditations of our hearts
be acceptable to God.**

Opening Hymn, "All Creatures of Our God and King"

Call to Confession

Please be seated.

When we come before God, we remember and proclaim who God is: merciful, just, holy, and loving. We must also remember who we are, that we are a people who have not always been the people God has called us to be. We have not always been merciful, just, holy or loving. So let us confess our sin, trusting in God's goodness to forgive us and create us anew for our lives ahead.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, our hearts are restless until they find their home in you. Forgive our pursuit of things that separate us from you. We pursue success, realizing it will never be enough. We desire more possessions, knowing they are empty. We turn toward the world and hope we will find peace, knowing the world cannot provide it. Forgive us, we pray, and may our wandering hearts find their rest in you alone.

Assurance of Grace

Hear now these words assuring us of God's amazing and unending grace.

One Voice: Hear the good news! In Christ, we are new creations.

All Voices: The old life is gone, thank God! A new life has begun.

One Voice: Know you are forgiven, and be at peace.

All Voices: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Scripture Reading: Acts 8:26-40

Sermon, "Look ..."

Rev. Greg Han

Hymn, "For the Fruit of All Creation"

Saying What We Believe – from the Belhar Confession

We believe in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

We believe in one holy, universal Christian church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family.

We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another; that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God's Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought: one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain.

**Gloria Patri*

Offering & Offertory

Our offering today will go to the presbytery's youth ministry program to provide scholarships for summer programs and more. Your donation can be made online using this link: <https://www.pbyofnewcovenant.org/> Look for the "Give Now" button in the upper right hand corner, then choose Presbytery Meeting Offering.

**Doxology*

*Communion of the People & Lord's Prayer
Hymn, "This Is My Song"*

Prayers of the People

**Hymn, "Lord When I Came Into This Life"*

Charge & Benediction

15 All Creatures of Our God and King

Unison

1 All crea-tures of our God and King, lift up your voice
 2 O broth-er wind with clouds and rain, you nur-ture gifts
 3 O broth-er fire, so warm and bright, chase off the shad-
 4 All who for love of God for-give, all who in pain

Harmony

and with us sing, Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
 of fruit and grain. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
 ows of the night. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
 or sor-row grieve, Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!

Unison

O broth-er sun with gold-en beam, O sis-ter moon
 O sis-ter wa-ter, flow-ing clear, make mu-sic for
 Dear moth-er earth, who day by day un-folds such bless-
 Christ bears your bur-dens and your fears; so, e-ven in

Sometimes called "The Canticle of the Sun," this cosmic roll call allows human beings to give voice to all creation. One of the earliest religious poems in the Italian language, it is made even more expansive by this broad, repetitive melody with interspersed "Alleluias."

CREATION AND PROVIDENCE

Harmony

with sil - ver gleam, sing prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia!
 your Lord to hear. Sing prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia!
 ings on our way, sing prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia!
 the midst of tears, sing prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia!

Unison

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

5 And you, most gentle sister death,
 waiting to hush our final breath:
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Since Christ our light has pierced your gloom,
 fair is the night that leads us home.
 Sing praises! Alleluia!
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,
 and worship God with humble heart.
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
 and Holy Spirit, Three in One!
 Sing praises! Alleluia!
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

For the Fruit of All Creation 36

1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
 2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will be done.
 3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.

For the gifts to ev - ery na - tion, thanks be to God.
 In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will be done.
 For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.

For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are
 In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de -
 For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con -

sleep - ing, fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
 spair - ing, in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will be done.
 found us, most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Originally called "Harvest Hymn," this text is much more comprehensive than that title implies. It also deals with stewardship, thanksgiving, and God's endless gifts that continue to astound us. It is set to a familiar Welsh tune whose name means "throughout the night."

340

This Is My Song

1 This is my song, O God of all the na - tions,
 2 My coun - try's skies are blu - er than the o - cean,
 3 This is my prayer, O Lord of all earth's king - doms:

a song of peace for lands a - far and mine.
 and sun - light beams on clo - ver - leaf and pine.
 thy king - dom come; on earth thy will be done.

This is my home, the coun - try where my heart is;
 But oth - er lands have sun - light too, and clo - ver,
 Let Christ be lift - ed up till all shall serve him,

here are my hopes, my dreams, my ho - ly shrine;
 and skies are ev - ery - where as blue as mine.
 and hearts u - nit - ed learn to live as one.

The first two stanzas of this hymn were written between the 20th century's two world wars and focus on the theme of international peace. The third stanza, by another author and added later, uses the language of the Lord's Prayer to voice a distinctly Christian perspective.

TEXT: Stanzas 1-2. Lloyd Stone; stanza 3. Georgia Harkness, alt.

MUSIC: Jean Sibelius, 1899; arr. *The Hymnal*, 1933, alt.

Text Sts. 1-2 © 1934, ren. 1962 The Lorenz Corp.; St. 3 © 1964 The Lorenz Corp.

Music Arr. © 1933, ren. 1961 The Presbyterian Board of Christian Education (admin. Westminster John Knox Press)

FINLANDIA
 11.10.11.10.11.10

Lord, When I Came into This Life 691

1 Lord, when I came in - to this life you
 2 With - in the cir - cle of the faith, as
 3 In all the ten - sions of my life, be -
 4 So help me in my un - be - lief and

called me by my name; to - day I come, com -
 mem - ber of your cast, I take my place with
 tween my faith and doubt, let your great Spir - it
 let my life be true: feet firm - ly plant - ed

mit my - self, re - spond - ing to your claim.
 all the saints of fu - ture, pres - ent, past.
 give me hope, sus - tain me, lead me out.
 on the earth, my sights set high on you.

Written for the confirmation of the author's son, this text of self-dedication also voices our recurring individual need to recommit ourselves in less formal ways. The familiar shape note tune enhances a sense of finding our place among God's people from all times and places.


TEXT: Fred Kaan, 1976
 MUSIC: American folk melody; harm. Charles H. Webb, 1988
 Text © 1979 The Hymn Society (admin. Hope Publishing Company)
 Music Harm. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House (admin. The Copyright Company)

LAND OF REST
 CM
 (alternate harmonization, 545)

GP+SC4AP

Lynn Hargrove’s term as General Presbyter + Stated Clerk for Administrative Process ends on December 31, 2026, at which point it is her intention to retire from serving in this role. She is grateful for the opportunity to lead the presbytery through these challenging times including many church dismissals, COVID and the recovery years after.

As of March 24, 79 congregations have submitted their Session Annual Statistical Reports. Reports have not been received from Covenant in College Station, First in Dickinson, and Korean Central in Houston. The deadline for submission is March 31, so they still have an opportunity to provide the required information.

2025 Presbytery Statistical Report			
Presbytery	New Covenant		
Address	4803 San Felipe, Houston, TX 77056		
Phone	713-526-2585	Fax	713-526-8814
Email	lhargrove@pbbyofnewcovenant.org		
Web Site	www.pbbyofnewcovenant.org		
			
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Membership			
Prior Active Members	13092	Adjusted membership	13087
Gains		Losses	
Certificate	91	Certificate	83
Youth Professions	43	Deaths	206
Professions & Reaffirmations	220	Deleted for any Other Reason	419
Total Gains	354	Total Losses	708
Total Ending Active Members	12733		
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Baptisms		Average Weekly Worship Attendance	4614
Presented by Others	52	Friends of the Congregation	1280
At Confirmation	13	Ruling Elders on Session	602
All Other	25	Do you have Deacons? Yes / No	19 / 57
<hr/>			
Age Distribution of Active Members		People with Disabilities	
17 & Under	449	Hearing impairment	385
18 - 25	692	Sight impairment	83
26 - 40	1318	Mobility impairment	292
41 - 55	1406	Other impairment	335
56 - 70	2333		
Over 70	3203	Gender Distribution	
Total Age Distribution	9401	Women	5751
		Men	3951
		Non-Binary	6
<hr/>			
Youth in Congregation			
Age 4 and under	245	Middle School (6th – 8th grade)	226
Elementary School (K-5th grade)	475	High School (9th – 12th grade)	318
		Total Youth	1264
<hr/>			
Racial Ethnic			
Asian/Pacific Islander/South Asian	504	Native American/Alaska Native/Indigenous	106
Black/African American/African	503	White	7053
Middle Eastern/North African	26	Multiracial	270
Hispanic/Latino-a	415		
		Total Racial Ethnic	8877
<hr/>			
Budgeted Income	20,358,701		
Budgeted Expense	21,805,063		
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Receipts			
Regular Contributions	16,554,965	Bequests	378,274
Capital Building Fund	2,310,798	Other Income	2,606,945
Investment Income	1,356,359	Subsidy or Aid	140,628
<hr/>			
Expenditures			
Local Program	19,710,104	Investment Expenditures	507,573
Local Mission	876,799	Per Capital Apprt	135,090
Capital Expenditures	2,500,693	Other Mission	504,976

In the process of completing statistical reports, and after more than 10 years of trying to reach the church leadership (Pastor, Clerk of Session and Treasurer) of First Lao Presbyterian Church, by email and phone calls (to numbers that no longer worked) with no response, a son of Phoy Vorabouth reported that the congregation stopped meeting two years ago. Phoy, who served as the Commissioned Pastor, is now 78 years old and not in good health. The congregation was reported as dissolved in February.

The congregation at Waverly Presbyterian Church voted last fall to disassociate with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and no longer responds to communication from the presbytery. We have offered to work with them to achieve their goal despite taking a vote that was not in compliance with the Book of Order or with the Gracious Dismissal Process for being dismissed from the denomination. More efforts to contact the leadership will continue.

The congregation of St. Stephen in Houston is under contract to sell their church facility with a closing date in April. The details will be reported to the July meeting of the presbytery. Their intention is to remain a congregation for the time being and to nest in a nearby Presbyterian Church.

The congregation of ChristChurch in Bellaire is under contract to sell their Fellowship Hall building and a house next door. This was the property where they had hoped to build a new church facility. The permitting process in Bellaire was difficult to navigate. The funds generated from the sale will assist in renovations at their main campus at the corner of Bellaire Blvd. and South Rice Avenue.

The first congregation to turn in session minutes for review in 2026 was Shiro. There will be a records review after today's meeting for anyone who can attend. Other sessions will be scheduled around the presbytery and held after the November presbytery meeting scheduled for St. Philip.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn R. Hargrove

Stated Clerk for Judicial Process

Disciplinary Case PNC 2023-01: Liaisons from the Committee On Ministry are consulting with Rev. Peter Chung to confirm his completion of the requirements of the Alternative Resolution as defined in his Censure.

Respectfully submitted,

John Lemen

Necrology for 2025

Ministers of Word and Sacrament

<i>Ben Carpenter</i>	<i>December 20</i>
<i>T. Stewart "Stew" Coffman</i>	<i>August 29</i>
<i>Robert "Bob" Covington</i>	<i>September 21</i>
<i>Steve Kerr</i>	<i>February 13</i>
<i>Brian Kile</i>	<i>December 29 (2024)</i>
<i>James Angus McLeod</i>	<i>September 21</i>
<i>William "Bill" Schulenberg</i>	<i>December 18</i>
<i>Wilbur "Will" Stambaugh</i>	<i>September 13</i>
<i>Ed Triem</i>	<i>February 27</i>

Ruling Elders, Deacons and Trustees

<i>Alvin, First</i>	<i>First, Conroe</i>
<i>Nancy Ayres Milchrist Williams</i>	<i>Janet McGavin Ashley May 21</i>
<i>February 2</i>	<i>Kyle Walker September 15</i>
<i>Patricia Lucile Eubanks Beasley</i>	<i>John D. Wright December 13</i>
<i>June 16</i>	
<i>Billy Wayne Pannell</i>	<i>First, Crockett</i>
<i>December 16</i>	<i>Bettie Sarver July 22</i>
<i>Pioneer, Beaumont</i>	<i>Christ, Houston</i>
<i>Steve Wycoff June 3</i>	<i>Felix Johnson January 12</i>
<i>St Andrew's, Beaumont</i>	<i>Heights, Houston</i>
<i>Beth Ann Mistrot August 11</i>	<i>Terry Myers February 24</i>
	<i>Amber Martinez February 24</i>

Oaks, Houston
Steve Kent January 24

Pines, Houston
Melissa Sandstrom July 17

St. Andrew's, Houston
Philip Migliore February 11
Harry Bristol May 27
Laurie Fitzpatrick December 4

St. John's, Houston
Bob Hughes March 30
George Dobbin April 1

St. Luke's, Houston
Alan Lucas December 15

Spring Branch, Houston
Jerry Bigelow January 15
Patty Walsh March 4
Richard Slover March 18

First, Lufkin
Earl Parker June 7

First, Navasota
Donald Wayne Otto December 22

First, Orange
Karen Akers August 25
Bill Duncan December 21

First, Pasadena
Emma Abrams February 26
Michael Wallace September 2
Barry Webb October 4

First, Rosenberg
Pete Gonzales January 26

First, Sugar Land
Jackie James February 12
Don Stewart March 20
Pearlene Tielke November 8

First, Tomball
Mark Brown September 8
Jan Walker October 12

Trawick, Trawick
James Thomas Kerss August 15

First, Wharton
Russ Cenko October 4

Church Anniversaries

<i>First Presbyterian Church, Navasota</i>	<i>160 years</i>
<i>First Presbyterian Church, Angleton</i>	<i>130 years</i>
<i>MEMI, Texas City</i>	<i>85 years</i>
<i>Trinity Presbyterian Church, Nederland</i>	<i>75 years</i>
<i>Faith Presbyterian Church - Pasadena</i>	<i>70 years</i>
<i>St. John's, Houston</i>	<i>70 years</i>
<i>Juan Marcos, Houston</i>	<i>60 years</i>
<i>St Thomas, Houston</i>	<i>60 years</i>
<i>Community of the Servant Savior, Houston</i>	<i>60 years</i>
<i>First Presbyterian Church, Tomball</i>	<i>40 years</i>
<i>San Pablo + Trinity, Houston</i>	<i>35 years (merger)</i>
<i>ChristChurch, Bellaire</i>	<i>20 years (merger)</i>

Administration Committee

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE PRESBYTERY

4. To approve the proposed budget for 2026.
5. To accept as a first reading the revised Sexual Misconduct Protection Policy.
6. To accept as a first reading the revised Child, Youth, Vulnerable Adult and Participant Protection Policy.

Our committee is fortunate to include dedicated members with a broad spectrum of expertise and experience. We are charged with managing the assets of the Presbytery, supporting the Personnel of the Presbytery, and making funding decisions regarding various Outreach programs requested by member Churches.

The assets of the Presbytery are very strong and in very good order. As of the close of 2025 Presbytery of the New Covenant investments in the Texas Presbyterian Fund totaled \$13,571,109. This was an increase of \$1,583,789 as compared to the close of 2024. PNC also holds an additional investment of \$300,000 in PLIP so total investments equal \$13,871,109.

Approximately half of this amount (just over \$6.5 Million) is pledged to secure loans taken out by various member Churches as they build new buildings or make improvements to existing real estate. Many of these investments are tied up in restricted funds that are bound by the requests of the donors to only be utilized for certain purposes. The largest single fund is the Building Sales Proceeds fund totaling over \$7.5 Million. These are funds derived from Churches that have closed and the real estate has been sold.

The income from these investments in terms of dividends and interest earned are utilized to cover shortfalls in the PNC Budget. The Presbytery primarily relies on benevolence from Churches and individuals to fund activities, pay staff, lease office space, pay utility bills, and do the work of the Presbytery. Giving to the Presbytery continues to spiral downward with expenses exceeding income for several years in a row. Fortunately, the income received from our investments has been available to fund these deficits. We are operating under a budget for 2026 that projects an annual deficit of just over \$210,000.

As part of our Personnel duties, we were asked by General Council to review PNC Policy and Procedures as pertaining to Sexual Harassment and Child Protection policies. This was in direct response to unfortunate issues that arose and involved PNC staff and youth as well as young adults involved in Presbytery activities.

A task force was appointed and charged with examining current PNC policies and determining how they might be revised to more adequately address what occurred and perhaps avoid a repeat of the same sort of issues in the future. The Task Force included Rev John Judson, Bill Parker, Rosy Murphy, Denise Wilborn, Ann Hardy, and Leah Lynch McFadden, and Charlie Bradbury.

This very capable group was able to propose complete rewrites of Existing Policies and Procedures which had not been updated in over 10 years. These revised and improved policies were first presented to and approved by the Administration Committee and then were presented to and approved by General Council. Copies of these revised policies are attached. They will be included as Appendices to the presbytery's Manual of Operations.

Committee Members

Class of 2026: RE Chris Friedersdorf (Atascocita); TE John Judson (HR); TE Kathy Sebring (Dickinson, First and Interim Associate at Webster)

Class of 2027: TE Deborah Bogar (Richmond, St. Paul); TE Brent Hampton (HR); RE Ann Hardy (Houston, St. John's)

Class of 2028: RE Charlie Bradbury – Chair (Huntsville, First); RE Jim Fryfogle (Houston, Northwoods)

OPERATING CASH FLOW ANALYSIS

OPERATING STATEMENT (2 Months Ended 2/28/2026)

Total Operating Revenues	\$52,740
Less Total Expenses before Depreciation	<u>(87,145)</u>
Operating Deficit	(34,405)

FUNDS AVAILABLE TO FINANCE DEFICIT (see note below)

Investment income @12/31/2025 421,466*

*30% is available to finance the deficit, the same amount is reinvested 124,439 x 2 = 252,879

*40% is available for the General Council for mission and ministry 168,586

LIQUID RESERVES @ 2/28/2025

Balance Sheet @ 2/28/2026

Total reserves: cash & liquid investments	\$13,697,673
Less Restricted funds @ 2/28/2026	(679,764)
Total Unrestricted Reserves @ 2/28/2026	\$13,008,909

NOTE: The "funds available to finance deficit" come from the proceeds from the sale of our former office building at 1110 Lovett. In September, 2021, the Finance Committee recommended to the General Council that disbursements from the income earned on these invested funds be distributed as follows:

40% to be distributed by General Council for mission and ministry

30% to be used for PNC operations if there is a deficit. If there is no deficit, then the funds are carried forward to be used in the future if necessary.

30% to be reinvested into the "Building Fund" at Texas Presbyterian Foundation

**None of these funds have been used thus far in 2025.*

In September of 2023, a motion was approved to set up a GC Discretionary Spending Fund which would include:

- Funds generated by the earnings (interest and dividends) and realized capital gains (new of realized capital losses) generated by the "Building Sales Proceeds and Unrestricted Reserve funds at Texas Presbyterian Foundation (TPF)."*
- 20% of all monies that are realized from the sale of PNC properties.*
- Designated donations.*

Further move that the remaining 80% of monies that are realized from the sale of PNC properties be placed in the Building Sales Proceeds account at TPF.

When a congregation chooses to dissolve, their property reverts to the presbytery under the trust clause. We have been able to lease some of these properties so that they are still being used for the purposes of worship and mission in those communities. When there is no group interested in leasing, then the property is sold.

Presbytery of New Covenant Summary of Proposed 2026 Budget	Proposed 2025 Budget	Actual 2025	Proposed 2026 Budget
Revenues			
Benevolence Receipts			
From Churches (PLEASE SEE NOTE 1 BELOW)	275,000	251,957	275,000
From Individuals	5,541	3,202	3,200
Per Capita for OGA	88,450	93,041	93,041
Total Benevolence Receipts	368,991	348,200	371,241
Other Income			
Interest Income	11,000	7,630	2,400
Misc. Income	-	2,693	-
Rental Income	13,000	14,000	21,000
Total Other Income	24,000	24,323	23,400
Total Revenues	392,991	372,523	394,641
Expenses			
Support of Larger Church			
Benevolences to Synod (\$5,000 is funded outside the budget pledge.)	10,000	15,000	10,000
Per Capita for OGA	88,450	82,057	93,041
Total Support of Larger Church	98,450	97,057	103,041
Ministry Expenses			
Communications (Data Base, Constant Contact, Web Site and Zoom)	6,850	6,285	6,300
Resource Center	500	599	600
Administration - Covenant Partners	28,000	26,500	26,500
Total Ministries Expenses	35,350	35,384	35,400
Administrative Expenses			
Finance - Insurance, Legal & Payroll Support	60,000	49,553	50,000
Ops-Building Maintenance (primarily rent) (PLEASE SEE NOTE 2 BELOW)	24,401	29,203	31,603
Ops-Equipment	13,364	6,135	6,000
Audit Fees	10,500	10,500	10,500
Ops-Office Supply	750	947	1,000
PJC Expenses	5,612	3,268	3,300
Ops-Utilities - (Telephones, Internet and Google)	5,100	3,532	3,500
Ecclesiastical Affairs	112	106	125
Personnel Compensation (Committee approved a 5% increase effective 4-1-26)	270,000	244,061	270,000
Personnel Benefits	99,592	101,092	102,000
Professional Reimbursements	6,468	9,310	10,000
Total Administrative Expenses	495,899	457,707	488,028
Total Expenses	629,699	590,148	626,469
Total Revenues Minus Total Expenses	(236,708)	(217,625)	(231,828)
Other Sources Of Cash In To Balance Budget (Building Sales Proceeds)			
Funds to be Transferred from Operating Account to balance the Budget	200,000	148,361	200,000
Additional Financial Information			
Investment Increase from 12-31-24 to 12-31-25		1,583,760	
Cash and Cash Equivalents as of 12-31-25			
Checking and Deposit Accounts and any Certificate of Deposit		156,421	
Investment In PILP for Baytown (excludes 9,012 interest receivable)		300,000	
Investments with TPF		13,349,900	
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents		13,806,321	

Committee on Ministries, Innovation and Vitality, Youth Ministries and various grants are funded outside the Budget

NOTE 1. AS OF 3/23, 28 ESTIMATES OF GIVING HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FOR A TOTAL OF \$163,700 FOR GENERAL BENEVOLENCE TO THE PRESBYTERY AND \$56,373 FOR DENOMINATIONAL PER CAPITA.

NOTE 2: ON MARCH 19, WE WERE NOTIFIED OF A RENT INCREASE FOR A TOTAL OF \$29,705.76,

Revised 3/24/2026



Presbytery of New Covenant
January 1, 2026—December 31, 2026
 Budget Pledge of Undesignated Church Giving

We appreciate the generous support that we receive from our congregations!

From Church: _____ City: _____

General Operating Budget Gift 1/01/26-12/31/26 for The Presbytery of New Covenant

Amt. to be sent Monthly \$ _____ Amt. to be sent Quarterly \$ _____

**Total of \$ _____ to the Presbytery of New Covenant General Operating Fund.
 This supports the work of the presbytery.**

General Assembly Per Capita for 2026 = \$11.26 x 2024 Active Church Membership
Please note: This amount was set by the 226th General Assembly at its 2024 meeting in Salt Lake City.

Amt. to be sent Monthly \$ _____ Amt. to be sent Quarterly \$ _____

Total of \$ _____ for Per Capita. This is sent directly to our offices in Louisville to support the work of the denomination.

Please be sure to fill out the remittance form including how to allocate funds when sending a check to the Presbytery. If not specifically stated, all funds will go into General Operating Fund.

Submitted By: _____

Position/Office: _____

Please send the Completed Form to:

The Presbytery of New Covenant
 Attn: Charlie Leibold
 4803 San Felipe
 Houston, TX 77056-3907

Email: cleibold@pbyofnewcovenant.org

Presbytery of New Covenant

Sexual Misconduct Policy

I. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), hereinafter referred to as PC(USA), that all teaching elders, councils (including officers, employees and members), church members, church officers, and nonmember employees and volunteers of churches and governing bodies are to maintain the integrity of ministerial, employment, and professional relationships at all times. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in Scripture, and also of the ministerial, pastoral, employment and professional relationships expected of members of the PC(USA) and of followers of Jesus Christ.

II. Implementation

Therefore, the Presbytery of New Covenant (PNC) *requires* all minister-members, commissioned ruling elders, certified Christian educators, and PNC volunteers who work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults at PNC sponsored events, to participate in an educational event, sponsored either by the Committee on Ministry, for minister members, commissioned ruling elders, Christian Educators, and professional staff, or the appropriate PNC committees for PNC volunteers working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults at PNC sponsored events which:

- **Outlines professional and ministerial boundaries including sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and elder abuse for teaching elders, commissioned ruling elders and certified Christian educators and professional staff**
- **Outlines boundaries for volunteers working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, including sexual abuse and sexual misconduct**

These events will be offered each year for clergy, commissioned ruling elders, Christian educators, and professional staff. Attendance is required every three years.

Events for PNC volunteers will be offered as needed

The Presbytery of New Covenant requires that all teaching elders, commissioned ruling elders and certified Christian educators under its jurisdiction and all employees of the presbytery abide by its provisions.

In order to accomplish the proceeding requirements, the presbytery shall develop or implement educational materials or courses appropriate for all such groups or may contract with expert entities to provide such materials or courses. A minister-member not currently residing in the presbytery, may undertake alternative education in accordance with this policy in satisfaction of this requirement, if the member demonstrates to the PNC Stated Clerk that such alternative education is substantially equivalent to that provided for above.

III. Distribution

Copies of this policy and its procedures shall be made available to all councils and entity offices. Specifically, within the bounds of the Presbytery of New Covenant, this policy and its procedures will be made available and commended to all sessions within the presbytery. Sessions, which are required to have Sexual Misconduct Policies, are allowed to adapt this document if they find it helpful.

This policy and its procedures shall be made available to persons who accuse others of misconduct, including those who are or claim to be victims of sexual misconduct and their families.

IV. Definition

Sexual Misconduct includes the following:

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined in the Book of Order as: "Sexual abuse of another person is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position" (Book of Order, D-10.0401c).

Child sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child (those under the age of eighteen) and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of another person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced because children cannot give informed consent.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment defined for this policy is as follows:

Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favor, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including but not limited to when:

- a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution.

- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual.
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- d. a person in a position of religious or moral authority (clergy, Commissioned Ruling Elder, teacher, elder, counselor, youth leader, church volunteer) subjects an individual within their sphere of influence to sexual jokes, or sexual innuendoes, or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals (including but not limited to electronic communications), regardless of the manner or location in which these events take place.

Grooming

Grooming is a form of sexual misconduct and is prohibited. Grooming refers to any pattern of behavior by a minister, elder, deacon, employee, or volunteer that seeks to establish trust, emotional dependency, secrecy, or undue influence for the purpose of exploitation, manipulation, or abuse.

Prohibited grooming behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Excessive or inappropriate attention, favoritism, or gift-giving
- Attempts to isolate an individual from family, peers, Session, Presbytery, or other accountability structures
- Boundary-violating communications, including sexualized, overly personal, or secretive conversations (in person or via digital media)
- Use of ministerial authority, spiritual influence, or pastoral care relationships to manipulate, coerce, or control another person
- Gradual escalation of emotional or physical intimacy that violates pastoral, professional, or fiduciary boundaries

Grooming behavior may occur with minors or adults and does not require overt sexual contact to constitute a violation of this policy. Any substantiated grooming behavior shall be considered serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action under ecclesiastical process, employment action, dismissal from a volunteer position, and/or referral to civil authorities, as required by law.

All members of the Presbytery, including ministers of the Word and Sacrament, ruling elders, employees, and volunteers, have a duty to report suspected grooming behavior promptly. Retaliation against any person who reports concerns in good faith is strictly prohibited.

V. Reporting Responsibilities

Reporting

Local Church: The presbytery does not have jurisdiction over employees of local churches. If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a member, elder, deacon, volunteer, or employee of a congregation, the report of allegations should follow the procedures listed in the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the congregation. If those policies do not exist, or cannot be located, allegations should be made to the pastor, the clerk of session, or the chair of the personnel committee. If the accused is a member or officer of the church, the church will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. If the accused is a nonmember employee or volunteer, the church will respond by using procedures set forth by the session of the congregation in their personnel policies. If the accused is a Teaching Elder, Commissioned Ruling Elder, Christian Educator, or presbytery staff member the report shall be made as outline below in the Presbytery section.

Presbytery: Any allegations of sexual misconduct by a minister member, commissioned ruling elder or certified Christian educator, volunteer, member or nonmember employee of the presbytery, shall be reported in writing to the stated clerk of the presbytery. If the accused is the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, the report shall be made to the Chair of the PNC Administration Committee. The stated clerk, or Administration Chair will ensure that the presbytery responds according to the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order, by policy or bylaws of the presbytery.

Higher Council (Governing Body) or Entity of the General Assembly: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is an employee or volunteer of a synod or General Assembly or any entity established by a synod or General Assembly, contact the stated clerk of that particular synod or General Assembly.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

Per the Book of Order (G-40302.a)

Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Certified Christian Educators and Deacons:

“Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by the church or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.”

Per the Mental Health Services Provider Chapter 81 of the Texas Civil Practice & Remedies Code:

The Code imposes certain reporting obligations on mental health services providers and their employers when the provider or employer has reasonable cause to suspect that a patient has been the victim of sexual exploitation by a mental health services provider. A "mental health services provider" includes a member of the clergy. Chapter 81 of the Texas Civil Practice & Remedies Code is set forth in Appendix D and should be consulted in determining whether, when, how and to whom reports should be made of suspected sexual exploitation by a mental health services provider.

All persons covered by this policy have an additional duty to report knowledge of child sexual abuse to the employing entity, supervisor, or governing body representative. All persons should be informed of and must comply with state and local laws regarding incidents of actual or suspected child sexual abuse. These reports should be made within a reasonable time of receiving the information.

These provisions of the Book of Order attempt to balance conflicting moral duties for officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

For teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders, the provision strives to balance the duty to protect children from future harm with the duty of a pastor to hold in confidence any information revealed to them during the exercise of pastoral care in any ministry setting as defined in G-4.0301 in the Book of Order.

For ruling elders, deacons, and certified Christian educators, the provisions strive to balance the duty of an officer of the church to protect children from harm and any secular duty the officer may have to hold in confidence any information revealed because of a secular relationship such as attorney/client, counselor/client, or physician/patient. The secular duties will be a function of secular law and may vary from state to state.

VI. Receiving Reports

Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct Reports or allegations of sexual misconduct may occur in a variety of ways. Because a council or entity cannot control to whom the victim of sexual misconduct will speak first, it is important that officers, employees, and persons highly visible to church members and visitors understand the reporting processes outline above.

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the victim, the accused, and the church. Reports of allegations should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities.

The first person to learn of an incident of sexual misconduct should not undertake an inquiry or question either the victim or the accused unless the incident is divulged in the process of pastoral care, counseling, or a therapy session. If the victim is hesitant to talk to "higher authorities," the person who

has received the initial report has a special pastoral responsibility to demonstrate compassion and care for the individual.

The person receiving the initial report of allegations of sexual misconduct shall analyze the relationship of the person accused of sexual misconduct with the PC(USA) and shall make sure that the allegations of offense are filed with the council with jurisdiction over the person accused. This may be done by the person alleging harm or by any member of the PC(USA).

If the report is made orally, the person receiving the report of allegations should request that the person making the report of allegations place it in writing. A written report of allegations of sexual misconduct from a member of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed an offense must be handled according to the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. If a clerk of session or stated clerk receives a report of allegations in writing from a nonmember of the PC(USA) alleging a member or officer of the PC(USA) committed sexual misconduct, the report shall be acted upon according to the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. If the person who makes the report is unwilling or unable to place it in writing, any member of the PC(USA) may make the written statement that will automatically initiate the *Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order*.

VII. Responding to Reports

The appropriate council or entity response will vary according to the relationship of the PC(USA) with the person who is accused of sexual misconduct. Church members and officers are subject to inquiry and discipline (censure and correction) under the Book of Order. Non church member employees and volunteers are subject to oversight and correction by the governing body or entity that employs them.

1. Accused Covered by Book of Order

When an allegation of offense of sexual misconduct has been received by the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, the clerk of the council will report to the council that an offense has been alleged and that the council will proceed according to the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. The council should appoint an investigating committee to inquire into the allegations. The investigating committee must promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations. Delay may cause further harm to the victim and/or the accused.

Councils and entities must cooperate with civil authorities in an investigation of child sexual abuse or other criminal sexual misconduct. Church disciplinary proceedings cannot interfere with a criminal investigation by civil authorities and may have to be suspended until these are completed. The session has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving members, ruling elders, and deacons of the church, each congregation having jurisdiction only over its own members. A presbytery has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving teaching elders (and to a limited degree, commissioned ruling elders and certified Christian educators). A presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship when the *“church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it”* (G-2.0904). However, a presbytery may only place a minister on administrative leave when allegations of sexual

abuse have been received, and the presbytery has followed the Book of Order procedures to conduct its risk evaluation to determine whether a minister member accused of sexual abuse should be placed on administrative leave (D-10.0106). It is recommended that the permanent judicial commission (PJC) members who will conduct this risk evaluation based upon the allegations and a hearing should also consider secular legal advice.

When a church officer renounces jurisdiction, the clerk of session or stated clerk shall report the renunciation at the next meeting of the council and shall record the renunciation in the minutes of the council. The status of any pending charges may be shared with the council at that time. Renunciation shall not cause the inquiry to cease.

2. Accused Not Covered by Book of Order

When a council receives an accusation of offense of sexual misconduct against a nonmember employee or volunteer, the procedural response of the council or entity will be guided by the written personnel policies of the council or entity. For PNC employees this entity is the PNC Administration Committee.

For volunteers the appropriate presbytery committee will request the formation of an administrative commission to review of the allegation.

The committee or commission that will respond to the allegation of offense of sexual misconduct will do the following:

- a. Determine whether the allegation gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct by the accused.
- b. If so, gather additional information necessary to decide about correcting the behavior.
- c. Determine any remedies, including limiting ministry, suspension, or termination necessary and advisable under the circumstances. If the accused is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegations and the response.
- d. Inform the victim and the accused of the remedy.
- e. In all cases, the personnel committee shall prepare a written report, which shall be included in the accused's permanent personnel file. The accused shall be allowed to attach any written statements to said documents, also for permanent inclusion in the permanent file.

All procedures shall follow the guidelines set forth by the council, employing agency, or entity of the General Assembly.

3. Council or Entity Record Keeping

The council or entity shall keep detailed records of its actions and minutes of its deliberations and its conversations with the accuser, the accused, and other parties involved, correspondence, and copies of the reports received from committees or commissions. Such records will be kept confidential. In

Case #208-6, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) interpreted the Rules of Discipline to say that a council (governing body) or entity may share the contents of inquiry reports with other councils or entities of the PC(USA) when necessary. The clerk of the council or director of the entity will maintain the records while the inquiry is in process.

VIII. Prevention and Risk Management

Implementation

This document shall be made available to all Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Christian Educators, PNC staff and PNC volunteers working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults at PNC sponsored events. All Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Christian Educators, under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of New Covenant, and PNC staff shall sign a copy of this policy to acknowledge that they have read and received it/

Liability and Insurance

A council or entity can be held liable for harm caused by sexual misconduct of an officer, minister, or employee based on several legal theories.

Councils and entities should take such potential liability into consideration when establishing hiring and supervisory practices. Councils and entities should regularly inform their liability insurance carriers of the activities and programs they operate or sponsor and of the duties and responsibilities of officers, employees, and volunteers. The standard insurance policy should usually be enhanced by endorsements to cover specific exposures such as camps, day-care operations, shelters, or other outreach programs.

It is also recommended that councils and entities obtain an endorsement to their general liability insurance policy specifically covering sexual abuse and molestation, along with standard directors' insurance. Such coverage may provide for legal defense expenses and judgments in civil suits brought against the council or entity, its officers, directors, or employees.

Employment Practices

1. **Record Keeping:** Accurate record keeping is an essential part of hiring and supervision practices of churches, councils, and related entities. Every council and entity should maintain a personnel file on every employee, including ministers. The file should contain the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, background checks, references responses, and all other documents related to an employee's employment, except records that may be required, by law, to be kept in separate files.
2. **Prescreening Applicants:** Councils and entities are urged to establish thorough and consistent hiring practices. If an applicant is unknown to the employer, the employer should confirm the applicant's identity by requiring photographic identification such as a driver's license. The council

should perform a background check, including both a state and a national criminal background check, on all applicants that may have interaction with children and youth.

3. References: The employing council or entity is responsible for contacting references for prospective ministers, employees, or volunteers. A written record of conversations or correspondence with references should be kept in the minister or employee's personnel file.

The person within the council or entity authorized to give a reference is obligated to give truthful information regarding allegations, inquiries, and administrative or disciplinary action related to sexual misconduct of the applicant.

If false or misleading information is given by the applicant, or relevant information is withheld, the applicant should be eliminated from consideration.

Applicants should be informed of negative comments regarding sexual misconduct and shall be given an opportunity to submit additional references or to give other evidence to correct or respond to harmful information obtained from a reference.

IX Pastoral Care Following Reporting

In cases of harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct our response as the Church ought to be to try to be of assistance to all persons or entities affected by the alleged events. This includes being of assistance to the accuser (and family if there is one), the accused (and family if there is one), congregation(s), and any church institution(s) involved.

This shall be accomplished by the creation of a Pastoral Care Response Team (PCRT). This team shall not be involved in the investigation of charges or the legal adjudication process (either the Church process or any other State legal process). The PCRT shall concern itself solely with the pastoral care needs of those affected by the alleged events. The PCRT shall be initiated in the following manner:

When the stated clerk receives an allegation of sexual misconduct, the stated clerk shall report the allegation to the Moderator and Vice-Moderator of the Committee on Ministry. The moderator and vice-moderator shall determine if such a PCRT team should be named and shall be responsible for recruiting the members of the PCRT.

CRITICAL NOTE: All accusations are confidential. The persons making the accusations and the accused have the right to privacy. The presbytery shall only act in the following manner if the accuser and/or accused so desire.

Pastoral Care for the Accuser and/or Alleged Victims

The *council*, entity, and response coordination team is to assume in all cases that the accuser has been harmed by the alleged experience.

The following are steps that shall be taken by the Presbytery and the PCRT:

1. The accuser shall be taken seriously. From the time that the accuser is first able to indicate that harassment/sexual misconduct in any form has occurred, that person shall receive immediate attention from Church authorities.
2. The accuser shall be offered pastoral and therapeutic support. The accuser may benefit from spiritual and professional assistance as a result of the alleged harassment/sexual misconduct. The PCRT shall offer to help arrange for such support if the accuser so desires.
3. The accuser shall be regularly updated about the church process of the accusation. One member of the response coordination team should be the church contact person for the victim. Frequently, this contact person will give the victim these regular updates. The accuser may choose their own advocate to serve in this capacity even if that person is not a member of the PCRT.

Pastoral Care for the Accused

1. The accused shall be taken seriously and assumed to be innocent until proven otherwise. From the time that an accusation is made, until the end of the Church judicial process, the presbytery shall to the best of its ability offer the pastoral and spiritual care to the accused. This shall be done within the confines of confidentiality

2. The accused shall be regularly updated about the church process of the accusation. One member of the response coordination team should be the church contact person for the victim. Frequently, this contact person will give the victim these regular updates. The accuser may choose their own advocate to serve in this capacity even if that person is not a member of the PCRT.

3. The PCRT shall alert the Committee on Ministry to the possible spiritual, emotional, and financial needs of the family of the accused and recommend resources to assist.

Pastoral Care for a Congregation in a Context of Sexual Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Ministry to decide how to provide information, care, and counsel to congregations in which allegations of Harassment/Sexual Misconduct are reported. All care should be taken to ensure confidentiality of all parties involved.

It is the responsibility of each *council* to establish policy and its procedures governing cases of sexual misconduct in that jurisdiction. The PC(USA) policy and its procedures are intended to guide the development of *council* policy and procedures.

X. Definitions

Accused is the term used to represent the person against whom a claim of sexual misconduct is made.

Accuser is a term used to represent the person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not have been the victim of the alleged sexual misconduct. A person such as a family member, friend, or colleague may be the accuser.

Church when spelled with the initial capitalized refers to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Church when spelled with the initial in lowercase refers to local churches. The word congregation is used loosely for members and participants.

Employee is the comprehensive term used to cover individuals who are hired or called to work for the Church for salary or wages.

Entity is the term used to refer to any program or office managed by a board, committee, council, or other body whose membership is elected by a governing body.

Council (Governing Body) is a representative body composed of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament: sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. A *council* may establish entities such as day-care centers, conference centers, camps, or homes for the aged. A *council* may have both church members and nonmembers as employees.

Inquiry is the term used in the Rules of Discipline to determine whether charges should be filed based upon allegations of an offense received by a *council*. See *Book of Order*, D-10.0000.

Mandated Reporter is described by some states' laws as a person who is required to report any and all suspected incidents of child abuse, including child sexual abuse that come to their attention. State laws vary from defining "all persons having knowledge" as mandated reporters to specifying very limited lists of professions whose members are required to report.

Persons Covered by this policy includes church members, church officers, ministers, and nonmembers who are employees or volunteers.

Response is the action taken by the *council* or entity when a report of sexual misconduct is received. It may include (1) inquiry into facts and circumstances, (2) possible disciplinary action (administrative or judicial or both), (3) pastoral care for victims and their families and others, and (4) pastoral care and rehabilitation for the accused and care for their families.

Secular Authorities are the governmental bodies, whether city, county, state, or federal, who are given the responsibility to investigate, criminally prosecute, and/or bring civil charges against individuals accused of sexual crimes or offenses against adults and

Secular Law is the body of municipal, state, and federal laws and is often referred to collectively as civil and criminal law. Prohibited behavior addressed by this policy may result in criminal and/or civil charges filed under secular law.

Victim is a person whose claims of sexual misconduct have been substantiated either by the processes of the Book of Order or secular authorities.

Volunteers include persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other groups. For purposes of this policy, volunteers are treated the same as employees.

Presbytery of New Covenant

Child, Youth, Vulnerable Adult and Participant Protection Policy

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XV. Grooming

Adopted: [Date]

Last Reviewed: [Date]

I. Purpose and Theological Foundation

The Presbytery of New Covenant is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and secure environment for all children and youth who participate in presbytery-sponsored programs, ministries, and activities. This policy is grounded in the church's calling to participate in God's mission of care, justice, and protection for the vulnerable (Book of Order **F-1.0201**), and to maintain relationships of mutual trust, respect, and safety within the community of faith (**F-1.0404**).

Pursuant to the authority and responsibility of councils of the church (**F-3.0101**), the Presbytery of New Covenant adopts this policy to prevent abuse, respond faithfully to allegations, comply with civil law, and uphold the integrity of the church's witness.

II. Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all persons acting under the authority of the Presbytery of New Covenant, including:

- Ministers of Word and Sacrament
- Commissioned Ruling Elders
- Employees
- Directors of Christian Education
- Volunteers and chaperones
- Interns, contractors, and temporary workers

This policy governs all presbytery-sponsored activities involving minors, whether on-site, off-site, during travel, or in virtual settings, consistent with the presbytery's responsibility for mission and governance (**G-3.0106; G-3.0303**).

III. Definitions

- **Child / Minor:** Any person under eighteen (18) years of age.
- **Worker:** Any paid or unpaid individual who supervises, teaches, mentors, counsels, or otherwise interacts with minors.
- **Volunteer:** An unpaid worker serving in a role involving minors.
- **Event Director:** The individual designated to oversee a presbytery-sponsored activity.
- **Child Abuse:** Any act or failure to act that results in harm or risk of harm to a child's physical, emotional, or psychological well-being, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

- **Participant:** A participant is any person, regardless of age, who is taking part in a presbytery sponsored activity.
- **Grooming:** Grooming refers to any pattern of behavior by a minister, elder, deacon, employee, or volunteer that seeks to establish trust, emotional dependency, secrecy, or undue influence for the purpose of exploitation, manipulation, or abuse.

IV. Responsibility of the Presbytery

The Presbytery of New Covenant bears responsibility for establishing and enforcing policies that ensure safe ministry environments (**G-3.0303**). All officers and workers are expected to adhere to standards of ethical conduct, accountability, and fitness for ministry (**G-2.0104a-c**).

V. Selection and Screening of Workers

A. Six-Month Rule

Volunteers shall normally be involved with the presbytery or an affiliated congregation for at least six (6) months prior to serving with minors, unless waived by the presbytery with appropriate safeguards.

B. Written Application

All prospective workers must complete and sign a written application, including disclosure of prior experience with minors, church or organizational history, references, and criminal history. Records shall be maintained confidentially.

C. Interviews and Reference Checks

Applicants may be interviewed and must provide at least two references, preferably institutional or professional, to assess suitability for ministry with minors.

D. Criminal Background Checks

National criminal background checks are required for all employees and applicable volunteers. Authorization is mandatory. Disqualifying offenses shall be evaluated in light of the church's commitment to safety and integrity (**G-2.0104a**). Failure to disclose a criminal conviction is grounds for disqualification.

VI. Code of Conduct for Event Leaders and Workers

All workers shall:

- Treat ~~children and youth~~ minors and all adult participants with dignity and respect.

- Maintain appropriate physical, emotional, and spiritual boundaries with minors and adults participants.
- Avoid any behavior with minors and adult participants that could be perceived as abusive, coercive, exploitative, or grooming (**Section XV**) in nature.
- Refrain from sexualized language, jokes, or conduct.
- Comply with this policy and all applicable laws.

Sexual misconduct, abuse, and exploitation are serious offenses under the Rules of Discipline (**D-10.0401**) and violate Christian ethics and trust.

VII. Supervision and Safety Standards

A. Two-Adult Rule

Whenever practicable, a minimum of two unrelated adults shall be present when supervising minors. When one adult is present, activities must occur in observable settings with doors open or windows unobstructed.

B. One-on-One Interactions

Private one-on-one contact between adults and minors is prohibited except in approved counseling settings conducted in observable spaces.

C. Ratios and Leadership Requirements

- One adult for every six youth.
- Sponsors for overnight events must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
- Mixed-gender groups must be supervised by both male and female adults.

D. Overnight Events and Travel

- Adults shall not share beds with minors (except their own children) or other adult participants unless they are related.
- Sponsors for overnight events must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
- Mixed-gender groups must be supervised by both male and female adults.
- Written parental consent is required for all overnight events and travel.

E. Transportation Policy

1. Scope and Applicability

1. This policy applies to all transportation of minors for presbytery-sponsored activities, including but not limited to:

- Retreats, camps, conferences, and mission trips

- Meetings, trainings, and special events
- Day trips and overnight travel

2. It applies to all drivers acting under presbytery authority, including:

- Ministers of Word and Sacrament
- Employees
- Volunteers and chaperones
- Contracted drivers

2. General Transportation Standards

- Transportation of minors shall occur only with **written parental or guardian consent**.
- All transportation arrangements must be approved by the Event Director or designated presbytery leader.
- Transportation shall be planned and conducted in a manner that prioritizes **safety, accountability, and appropriate supervision**.

3. Driver Qualifications and Screening

Eligibility

Drivers transporting children or youth must:

- Be at least **21 years of age**
- Hold a valid driver's license appropriate for the vehicle type
- Have at least **two years of licensed driving experience**

Screening Requirements

Drivers must:

- Complete the presbytery's worker application
- Pass a criminal background check consistent with presbytery policy (**G-2.0104a**)
- Sign acknowledgment of the Child and Youth Protection Policy and this Vehicle Use Policy

Driving Record

Drivers must disclose any serious traffic violations within the past five (5) years. The presbytery reserves the right to prohibit individuals with unsafe driving records from transporting minors.

4. Approved Vehicles

- **Vehicles used must be:**

- Properly registered and insured
- In safe operating condition
- Appropriate in size and seating capacity for the number of passengers
- **Vehicles used must be:**
 - Properly registered and insured
 - In safe operating condition
 - Appropriate in size and seating capacity for the number of passengers
- **Seat belts are required for all passengers at all times.**
 - No vehicle may carry more passengers than available seat belts.
 - Children must be seated according to applicable child safety seat and booster laws.
- **15-passenger vans** shall only be used in compliance with insurance carrier requirements and presbytery approval.

5. Supervision and Occupancy Rules

- Whenever possible, **two unrelated adults** shall be present in a vehicle transporting minors (**Two-Adult Rule**).
- An adult shall **never transport a single minor alone**, except:
 - The driver's own child, or
 - An emergency situation approved by the Event Director and disclosed to parents.
- Youth passengers shall not ride in the front seat unless required by vehicle safety standards

6. Conduct During Transportation

- Drivers and passengers shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Christian values and presbytery policies (**G-2.0104c**).
- Drivers shall obey all traffic laws and drive defensively at all times.
- The following are prohibited:
 - Use of alcohol, illegal substances, or impairing medications
 - Distracted driving (including texting or handheld phone use)
 - Inappropriate language, music, or conversation

7. Travel Logistics and Safety Procedures

- Travel itineraries shall be planned in advance and shared with parents or guardians.
- For long trips:
 - Regular rest stops shall be scheduled.
 - Driver rotation is encouraged to reduce fatigue.
- Emergency contact information and medical forms must be accessible during travel.

8. Accidents or Breakdowns, ~~and Emergencies~~

In the event of an accident or breakdown emergency:

- Ensure the immediate safety of all passengers.
- Contact emergency services if needed.
- Notify the Event Director as soon as possible.
- Parents or guardians shall be informed promptly.
- If participants are picked up, attempt to ensure two adult/leader rule
- A written incident report shall be completed and submitted to the presbytery.

The presbytery shall comply with all civil reporting requirements (**G-3.0106**).

9. Prohibited Transportation Practices

The following practices are strictly prohibited:

- Transporting minors without parental consent
- Allowing unauthorized drivers
- Exceeding passenger or seat belt capacity
- Overnight travel without approved supervision and planning
- Deviating from approved routes or schedules without authorization

10. Insurance and Liability

- All drivers must carry insurance meeting presbytery minimum requirements.
- Drivers using personal vehicles must provide proof of insurance upon request.
- The presbytery shall notify its insurer of transportation arrangements as required.

11. Training and Acknowledgment

All drivers must:

- Receive orientation on this policy prior to transporting minors
- Participate in periodic refresher training
- Sign an annual acknowledgment agreeing to comply with this policy

VIII. Electronic Communication and Social Media

Electronic communication with ~~minors~~ any and all participants must be ministry-related, transparent, and appropriate. Workers shall avoid secretive or private communications with any and all participants and are encouraged to include parents, or guardians, or other event leaders to ensure full accountability and transparency ~~when appropriate~~. Use of social media must reflect the church's standards of conduct and accountability (**G-2.0104c**).

IX. Health, Safety, and Discipline

A. Sick Child Policy

Children exhibiting symptoms of contagious illness should not attend activities. Ill children shall be separated and parents contacted.

B. Medications

Workers shall not administer medications except in documented emergency situations with written parental authorization.

C. Restroom Guidelines

Workers shall escort children in groups and shall never be alone in a closed restroom or stall with a child.

D. Discipline

Corporal punishment, hazing, or humiliation is prohibited. Discipline must be constructive and consistent with Christian values.

X. Accidents and Injuries

First aid may be administered for minor injuries. Parents and emergency services shall be contacted as needed. Incident reports must be completed for injuries requiring medical attention.

XI. Training and Acknowledgment

All workers must receive child protection training prior to service and participate in refresher training as offered. Annual written acknowledgment of this policy is required, consistent with the Book of Order's expectations for preparation and accountability (**G-2.0104b-c**).

XII. Confidentiality and Record Retention

All records related to screening, training, incidents, and reports shall be maintained securely and confidentially in accordance with civil law and denominational standards.

XIII. Review and Enforcement

This policy shall be reviewed at least every three (3) years or as required by changes in law or denominational standards. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action consistent with the Rules of Discipline (**D-10.0401-0403**).

XIV. Reporting, Receiving, and Responding to Allegations of Abuse or Misconduct

A. Reporting

Per the Book of Order (G-40302.a)

Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Certified Christian Educators and Deacons:

“Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by the church or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.”

Per the Mental Health Services Provider Chapter 81 of the Texas Civil Practice & Remedies Code:

The Code imposes certain reporting obligations on mental health services providers and their employers when the provider or employer has reasonable cause to suspect that a patient has been the victim of sexual exploitation by a mental health services provider. A "mental health services provider" includes a member of the clergy. Chapter 81 of the Texas Civil Practice & Remedies Code is set forth in Appendix D and should be consulted in determining whether, when, how and to whom reports should be made of suspected sexual exploitation by a mental health services provider.

All persons covered by this policy have an additional duty to report knowledge of child sexual abuse to the employing entity, supervisor, or governing body representative. All persons should be informed of and must comply with state and local laws regarding incidents of actual or suspected child sexual abuse. These reports should be made within a reasonable time of receiving the information.

These provisions of the Book of Order attempt to balance conflicting moral duties for officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

For teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders, the provision strives to balance the duty to protect children from future harm with the duty of a pastor to hold in confidence any information revealed to them during the exercise of pastoral care in any ministry setting as defined in G-4.0301 in the Book of Order.

For ruling elders, deacons, and certified Christian educators, the provisions strive to balance the duty of an officer of the church to protect children from harm and any secular duty the officer may have to hold in confidence any information revealed because of a secular relationship such as attorney/client, counselor/client, or physician/patient. The secular duties will be a function of secular law and may vary from state to state.

B. Receiving Reports

Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct Reports or allegations of sexual misconduct may occur in a variety of ways. Because a council or entity cannot control to whom the victim of sexual misconduct will speak first, it is important that officers, employees, and persons highly visible to church members and visitors understand the reporting processes outline above.

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the victim, the accused, and the church. Reports of allegations should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities.

The first person to learn of an incident of sexual misconduct should not undertake an inquiry or question either the victim or the accused unless the incident is divulged in the process of pastoral care, counseling, or a therapy session. If the victim is hesitant to talk to “higher authorities,” the person who has received the initial report has a special pastoral responsibility to demonstrate compassion and care for the individual.

The person receiving the initial report of allegations of sexual misconduct shall analyze the relationship of the person accused of sexual misconduct with the PC(USA) and shall make sure that the allegations of offense are filed with the council with jurisdiction over the person accused. This may be done by the person alleging harm or by any member of the PC(USA).

If the report is made orally, the person receiving the report of allegations should request that the person making the report of allegations place it in writing. A written report of allegations of sexual misconduct from a member of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed an offense must be handled according to the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. If a clerk of session or stated clerk receives a report of allegations in writing from a nonmember of the PC(USA) alleging a member or officer of the PC(USA) committed sexual misconduct, the report shall be acted upon according to the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. If the person who makes the report is unwilling or unable to place it in writing, any member of the PC(USA) may make the written statement that will automatically initiate the *Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order*.

C. Responding to Reports

The appropriate council or entity response will vary according to the relationship of the PC(USA) with the person who is accused of sexual misconduct. Church members and officers are subject to inquiry and discipline (censure and correction) under the Book of Order. Non church member employees and volunteers are subject to oversight and correction by the governing body or entity that employs them.

3. Accused Covered by Book of Order

When an allegation of offense of sexual misconduct has been received by the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, the clerk of the council will report to the council that an offense has been alleged and that the council will proceed according to the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. The council should appoint an investigating committee to inquire into the allegations. The investigating committee must promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations. Delay may cause further harm to the victim and/or the accused.

Councils and entities must cooperate with civil authorities in an investigation of child sexual abuse or other criminal sexual misconduct. Church disciplinary proceedings cannot interfere with a criminal investigation by civil authorities and may have to be suspended until these are completed. The session has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving members, ruling elders, and deacons of the church, each congregation having jurisdiction only over its own members. A presbytery has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving teaching elders (and to a limited degree, commissioned ruling elders and certified Christian educators).

A presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship when the *“church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it”* (G-2.0904). However, a presbytery may only place a minister on administrative leave when allegations of sexual abuse have been received, and the presbytery has followed the Book of Order procedures to conduct its risk evaluation to determine whether a minister member accused of sexual abuse should be placed on administrative leave (D-10.0106). It is recommended that the permanent judicial commission (PJC) members who will conduct this risk evaluation based upon the allegations and a hearing should also consider secular legal advice.

When a church officer renounces jurisdiction, the clerk of session or stated clerk shall report the renunciation at the next meeting of the council and shall record the renunciation in the minutes of the council. The status of any pending charges may be shared with the council at that time. Renunciation shall not cause the inquiry to cease.

4. Accused Not Covered by Book of Order

When a council receives an accusation of offense of sexual misconduct against a nonmember employee or volunteer, the procedural response of the council or entity will be guided by the written personnel policies of the council or entity. For PNC employees this entity is the PNC Administration Committee.

For volunteers the appropriate presbytery committee will request the formation of an administrative commission to review of the allegation.

The committee or commission that will respond to the allegation of offense of sexual misconduct will do the following:

- f. Determine whether the allegation gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct by the accused.
- g. If so, gather additional information necessary to decide about correcting the behavior.
- h. Determine any remedies, including limiting ministry, suspension, or termination necessary and advisable under the circumstances. If the accused is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegations and the response.
- i. Inform the victim and the accused of the remedy.
- j. In all cases, the personnel committee shall prepare a written report, which shall be included in the accused's permanent personnel file. The accused shall be allowed to attach any written statements to said documents, also for permanent inclusion in the permanent file.

All procedures shall follow the guidelines set forth by the council, employing agency, or entity of the General Assembly.

XV. Grooming

Grooming is a form of sexual misconduct and is prohibited. Grooming refers to any pattern of behavior by a minister, elder, deacon, employee, or volunteer that seeks to establish trust, emotional dependency, secrecy, or undue influence for the purpose of exploitation, manipulation, or abuse.

Prohibited grooming behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Excessive or inappropriate attention, favoritism, or gift-giving
- Attempts to isolate an individual from family, peers, Session, Presbytery, or other accountability structures
- Boundary-violating communications, including sexualized, overly personal, or secretive conversations (in person or via digital media)
- Use of ministerial authority, spiritual influence, or pastoral care relationships to manipulate, coerce, or control another person
- Gradual escalation of emotional or physical intimacy that violates pastoral, professional, or fiduciary boundaries

Grooming behavior may occur with minors or adults and does not require overt sexual contact to constitute a violation of this policy. Any substantiated grooming behavior shall be considered serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action under ecclesiastical process,

employment action, dismissal from a volunteer position, and/or referral to civil authorities, as required by law.

All members of the Presbytery, including ministers of the Word and Sacrament, ruling elders, employees, and volunteers, have a duty to report suspected grooming behavior promptly. Retaliation against any person who reports concerns in good faith is strictly prohibited.

Committee On Ministry (COM)

2026 IRS Mileage Rate is \$.725 per mile

There is a great need for pulpit supply pastors, please contact Darcy Bryan-Wilson to be added to the list

COM MOTIONS TO PRESBYTERY:

1. COM recommends and moves that the minutes be received and the following installation commission be dismissed with our thanks: Rev. Guy ‘Coby’ Cagle, Associate at Clear Lake, February 15,2026
2. COM recommends the following to be Ordination Examination Readers from our Presbytery: RE Kevin Snowden (Webster), Rev. John Park (Mosaic Village NWC), Rev. Pam Morgan (HR), RE Debbie Battise-Kleinman (Livingston, Indian).

COM ACTIONS TAKEN ON BEHALF OF PRESBYTERY:

Please note that a Paid Medical Family Leave is offered only when needed.

I. New Calls and Contracts

Gregory Han and Oaks, Part Time Temporary Stated Supply 2/15/2026-12/31/2026

Salary	\$ 18,375
Mileage Reimbursement	@IRS rate
Vacation	4 weeks

II. Terms of Compensation Approved (November 15, 2026 - March 3,2026)

Jon Burnham and St. John’s, Full Time, Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$49,256
Housing	44,881
Other Allowances, Insurance Premiums, etc not paid through BOP	2,045
Travel Reimbursement @ IRS Rate	713
Books, Professional Expenses	1,155
Board of Pensions	38,700
Study Leave Allowance	1,600
Matching Employer Contributions to PC(USA) Retirement Savings plan	5,160
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks
Reimbursement of (SECA) tax obligation up to 7.65%	7,358

Lloyd Crosby and Pioneer, Beaumont Part Time (10hrs/wk) Stated Supply 1/1/2026

Salary	\$10,800
Housing	2,400
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks

Bobby Daniel and First, Orange, Full Time Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$40,976
Housing	20,000
Travel Reimbursement @ IRS Rate	5,000
Books, Professional Expenses	2,500
Board of Pensions & M&F dental and vision	30,288
Study Leave Allowance	1,450
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks

Wayne Eberly and Atascocita, Full Time, Installed 1/2/2026

Salary	\$52,000
Housing	32,000
Travel Reimbursement @ IRS Rate	3,000
Books, Professional Expenses	2,300
Board of Pensions	24,000
Study Leave Allowance	2,400
Vacation	4 weeks
Study Leave	2 weeks
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks

Fairfax Fair and First, Pasadena, Full Time, Installed 1/2/2026

Salary	\$32,700
Housing	44,500
Travel Reimbursement @ IRS Rate	4,800
Books, Professional Expenses	300
Board of Pensions	19,402
Vacation	4 weeks
Study Leave	2 weeks
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks

Michael Gable and First, Angleton Full Time Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$21,048
Housing	48,649
Other allowances or insurance payments (dental and vision- family)	1,554
Travel Reimbursement	3,000

Books, Professional expenses	1,300
BOP Dues	33,488
Study leave allowance	1,700
Reimbursement of (SECA) tax obligation up to 7.65%	5,451
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks

Savannah Goodman and Spring Branch, CoPastor, Full Time Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$20,000
Housing	35,000
Other Direct Compensation/Reimbursement	6,800
Travel Reimbursement @ IRS rate	500
Books, Professional Expenses	500
Study Leave Allowance	1,450
Board of Pensions	30,043
Vacation	4 weeks
Study Leave	2 weeks
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks

Laurie Hill and Westminster, Galveston Part Time (19 hrs/wk) Stated Supply 1/1/2026

Salary	\$1,363
Housing	27,760
Reimbursement of (SECA) tax obligation (in excess of 7.65%)	2,554
Travel Reimbursement @ IRS Rate	1,800
Books, Professional Expenses	375
Board of Pensions	3,483
Study Leave Allowance	1,250
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	0 weeks
Vacation	0 weeks

Craig King and First, Tomball, Part Time (24 hrs/wk) Stated Supply 2/1/2026 (36 mo. Contract)

Salary	\$27,720
Housing	27,720
Bonus: Include bonuses, professional expense allowances, gifts from employing organizations	1,575
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks

Maury Millican and Trawick, Part Time (10 hrs/wk) Stated Supply 1/1/2026

Salary	\$10,645
Housing	6,000

Employing Organization Contributions: Include employing organization contributions to 403(b)(9), annuities, equity allowances	3,598
Other Allowances, Insurance Premiums, etc not paid through BOP	1,200
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks

Kallie Pitcock and Westminster, Nacogdoches Full Time, Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$47,493
Housing	20,000
Books, Professional Expenses including travel reimbursement	7,525
Board of Pensions Dues	18,561
Study Leave Allowance	2,175
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	3 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks

Mark Plunkett and Spring Branch, Co Pastor Full Time, Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$24,000
Housing	37,000
Other Direct Compensation/Reimbursement	10,070
Travel Reimbursement @ IRS Rate	500
Study Leave Allowance/ other professional expenses	1,000
Board of Pensions	32,792
Vacation	4 weeks
Study Leave	2 weeks
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks

Seth Saathoff and First, Conroe, Full Time, Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$48,000
Housing	32,000
Other Allowances, Insurance Premiums, etc not paid through BOP	N/A
Travel Reimbursement @ IRS Rate	3,500
Books, Professional Expenses	2,000
Board of Pensions Dues	45,648
Study Leave Allowance	2,000
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks
Reimbursement of Self Employment Contribution Act (SECA) tax obligation up to 7.65%	6,120

Fred Seay and First, Sugarland, Full Time, Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$48,966
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Housing	35,753
Other Direct Compensation	4,177
Other allowances (ie insurance payments for additional coverage)	7,981
Books, Professional Expenses	2,080
Board of Pensions	41,781
Vacation	4 weeks
Study Leave	2 weeks
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks

Racquel Tomacruz and St. Paul's, Needville Full Time Installed 1/1/2026

Salary	\$27,182
Housing	31,200
Travel Reimbursement	3,000
Books, Professional expenses	600
BOP Dues	16,501
Study leave allowance	1,450
Reimbursement of (SECA) tax obligation up to 7.65%	4,466
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	2 weeks
Vacation	4 weeks

III. Renewals with no changes in Terms of Call:

Dan Alexander and First, Trinity, Part Time (6 hours) Stated Supply 1/1/2026

Salary	\$39
Housing	9,254
Other Direct Compensation	2,610
Travel @ IRS rate	3,457
Vacation	2 days
Study Leave	NA
Paid Medical Family Leave	NA

Gregory Davis and San Pablo + Trinity, Part Time (20 hrs/wk) Stated Supply 4/1/2026

Salary	N/A
Housing	\$10,200
Paid Medical Family Leave	12 weeks
Study Leave (plus clergy retreat if offered)	0 weeks
Vacation	2 weeks

DISMISSALS, MOVES, TRANSFERS:

John Roberts resigned from Heritage as of February 26, 2026

Mauricio Chacon was approved to labor outside the bounds at Bethel Hispanic Presbyterian Church in Vineland, NJ.

John Singleton to Indian Nations

Bowook Soo to East Tennessee

Jun Ho Kim to undisclosed Korean denomination

DEATHS:

Rev. William Schulenberg 12/18/2025 in Katy

Rev. Patrick Abrams 1/6/2026

Rev. Bryan Kile 12/29/2024 in San Diego

Rev. John Alexander 1/30/2026 in Beaumont

STATEMENT OF FAITH: New Ministers

Guy "Coby" Cagle

The Trinity not only describes the ontology of God, but it also provides a framework for how God relates to us and a model for how we should relate to one another. We believe that God is three in one. The persons of the Trinity, the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, are equal in power. While the Father is God, Jesus is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, they are distinct persons. This explains how God sent God's Son (John 3:16), Jesus prayed to the Father (John 17), and God sent the Holy Spirit to be our guide (John 14:26). The fact that there are three persons but one God means that there is no hierarchy in the Trinity. The three persons are united in one being, God. The unity of the Trinity provides a powerful model for how humans should live. We were not created to live life alone. God chose to reveal Godself in three persons who are one. Humanity was created in the image of God. We are connected. And while we may not be the same being, we need each other. We are bound to one another. Our sin impacts one another. Our justice and righteousness impact one another. We were meant to live, pray, study scripture, and play in the context of community. The Bible is the written word of God, witnessing to God's self-revelation. The Bible guides, instructs, challenges, and inspires readers. Something mysterious happens when we submit to the Holy Spirit while wrestling with the Bible in the context of a diverse community. When we listen well, we encounter the Triune God. This encounter transforms us into new people, sent to love as we are loved. The Church is the body of Christ. This body is comprised of a rich ethnically, culturally, linguistically, and theologically diverse global community. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 articulates the purpose of the church as Christ's ambassadors given the ministry of reconciliation. I believe this work involves living, teaching, and voting in such a way that people are reconciled with each other, themselves, God, and creation. The Kingdom of God is language found in the New Testament describing the reign of God's justice, mercy, love, compassion, and Shalom. Jesus speaks about the kingdom of God frequently in

scripture. God's kingdom is unlike anything humans have built. Kingdoms of this earth are built to gain and preserve power, usually at the expense of others. God's kingdom is about holistic restorative Shalom. God's kingdom is the way things were intended to be and the way things will once again be. Scripture reveals that this kingdom is both among us and in the process of being established. Theologians describe this as the "already, but not yet" tension. In this tension, we must live out and preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. We must pray for God's shalom to reign while we actively look for ways to embody restorative justice in all sectors of life. We must humbly partner with God as God redeems, restores, reconciles, transforms, and makes all things new.

Committee on Exams

The Committee on Examinations has not had cause to meet since November 15, 2025. The committee meets the fourth Saturday of the month via ZOOM when necessary

Committee on Exams Members:

Class of 2026: RE Jace Frey (Servant Savior), RE Patti Porter (Navasota, First), Rev. Cindy Mood (Katy, New Hope)

Class of 2027: Rev. Lindsay Hatch (At Large), Rev. Tara Thompson (Beaumont, St. Andrew's), RE Garry Schoonover (Katy, Grand Lakes)

Class of 2028: RE Trace Hlvaty (Atascocita); RE Warren Qualley (Bryan, First); Rev. Charley Shurtz (Bay City, First)

Committee on Ministry Members:

Moderator: Rev. Fairfax Fair (Pasadena, First)

Vice Moderator: RE Kevin Snowden (Webster)

Class of 2026: RE John Blanke (Orange, First); Rev. Fairfax Fair

Class of 2027: Rev. Helen DeLeon (HR); RE Bob Patterson (Houston, St. Luke's); RE David Sahm (Bryan, First)

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) met once since November 15, on January 17, at 9:30am via ZOOM. Two Inquirers were accepted into the Presbytery and assigned liaisons:

Deborah Mathews (CRE) from Faith Baytown

Rachel Goodwin (attending Austin Theological Seminary) from Northwoods

The Bible Content Exam was administered February 6, two individuals sat for it

The next meeting of CPM will be April 18 at 9:30am via ZOOM

Committee Members:

Class of 2027: TE Rev. Dr. Fred Seay, Chair; CRE Debra Battisse-Kleinman

Class of 2028: TE Rev. Jeannie Cardona; CRE Johnna Cormier; RE Omi Ford; TE Rev. Katrina Pennington

2026 Candidates and Inquirers

Candidates

Guy “Coby” Cagle was moved from candidacy to installation at Clear Lake on February 15, 2026, where he serves as Associate Pastor

Nancy Diaz, in the process of taking ordination exams

Inquirers

Gloria Blanco (Clear Lake); Rachel Goodwin (Northwoods); Sungtaek Kim (Korean Central); Richard Kang (Korean Central); Kevin McDaniel (Pinecrest); Jeusung (Chris) Park (Korean Central); Ruth Peterson (FPC Sugarland)

Inquirers pursuing Commissioning in a Pastoral Role

Lam Cao (Thien-An); Maria Gonzales (Iglesia Latina); Norma Gonzales (Iglesia Latina); Deborah Mathews (Faith, Baytown); Isabela Meija (Iglesia Latina); Italia Rivera Ramos (Iglesia Latina)

Ecclesiastical Affairs

The EAC carried out its call to select locations for our presbytery meetings, meet with the host congregations to plan the event, work at organizing premeeting workshops, invite pastors to preach, develop worship for the meetings, and organize the flow of the meeting. We look forward to our July meeting being on Zoom and our November meeting being held at the St. Philip church.

Committee Members: Rev Andy Gans (Houston, Pines); RE Diane Kane (Webster); Rev. Omar Rouchon (Houston, St. Philip); Rev. Becky Downs (Galveston, First)

General Council

In its first three meetings of 2026, the General Council has considered how to implement the suggestions brought forth by a task group that had been appointed in 2025 to evaluate the relative health of the 82 congregations in the Presbytery of New Covenant. A survey had been sent to pastors, clerks and others which resulted in 107 individual responses from 67 of our congregations. The findings included that a majority of our congregations consider themselves to be healthy, although finances continue to be a concern. Supporting staff and maintaining buildings along with rising insurance costs were identified as the primary expenses. Many of our congregations feel isolated and disconnected and don't know how to access resources that could help. Energy levels might be low, and people fear change. Leveraging social media can inform people of upcoming events and gatherings. Some wondered if the presbytery staff can be repurposed to be able to offer more services. This might include using volunteers, perhaps creating a network. How might we use our funds to assist our congregations?

The task group can be found in the report from the Innovation and Vitality Committee. In response, the General Council set these priorities:

1. Financial sustainability and systems – Request that the Administration and Finance Committee establish a Presbytery Financial Sustainability Grant Program to assist congregations that believe they may not be able to sustain themselves financially within the next three years.
2. Request that the Presbyter create a regionally distributed network of trained volunteers throughout the Presbytery who are willing and able to:
 - Interface directly with individual congregations
 - Listen, assess needs, and provide guidance
 - Connect congregations to appropriate presbytery or external resources
 - Support congregations navigating change, uncertainty, or conflict
 - This network should intentionally address:
 - Congregational isolation, especially outside the greater Houston area
 - Team-building challenges

- Fear or resistance to trying new approaches
- Create a periodic meeting (live or virtual) for volunteers to collaborate

3. Request that the Administration and Finance Committee create or designate a staff position responsible for strengthening congregational vitality through the following core functions:

Training & Leadership Development

- Develop and implement training opportunities requested by congregations, including:
 - Leadership development and team-building
 - Adaptive change and congregational culture
 - Goal-setting, evaluation, and accountability
 - Community engagement and church growth
 - Assessment of congregational resources (e.g.time, talent)
 - Strategic planning (1-,3-,5-year plans)
 - Financial planning and stewardship
 - Investment strategy for income
 - Provide resources for:
 - New member class training and integration
 - Engaging younger people, youth, and young adults
 - Christian Education leadership development, including exploration of shared or supported models where appropriate
 - Best Practices implementation

Volunteer Network Coordination

- Support and coordinate the volunteer network described in Action Item 2 by:
 - Providing up-to-date information on available resources
 - Matching congregational needs with appropriate volunteers or support
 - Ensuring follow-up and continuity of care

Communication & Visibility

- Strengthen presbytery communication by:
 - Actively managing and expanding use of the Presbytery's Facebook page
 - Regularly soliciting and posting content for *Tuesday Connect*
 - Improving clarity, consistency, and reach of announcements, training opportunities, and events
- This role is intended to increase presbytery relevance, responsiveness, and visibility to congregations.

IV. Staffing Capacity & Financial Feasibility

- Responsible Committee: Administration & Finance Committee,
- Action Item 4:

Request that the Administration and Finance Committee determine what financial resources are available to:

- Fund the staff position described in Action Item 3, **or**
- Repurpose existing staff roles and responsibilities to fulfill these functions

- This review should assess current staffing priorities, budget allocations, and alignment with the expressed needs of congregations, recognizing the need to prioritize congregational support even if it requires rebalancing administrative or denominational work.

-

V. Oversight, Evaluation & Accountability

- Responsible Body: General Council
- Action Item 5:

Request and charge General Council with:

- Providing oversight for the implementation of these actions
- Establishing reasonable timelines and reporting expectations
- Evaluating progress annually to ensure:
 - Ongoing responsiveness to congregational needs
 - Effective use of presbytery resources
 - Continued alignment with the mission and health of the Presbytery

VI. Dissolution of the Ad-Hoc Task Force.

- Action Item 6:
- Resolve that this Final Report and Action Items satisfies the Ad-Hoc Task Force’s charge and purpose and is hereby dissolved without further action.
- The Task Force believes these revised action items provide a **comprehensive and faithful response** to all themes identified in the congregational survey, including financial sustainability, leadership development, communication, generational engagement, Christian education, and congregational culture.
- While being transparent, the Task Force stresses confidentiality with individual congregation information. This will be necessary to build trust and insure input.
- By clearly assigning responsibility to committees, staff, and Council, these actions move the Presbytery from assessment toward **meaningful, measurable support of its congregations**.

With the announcement of Lynn Hargrove’s retirement from the position as General Presbyter + Stated Clerk for Administrative Process (GP+SV4AP) effective December 31, 2026, these proposals will be considered in the process of calling a new person/s to fill these key roles. The Administration Committee will take the lead to define how that process might work at their meeting on April 9.

A letter of interest was submitted on March 24 to apply for a Lilly Endowment Grant through their “Exploring Christian Practices Initiative.” The completed proposal is due May 18th. Awards of up to \$2,500,000 over 5 years will be made to 60 organizations across the country. These funds could be used to accomplish the priorities that have been set before us.

An additional concern that has been expressed by two congregations is the reading of the “Acknowledgement of Native Lands and Peoples” at the start of our presbytery meetings. We made the decision to include the statement in the meeting materials, but only read it at one of our three stated meetings each year.

Members of General Council are:

Class of 2026: RE Dave Coles (Houston, Pines); RE Gary Long (Houston, Northwoods); RE Michael McCracken (Lufkin, First)

Class of 2027: RE Marla Blanke (Orange, First); Rev. Michael Gable (Angleton, First); Rev. Tyler Henderson (Katy, New Hope)

Class of 2028: Rev. Kathleen Davies (Houston, Servant Savior); RE Sue Edrozo (Texas City, Mem1); Rev. Cory Stott (At Large)

By Virtue of Office: Rev. Hector Rivera-Velez (HR); RE Chuck Johnson (Houston, St. Philip); Rev. Karen Estes (Houston, Woodforest); RE Charlie Bradbury (Huntsville, First); Rev. Fairfax Fair (Pasadena, First); RE Lynne Parsons (Houston, St. John’s)



PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

Seeking God by helping the Body of Christ foster faith, hope, love and witness.

Lynn Hargrove
*General Presbyter +
Stated Clerk for
Administrative Process*

Darcy Bryan-Wilson
*Coordinator for COM
and CPM*

Mary Currie
Volunteer in Mission

Charles Leibold
Director for Finance

John Lemen
*Stated Clerk for Judicial
Process*

Sandra Lopez
Assistant for Finance

Rosy Murphy
*Coordinator of Youth
Ministries*

March 24, 2026

Lilly Endowment, Inc.
2801 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Letter of Interest — Exploring Christian Practices Initiative 2026

About Our Organization

The Presbytery of New Covenant is a regional council of the Presbyterian Church (USA) serving 82 churches and new church developments, spread across 35 counties in southeast Texas, including Houston. We provide theological oversight, shared resources, leadership development, and community support to congregations ranging from long-established urban churches to smaller, geographically isolated rural communities. Our mission is to seek God by helping the Body of Christ foster faith, hope, love and witness. We do this by nurturing congregations and helping them to serve their neighbors and grow in Christian discipleship.

Proposed Program: Christian Practices for Congregational Renewal and Community Engagement

Our Presbytery is responding to a dual challenge identified through a comprehensive congregational needs assessment completed in early 2026. Our member congregations report that they are navigating significant internal challenges: aging leadership, generational gaps, declining engagement, and uncertainty about their future. Meanwhile, a surprising number are situated in growing communities where younger people just starting families are spiritually curious but are disconnected from Christian tradition.

A particular and urgent challenge that was identified is congregational isolation. Many of our churches — especially those in rural and outlying areas — have lost a sense of connection to the larger Presbyterian body. This intensifies existing struggles, leaving local faith communities without the institutional experience, shared resources, and connectional identity to help to sustain vitality. Our program would equip congregations to retrieve and adapt historic Presbyterian practices — including scriptural study, service to the community, communal prayer, and intergenerational mentorship. In doing so we hope to help them stabilize their faith community by renewing congregational culture, develop local leadership, and rebuild relationships across the presbytery. This will allow them to turn their attention back out and connect with spiritual seekers in their local context, younger generations, and the unchurched in the communities they serve.

We would achieve this by establishing a presbytery-wide network of trained facilitators, both professional and volunteer, with intentional reach into rural and geographically isolated congregations. Using practices from the Reformed tradition and best practices throughout our denomination, they would create shared learning opportunities that reconnect congregations to one another and to the larger body. As the local churches experience renewal, they would be in a position to provide the financial support to sustain the program.

We are grateful for Lilly Endowment's commitment to multiplying access to Christian practices, and we believe this initiative aligns closely with the spiritual renewal our congregations and communities urgently need.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lynn R. Hargrove

Innovation and Vitality

As we move into 2026, efforts have continued to encourage congregations to form a cohort working with **Leadconnects** (<https://leadconnects.org/>). **Leadconnects** is a faith-based organization that assists congregations in thoughtful reflection that leads to action. This organization acts as a facilitator to assist each congregation on the quest to find a pathway to purpose and meaning in their ministries. This engagement helps to formulate your congregation's plan created and belonging only to you. The cost has been underwritten by the Presbytery and requires only your time, energy, and love.

Over these past few months, we have seen two congregations complete the **Leadconnects** program and they report renewed vision and commitment to their respective ministries. Several new congregations have initiated the **Leadconnects** program this year. We look forward to seeing where this new boost of innovation and vision will take them. Additionally, members of our committee have met with a congregation to discuss the advantages of joining a **Leadconnects** cohort and we now have a powerpoint presentation to accompany any new interests in what this program entails and why to do it. If your congregation is interested in a presentation, please contact Lynn Hargrove (lhargrove@pbyofnewcovenant.org) or Lynne Parsons (lynnep@sbcglobal.net) for more information. It is never too late to seize this opportunity!

As a workshop on innovation prior to our March Presbytery meeting, Rev. Cindy Mood presented a talk on accessibility for physically disabled adults and others who find using our church facilities or participating in our worship services quite challenging and at times overwhelming. Her insights offered new ways in which to consider how to evaluate and cultivate a welcoming spirit on our church campuses for all who desire to attend and become a part of a worshipping community. A Fall event on this very topic is in the planning stages with anticipation of expanding the discussion to include additional education, insights, and ideas. Look for more announcements on this event later this summer.

On Saturday, May 16, our committee will join with St. Philip Presbyterian Church in co-hosting a conference featuring Rev. Paul Roberts, an innovation expert, who delivers talks on exponential technologies, leadership transformation, and organizational change. This presentation will be well worth your time in attending. To be held at St. Philip Presbyterian Church in Houston, more information will be available in Tuesday Connect as we grow closer to the date. Plan to attend now.

Another avenue that leads to innovation and vitality is use of the Mission Insite Report. Each of our congregations is uniquely situated in locations surrounded by neighbors abounding in mission opportunities. Without knowing the needs of our neighbors, how can we possibly be relevant to them? Each week in Tuesday Connect there is a link to Mission Insite, a data bank that contains demographic information describing the community surrounding your church. It's revelations are incredibly valuable to study and pray over for vision in reaching out to the needs and desires of your immediate neighborhood. Valuable ministries can blossom based upon what this information will reveal to your leadership team.

Finally, a task force composed of members from the General Council was formed in 2025 to consider the ways in which our Presbytery can assist with congregational needs. A survey was sent out in September 2025 to the Pastor and Clerk of each Church with 107 responses (representing 67 congregation) received by the survey end date. The data was collected and analyzed by a professional. A brief summary of the

findings is attached to this report. In February 2026, the task force completed and presented its recommendations to General Council where final direction on each proposal is under consideration by appropriate committees of the Presbytery. We believe that this course of action will help direct our committee's resources in the best manner to support our efforts to bring vitality and innovation to our Presbytery.

As we continue our work, the committee remains open to ideas and suggestions on how to create greater vitality and innovation in our congregations. Please contact me or any member of our committee to present or suggest an idea. Together we can make a difference and bring hope to this dark world.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynne Parsons Austin
Moderator of Innovation and Vitality Committee

Committee Members:

Class of 2026: Rev. Wayne Eberly (Atascocita); RE Lynne Parsons (Houston, St. John's); RE Barbara Yantis (Bellaire, ChristChurch)

Class of 2027: Rev. Bobby Daniel (Orange, First); Rev. Steve Hill (Houston, John Knox); Rev. Tracy Williams (Brazoria, First)

Class of 2028: Rev. Janell Blair (Brenham); Rev. Laura Grice (Woodlands Community); Rev. Keatan King (Houston, St. Philip)

**Summary of Survey Results
by
Ad-Hoc Task Force**

The number of respondents to the survey was 107 representing 67 churches; however not all 107 respondents answered all the questions. This survey represents a snapshot of how congregations in our presbytery perceive their current health and needs. Key areas of concern are only included.

A. Vitality/Health of Church:

- 80.8% described their congregations as healthy (64.9%) or very healthy (15.6%).
- 33% stated they were excited about the direction of their church
- 48.4% know change is needed: of these groups 27% stated they know change is needed but not sure what that looks like, and 21.4% stated they know change is needed but not sure how to do it

NOTE: Summarization of strengths of congregations stated: congregations are composed of loving and caring people who are focused on the mission of sharing the love of Jesus Christ.

B. Financial Health of Church:

- 45% are breaking even financially
- 26% are existing in the red
- 28% are existing in the black
- 34% are not running a deficit
- 66% are running a deficit

Over next three years:

- 34% might or meet not meet financial needs
- 49% probably will meet financial needs
- 11% definitely will meet financial needs

NOTE: 80.3% of folks within our congregations are composed of people 55 years + [67/1% are retirement age and/or over 70 years and 13.2% are pre-retirement age (55-69 years)]

C. Top Challenges Summarized:

- desire greater inclusion of younger people
- desire some or better insurance coverage
- desire to be more visible in the surrounding community
- desire greater number of laborers to create greater energy
- desire financial assistance/have financial concerns - especially regarding building expenses
- too often the congregation is afraid to try something new
- members are not necessarily functioning as a team

D. Top Budget Priorities:

- Pastor salary & benefits
- building maintenance
- property insurance
- staff salary

NOTE: Very few churches have a credentialed and paid Christian Education Leader: the responses reflected 6 full time, 5 part time

E. Desire Investment Strategy Information

- 22% said would like professional help to become aware of an endowment fund
- 44% said they needed money for capital repairs with 62% saying they needed repairs for buildings
- 35% would like some no-cost professional help for congregational assessment
- 42.6% would like operating strategic plan assistance for the next 3 years

F. What Presbytery should do to help churches (summarized):

- need new member class training
- need greater communication with Presbytery - putting Tuesday Connect on the Website
- need group insurance carrier
- help with learning to set goals, how to reach them, and how to evaluate their progress
- offer training opportunities for pastors
- connect and share more with other congregations
- offer more youth opportunities with leadership growth, training, and education

Take Aways and Recommendations:

1). Issue: **Connection** between Presbytery and congregations, and connection between congregations

- Need to reconsider the structure of communication with our congregations by:
 - 1). creating greater use of social media for announcements, information and marketing events
 - 2). hosting events throughout the Presbytery for easier access and inclusion by the congregations outside the greater Houston area
- Need to reconsider how we support our congregations by:
 - 1). offering planned seminar/events throughout the year that deal with leadership, training, and financial planning
 - 2). creating network of regional, resource volunteers to help guide and mentor needs of individual congregations

2). Issue: **Financial Assistance**

- Establish grant opportunities for individual congregations with dire needs

3). Issue: **Staff Assistance**

- Need to increase and/or repurpose existing staff of the Presbytery so that communication and focus on Churches within the Presbytery become our priority and focus. We need to become more relevant to our membership, perhaps at the risk of spending less time working on Book of Order requirement, Synod and Denomination concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Parsons Austin (Houston, St. John's)
Charlie Bradbury (Huntsville, First)
Michael McCracken (Lufkin, First)
Dave Coles (Houston, Pines)
Rev. Kallie Pitcock (Nacogdoches, Westminster)

Nominating Committee

For action by the presbytery:

To elect RE Elizabeth Schweers (Pearland, First) to the class of 2028 on the Administration Committee.

To elect Rev. Lynn Hargrove (Pby) to serve as a TE Commissioner to the 227th General Assembly to be held online and in Milwaukee from June 22 – July 2, 2026.

The members of the NOM COM are: RE George James (Webster), Rev. Jolene Currie (At Large), RE Bonnie Keith (Pasadena, First); Rev. Craig King (Tomball, First), Rev. Isabel Rivera-Velez (Baytown, Faith)

Synod of the Sun Commissioners Report

The Synod of the Sun gathered for the Spring Assembly Meeting on February 23 - 24. Commissioners met to review ministry work, share reports and set priorities for 2026. Presbytery of New Covenant was represented by Rev. Lynn Hargrove, Rev. Ed Wolf and RE Leah McFadden.

Synod Treasurer Bill Wiles presented the budget emphasizing the Synod's commitment to equipping, connecting and empowering presbyteries. The Synod continues to return about twice the amount it receives from presbyteries in support of mission and ministry. Commissioners were encouraged to view resources through a perspective of abundance and strategic generosity.

Synod Leader and Stated Clerk Mitch Miller outlined the synod's priorities for 2026. These priorities were set at the leadership retreat early in January. The 2025 goals were revisited at the retreat and reviewed to determine the level of success for each goal. In setting the 2026 goals, the leadership team also set quantifiable goals. The priorities center around strengthening support for commissioned pastors and small congregations, increasing participation in Synod Youth Workshop and updating the Synod's operations manual.

Several ministry reports highlighted ongoing partnerships and programs across the Synod. Thomas Riggs reported that the Communications Services Program continues to provide affordable communications support—including websites, newsletters, and social media—to presbyteries across the denomination. Libby Janes, who was installed as Director of the Synod Partnership for Disaster Recovery at the meeting, shared updates on disaster preparedness efforts, noting that disasters can include not only natural events but also community disruptions that require additional support. The program continues to offer grants and training while encouraging congregations to provide emotional and spiritual care in times of crisis.

Committee reports reflected the wide range of ministries supported by the Synod and the efforts these ministries are making to work together and support each other. Updates included work with border ministries and the Hispanic Ministries Mission Network (HMMN), plans for the 2026 Synod Youth

Workshop (SYW) at the University of Tulsa July 13 - 18, and ongoing efforts to gather feedback from presbyteries to guide training and resource development.

Commissioners approved a renewed covenant partnership with the Noroeste Synod of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, affirming a shared commitment to ministry, learning, and fellowship across borders. The Noroeste Synod will meet on May 1. The hope is that the Noroeste Synod will also approve the covenant. Plans are already underway to share materials from the HMMN leadership workshops.

The Assembly renewed a covenant with the Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah McFadden (Houston, Northwoods) and Rev. Ed Wolf (Pearland, First)

Commissioners - Synod of the Sun

Go to <https://www.synodsun.org/> for more information or to subscribe to the synod email newsletter.

Synod Youth Workshop 2026

Across a galaxy far, far away, a familiar phrase is spoken again and again: “May the Force be with you.” It’s a send-off, a blessing, a reminder that no one faces the journey alone. Long before Star Wars, Scripture offered a blessing with the same kind of promise. In the book of Numbers, God says to God’s people: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you... and give you peace.”

But what does it mean to trust that promise today? What does it mean to believe that God is truly with us, and not just in the big, heroic moments, but when life feels confusing, messy, lonely, or unfinished?

This summer at Synod Youth Workshop, we’ll spend the week exploring what it means to live with the confidence that God’s presence goes with us wherever we are. Together, we’ll reflect on how God is with us when we don’t know who we are, when everything feels messed up, when we feel alone, when we step out to do something good, and when it’s time to return home and live out our faith in the real world.

So as we gather this summer, we listen again for God’s ancient and enduring promise:

May the Lord be with you.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE:

For over 67 years, Synod Youth Worship has provided a place, a space, and time for God’s work of creating new life-time relationships. Participants in Synod Youth Workshop will experience God’s presence through opportunities for worship, prayer, scripture exploration, and community service in small and large group gatherings. Small groups provide a ‘safe place’ to explore faith questions, while sharing fun and laughter beyond measure. Many participants throughout the years have described the conference as a life-changing event. We hope you will consider attending Synod Youth Workshop in 2026.

Peace,

*Synod Youth Workshop
Leadership Team*



SYNOD YOUTH WORKSHOP
JULY 13 -18, 2026

SYW Information:

HOUSING:

- Conference participants will be housed with your Home Church Group in a dorm setting (Female Dorm & Male Dorm). As you register online, you (as registrar) will select each participant's roommate from within your home group. Home groups will provide an adult for each dorm where they have students staying. The ratio (1:6) means that for each 6 females, the Home Church group will provide 1 female sponsor [the same for males].

WHO CAN ATTEND:

- Synod Youth Workshop is open to youth who are entering 9th grade through graduated seniors and their adult leaders.

WAYS TO REGISTER:

- ONLINE REGISTRATION: <https://synodyouthworkshop.regfox.com/synod-youth-workshop-2026>
- YOUTH: 1 adult sponsor for every 6 youth of the same gender, or any portion thereof.
- ADULT SPONSOR: Can only attend with their home groups.
- ADULT STAFF MEMBER: Adult Staff or SGL acting as a sponsor for their church must register as an adult.

CONFERENCE RATES:

- **Youth:**
\$450 (+ registration fees, est. \$5, applied at checkout if paying by check)
\$450 (+ registration fees & credit card fees, est. \$20 applied at checkout if paying by CC)
- **Adults attending with their home group:**
\$450 (+ registration fees, est. \$5, applied at checkout if paying by check)
\$450 (+ registration fees & credit card fees, est. \$20 applied at checkout if paying by CC)
- **Late Registration begins – June 27, 2026**
\$495 (+ registration fees, est. \$5, applied at checkout if paying by check)
\$495 (+ registration fees & credit card fees, est. \$20 applied at checkout if paying by CC)

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

- Registration for SYW is by group only.
- Registration opens February 1, 2026
Registration closes on July 5, 2026
- A deposit of \$100 per participant must accompany registration. Payment can be made by check or credit card. Checks are to be made out to Synod Youth Workshop.

Please mail to:

Synod Youth Workshop
P.O Box 521
Crandall, TX 75114

CANCELLATION POLICY:

- Full refund before June 1, 2026
- No refund After June 2, 2026
- **FULL PAYMENT IS REQUIRED BY JUL 6, 2026. REGISTRATION WILL NOT BE FINAL UNTIL THE TOTAL BALANCE HAS BEEN PAID.**
- Any additions, substitutions or cancellations can be made online at <https://synodyouthworkshop.regfox.com/synod-youth-workshop-2026> until registration closes on July 5, 2026. Any additions, substitutions or cancellations after July 5, 2026 need to be made by email to synodyouthworkshop@gmail.com.
- As groups are registered, the group registrar will receive a preliminary confirmation email of their registration.
- Approved Adult Sponsor form is required by Synod Youth Workshop. Please make sure that these are completed and emailed to synodyouthworkshop@gmail.com by July 1, 2026. Your group's registration cannot be finalized until this is done!
- **Scholarship Assistance** is available for youth who have financial concerns.
 - [Synod Youth Workshop Scholarship](#)

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Contact Gary Holloman at [Synodyouthworkshop@gmail.com](mailto:synodyouthworkshop@gmail.com) or call 214-463-9036 and leave a message.

Presbytery of New Covenant
Stated Meeting
November 15, 2025

Moderator Hector Rivera-Velez called the meeting to order at 10:05 am by welcoming attendees to Faith Presbyterian Church in Baytown, and opening the meeting with prayer. A quorum was declared. Our native lands and peoples were acknowledged. The amended docket was approved. The omnibus motion was passed. Rev. Dr. Isabel Rivera-Velez offered a welcome from the host congregation. First time commissioners were recognized. New Minister Members were asked to introduce themselves and to sign the "Book of Life." Visitors and exhibitors were also welcomed. John Hirling was appointed as Parliamentarian.

Our morning worship began at 10:23 with Rev. Dr. Jack Haberer preaching a sermon on Unity. Rev. Dr. Isabel Rivera-Velez assisted. The morning offering is for the Houston Food Bank. We celebrated communion.

The business meeting resumed at 11:25 am . Rev. Lynn Hargrove offered three motions as the Stated Clerk for Administrative Process which were approved. RE John Lemen (Houston, St. Philip) was elected to a three year term as the Stated Clerk for Judicial Process through December 31, 2028. RE David Elledge was elected to a three year term as the Treasurer for the presbytery through December 31, 2028. The congregation of Drake Memorial in Orange, Texas was approved to dissolve effective December 31, 2025.

Committee on Ministry: Rev. Karen Estes offered two motions from the committee. The proposed Minimum Terms of Call for 2026, which included a 3% increase, was approved. The motion to offer the Rev. Helen Rose Moore Honorable Retirement status was approved, and a Service of Retirement was offered.

Celebration of Ministry: Jennifer Perri shared the ministry of the Insurance Board helping congregations across the country with property insurance.

Celebration of Ministry: Rebecca McIlwain from Texas Impact talked about their work encouraging citizens to vote in a way that does not accentuate the divisions in our country.

ORDER OF THE DAY: We took a break for lunch, and reconvened at 12:55 pm.

Committee of Preparation for Ministry: Rev. Karen Estes offered the motion to elect Rev. John Park as a reader of ordination examinations for 2026. The motion was approved.

Celebration of Ministry: Liz Harling and Shelley Craig shared the work of Faith and Grief, a ministry out of Dallas that helps people attend to their own grief.

Celebration of Ministry: Judy Matetzschk-Campbell offered a greeting from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Ecclesiastical Affairs Committee: Rev. Andy Gans offered thanks to the people who planned and made the meeting happen here at Faith Presbyterian Church in Baytown. He offered the motion to approve the Parity Plan for 2026. The motion passed.

Celebration of Ministry: the “Beating Hearts” drum ministry from Faith in Baytown works with youth who are in detention for their immigration status.

Nominating Committee: RE George James thanked those rolling off the committee as well as the members of the Committee on Representation. He offered the slate of candidates found on pages 39-40. Rev. Omar Rouchon was nominated to serve on the Ecclesiastical Affairs Committee. Rev. Andy Gans offered a nomination from the floor that Rev. Becky Downs serve on the Ecclesiastical Affairs Committee. The nominations were all approved.

Synod of the Sun: RE Leah McFadden serves as a commissioner to the Synod from the presbytery. She highlighted some of what happened at the recent Synod meeting. We watched a video which will be linked in Tuesday Connect. SYW July 13-18 – Michael East keynote speaker

Rev. Lynn Hargrove offered a “state of the presbytery” message that will be included as part of these minutes.

RE Chuck Johnson (Houston, St. Philip) was installed as the Moderator of the Presbytery for 2026. He invited the members of St. Philip to be up on the chancel with him. A service of installation for Chuck was offered. Chuck answered the constitutional questions in the affirmative.

A motion to adjourn was approved and the meeting closed with prayer by Chuck Johnson at 1:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn R. Hargrove

Faithful Scribe

**PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT COMMISSIONING SERVICE FOR
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

We are called by God to be the church of Jesus Christ, a sign in the world today of what God intends for all humankind.

The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the kingdom of Heaven to the world.

The call of Christ is to willing, dedicated discipleship. Our discipleship is a manifestation of the new life we enter through baptism. Discipleship is both a gift and a commitment, an offering and a responsibility.

The grace bestowed on you in baptism is sufficient for your calling because it is God's grace. By God's grace we are saved, and enabled to grow in the faith and to commit our lives in ways that serve Christ. God has called you to particular service. Show your purpose by answering these questions:

Who is your Lord and Savior?

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his word and showing his love?

I will, with God's help.

Do you welcome the responsibility of this service because you are determined to follow the Lord Jesus, to love neighbors, and to work for the reconciling of the world?

I do.

Will you serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love, relying on God's mercy and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit?

I will, with God's help.

Do we, as members of the Presbytery of New Covenant, accept these brothers and sisters as commissioners and advisory delegates to the 224th General Assembly, chosen by God through the voice of the church, to guide us in the way of Jesus Christ?

We do.

Do we promise to support and encourage them as they seek to fulfill their responsibilities in this ministry?

We do.

COMMISSIONING PRAYER

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you called disciples, and by the Holy Spirit, make them one church to serve you. Be with members of the General Assembly. Help them to welcome new things you are doing in the world and to respect old things you keep and use. In their deliberation, bring about what is best for us and for all people. As they meet, let your Holy Spirit guide so that the whole church may be joined in love and service to Jesus Christ, who, having gone before us, is coming to meet us in the promise of your kingdom. Amen.

CHARGE

You are commissioned to service as commissioners and advisory delegate to the 224th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). Whatever you do, in word and deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through him.

-- Colossians 3:17



WE CHOOSE WELCOME

SACRED DISRUPTION: FAITH-ROOTED PRACTICES

REV. PAUL TIMOTHY ROBERTS SR.
PRESIDENT OF THE JUSTICE CENTER FOR SACRED THEOLOGICAL STUDIES
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

SATURDAY, MAY 16 | 9:30 - 1 PM

SACRED DISRUPTION: FAITH-ROOTED PRACTICES
FOR **LIVING IN TODAY'S WORLD OF CHAOS**

SUNDAY, MAY 17 | 9:30 - 10:45 AM

SACRED DISRUPTION: FAITH-ROOTED PRACTICES
FOR **JUSTICE-ORIENTED CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

The **Peacemaking & Social Justice Committee** and the **Church and Society Class** at *St. Philip Presbyterian Church* and the **Innovation and Vitality Committee** of *Presbytery of the New Covenant* invite you to join us as **Rev. Paul Roberts** leads us in exploring how we can embody justice by embracing the prophetic call to disrupt systems of exclusion and inequality within and beyond the church.

> **DETAILS & REGISTRATION TO COME!** <
VIA **TUESDAY CONNECT** OR **SAINTPHILIP.NET**

ST. PHILIP PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | 4807 SAN FELIPE, 77056



Ayer, Hoy y Mañana

24 Y 25 DE ABRIL DE 2026

ENCUENTRO ANUAL DE LA RED DE MISIONES DE MINISTERIOS HISPANOS (HMMN)

Unanse a nosotros para recordar la historia de nuestras iglesias y mirar hacia el futuro de nuestras congregaciones.



Para asistir en persona, regístrate escaneando el código QR o visitando el siguiente enlace: <https://tinyurl.com/2026MeetingInPerson>.

El costo es de \$70. La fecha límite para el alojamiento en el campus es el 15 de abril de 2026. Y para el alojamiento alternativo, es el mediodía del 20 de abril.

¡La asistencia en línea este sábado es gratuita! Regístrate mediante el código QR o en este enlace: <https://tinyurl.com/2026MeetingOnline>.



Orador principal:
Rev. Dan González-Ortega, Ph.D., es Co-Moderador del Caucus Nacional Hispano y Coordinador de Estrategias de Mision Hispanas/Latinas en el Presbiterio de Milwaukee PC(USA).



Encuentro anual de HMMN en el Seminario de Austin
100 E. 27th Street
Austin, TX 78705
24 y 25 de abril de 2025
www.hmmnetwork.org
Costo \$70
Registro 3 p.m. – Viernes
Fin 2 p.m. – Sábado



Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

APRIL 24 – 25, 2026

ANNUAL GATHERING OF THE HISPANIC MINISTRIES MISSION NETWORK (HMMN)

Join us as we remember our church histories and look toward the future of our congregations.



To attend in person, register by scanning the QR code or by visiting the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/2026MeetingInPerson>.

The cost is \$70. The deadline for on-campus housing is April 15, 2026, and for alternative lodging, it is noon on April 20.

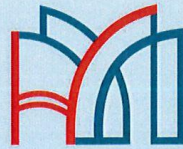
Online attendance this Saturday is free! Register via the QR code or at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/2026MeetingOnline>.



Keynote Speaker:
Rev. Dan González-Ortega, Ph.D., is the Co-Moderator of the National Hispanic Caucus and Coordinator of Hispanic/Latino Mission Strategies at the Presbytery of Milwaukee PC(USA).



HMMN Annual Gathering at Austin Seminary
100 E. 27th Street
Austin, TX 78705
April 24-25, 2025
www.hmmnetwork.org
Cost \$70
Check-in 3 p.m. – Friday
Ending 2 p.m. – Saturday



**2026 HMMN ANNUAL GATHERING AGENDA /
AGENDA PARA EL ENCUENTRO ANUAL DE HMMN DE 2026**

FRIDAY, APRIL 24/ VIERNES, 24 DE ABRIL:

3:00 P.M.

Registration & Check-in / Inscripción - McCord Center

3:00 - 5:30 P.M.

Sharing, Discussions and Recordings of Church History / Compartir, Discutir y Grabar Historia de las Congregaciones

6:00 P.M.

Dinner / Cena

6:45 P.M.

Gathering Music / Música de Preparación - Chapel / Capilla

7:00 P.M.

Worship / Adoración - Chapel / Capilla

8:15 P.M.

Fellowship (Bingo and Talent Show) / Compañerismo (Lotería y Programa de Talentos) - McCord Center

SATURDAY, APRIL 25 / SÁBADO, 25 DE ABRIL:

8:00 A.M.

Breakfast / Desayuno - Wright Hall (Library, 4th Floor/ 4to Piso de la Biblioteca)

8:30-8:50 A.M.

Devotional / Devocional

9:00 A.M.

Rev. Dan González-Ortega, Ph.D.

10:00 A.M.

Break / Descanso

10:15 A.M.

Rev. Dan González-Ortega, Ph.D.

11:15 A.M.

Business Meeting / Reunión de Negocios

12:15 P.M.

Group Photo & Lunch / Foto del Grupo y Almuerzo

1:00 P.M.

Rev. Dr. Isabel Rivera-Vélez

1:30 P.M.

Evaluation, Certificates & Adjourn / Evaluación, Certificados y Clausura

*** BEFORE 10 A.M.**

Check-out time for guests staying on campus / Hora de salida para los que se alojan en el campus