



Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

December 2, 2025 Stated Meeting Packet

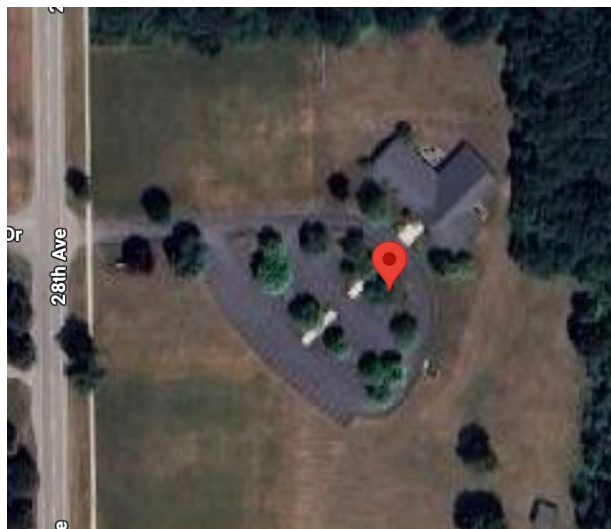
Directions & Parking

Parkwood Presbyterian Church

Church Address:
Parkwood Presbyterian Church
7998 28th Ave
Jenison, MI 49428

Jenison is located just off I-196 between
Holland and Grand Rapids.

We recommend using Google Maps or your
preferred GPS app/program to find driving
directions, as road conditions and closures
may impact your route.



Parking:

There is **very limited** parking available in the church lot, so we **strongly** recommend carpooling. Street parking is not allowed. Please do not park on surrounding streets.

If there is not snow on the ground, additional parking will be available on the grass.

If there is snow on the ground or if additional parking is needed, overflow parking will be available at a neighboring church, about ½ mile away. If we need to use the overflow lot, written directions will be given to drivers by parking lot guides at Parkwood, and shuttle vehicles will be at the overflow lot to take you to Parkwood. We will also have shuttle vehicles available after the meeting and after lunch to take you back to the overflow lot.

**PRELIMINARY
DOCKET of the STATED MEETING
Presbytery of Lake Michigan
December 2, 2025. 9:30 a.m.**

**Parkwood Presbyterian Church
Jenison, MI**

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan forms and partners with faith communities to challenge, encourage, equip, and hold one another accountable as Christ's disciples.

8:30 a.m. Registration opens: Please sign the Roll of the Presbytery

Orientation for first-time Elder Commissioners and new pastors took place via Zoom on November 24, 2025, and was led by Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom.

9:30 a.m. LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE – Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon, Moderator (GH)

OPENING OF THE STATED MEETING

Call to Order and Opening Prayer

Declaration of Quorum

9:35 a.m. BUSINESS PLENARY I

Appointment of Temporary Clerks

[ACTION]

Seating of Corresponding Members

[ACTION]

Approval of the Docket

[ACTION]

Welcome

First-Time Elders and Christian Educators

Guests and Visitors

Greetings from the Host Church - Rev. Sarah Juist

Approval of the Consent Agenda

[ACTION]

10:00 a.m. WORSHIP – (See insert)

Preacher: Rev. Lynette Sparks

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Today's offerings are designated for PLM Inquirers and Candidates

11:00 a.m. BREAK (15 minutes)

11:15 a.m. BUSINESS PLENARY II

Administrative GA Amendment - Rev. Lynette Sparks (15 minutes) **[ACTION]**
Repudiating Christian Nationalism and Affirming Our Faith Commitments

Budget and Finance - Elder Beth Dyer (30 minutes) Approval of
Proposed Budget for 2026 **[ACTION]**

Report of the Leadership Team - Rev. Lynette Sparks (15 minutes)
Terms of Call - Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence (EP/SC) **[ACTION]**

Anti-Racism Policy - Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence, Stated Clerk (10 min)**[ACTION]**

Commission on Ministry - Rev. Ben Rumbaugh (30 minutes)
Recognition of Retired Pastors - Rev. Jan Jasperse and Rev. Brenda Deily
Introduction and Welcome of Teaching Elders New to Presbytery
Examination of Candidate for Ordination– Craig Kunkle **[ACTION]**

Youth Strategies Committee (5 minutes)

Nominating & Representation Committee – Rev. Schrott 10 minutes) **[ACTION]**

1:15 p.m. ADJOURNMENT/EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLE
CLOSING PRAYER - Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

LUNCH

The next Presbytery meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 14, 2025
at First Presbyterian Church
48823 162 Bridge St, Dimondale, MI 48821
517-646-6183



**Prelude "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus / In Christ Alone" Rowland Hugh Prichard
 & Stuart Townend, arr. Phillip Keveren**

A child soon comes from an innocent place
With wisdom and might he'll lead the way.
Rejoice! Rejoice! All God's children.
Let all the people give God praise.¹

Assurance of God's Love and Sharing in Christ's Peace

In this season of desolation and uncertainty, it is good to know that God's love for us is sure—that God's commitment to us is definite—that God is walking with us, guiding us, as the compassionate companion that we are called to be for each other. Let us live into this gift. Amen. Thanks be to God. The Peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you!**²

Please greet your neighbors with the Peace of Christ.

We Hear the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom (PLM Associate Clerk)

Speak to us, Lord. Speak to us in the waiting, the watching, the hoping, the longing, the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing. Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days, and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.³

Special Music

"Pat-A-Pan"

Bernard de la Monnoye, arr. Victor Labenske

Scripture Readings

Luke 1:46-55

Message

"Theology Matters"

We Respond to the Word

*Hymn #100

"My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout"

*Affirmation of Faith - *Adopted from the Belhar Confession*

**Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence
(Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk)**

We believe that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice,
so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

We believe that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged.

We believe that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interest and thus control and harm others.

Installation of the Presbytery Moderator and Vice Moderator

**Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser-Brydon (Grand Haven First)
Elder Benjamin Boerkoel (GR Westminster)
Elder Linda Hardenbergh (East Lansing Westminster)**

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as we were called to the one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

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. Today it is our joy to share the call of God to Elder Ben Boerkel as moderator and Elder Linda Hardenbergh as vice moderator of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

Ben and Linda, 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 which 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 you, members of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, confirm the call of God to our siblings Ben Boerkel as moderator and Linda Hardenbergh as vice moderator in the service of Jesus Christ?

We do.

Will you support and encourage them in this ministry?

We will.

Faithful God, in baptism you claimed us; and by your Holy Spirit you are working in our lives, empowering us to live a life worthy of our calling. We thank you for leading Ben and Linda to this time and place. Establish them in your truth, and guide them by your Holy Spirit, that in your service they may grow in faith, hope, and love, and be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever.

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you called disciples and, by the Holy Spirit, made them one church to serve you. Let your Spirit rule your church, so that we 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.

Ben, you are installed to service as moderator and Linda, you are installed to service as vice-

moderator in the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through him.

Offering

Elder Kirk Truesdell (PLM Treasurer)

The offering today is designated to support the PLM Inquirers and Candidates

Offertory

"Open the Eyes Of My Heart"

Paul Baloche, arr. Phillip Keveren

*Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!**

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

For the wondrous ways this offering will bless this community

We dedicate these gifts.

For the ways it'll help us live out God's mission

We dedicate these gifts.

Let these gifts strengthen our call to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly. Amen.⁴

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Rev. Sarah Juist (Jenison Parkwood)

Rev. Kristin Stroble (COM Staff Support)

Invitation

As we come to this table of remembrance, this table of grace, we remember those members of this presbytery who have joined the heavenly communion this year. As each name is spoken, let us give thanks that their baptism is now complete.

Celebration of the Saints

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Elder Kirk Truesdell (PLM Treasurer)

The Lord be with you,

and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

How can we thank you, O God? For sun and moon and stars, for breath and life and all things good, for your steadfast promise and your faithful love, for the day that is surely coming when all things will be made new.

With saints, with angels, and with the whole creation, we join the ancient and eternal hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the
highest.**

We give you thanks, Holy God, for Jesus,
who came to be your living Word,
to baptize us with Spirit and fire,
to feed the hungry, to humble the mighty,
and to announce the good news of your coming realm.

With thanks and praise we offer ourselves to you,
sharing this holy meal, remembering Christ's dying and rising, and praying: Come Lord Jesus!

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us—
this bread, this cup, these people—
Christ's body and blood, given in love for the world.
Make us one in the Spirit, one in the church,
and one with Christ our Lord.
Make us gentle, joyful, thankful people,
serving our neighbors, worshiping you alone.
Keep us in the peace of Christ until you gather us at your table in glory.
Even now, a voice is crying in the wilderness: **prepare the way of the Lord!**
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours,
almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Communion of the People

*We invite you to come forward as you are able to receive the elements via intinction. All of the bread is
gluten-free. If you are unable to come forward, please raise your hand and you will be served in your
seat.*

Prayer After Communion

***Hymn #82**

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

***Charge and Benediction**

Rev. Lynette Sparks (GR Westminster)

Postlude

"We Three Kings"

John H. Hopkins, Jr.; arr. Victor Labenske

Thank you to all those who participated in leading worship today.

Music Director: Libbie Niewiada



Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

A Celebration of Saints Who Joined the Church Triumphant October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025

First Presbyterian Church – Battle Creek

Carolyn Christ
Janet Knapp
Jack K. Mawdsley
Owen Van Winkle

Fairplain Presbyterian Church – Benton Harbor

Leslie Gilreath

Brooklyn Presbyterian Church

Dorothy Rose

United Presbyterian Church – Cassopolis

JoAnn Bazata

First Presbyterian Church – Concord

James Anderson
Suzanne Anderson
Genevieve Hartwig
Charles Smith

Eastminster Presbyterian Church – East Lansing

Elaine Cable
Ted Hagan
David Merchant

Edwardsburg Presbyterian Church

Bill Hassinger

Forest Hills Presbyterian - Grand Rapids

Hugh Barnard

Westminster Presbyterian Church – Grand Rapids

Beuna “Bunny” Carlson
William Farr
Jan Gorman
Ardath McCall
Linda Paul

First Presbyterian Church – Hastings

Earlene Baum
Charles Semerad
James Wiswell

First Presbyterian Church - Holland

David M. Zessin

First Presbyterian Church – Holt

Charles Gubry

First Presbyterian Church – Ionia

Lewis Edward Campbell
Lavonna Jean Hoover

Parkwood Presbyterian Church - Jenison

Fredrick “Skip” Schouw

First Presbyterian Church - Jonesville

Don Smith

First Presbyterian Church – Kalamazoo

Tim Aldrich
Hal Horneffer
I. Charles Madden
Carol Payne Smith
Diane Heckler
Jeanene Lewis
Paul Hartwigsen
Bob Poel

First Presbyterian Church – Lake City

Douglas Lyle Nielsen

Delta Presbyterian Church – Lansing

Nancy Ellis
Mary Gerrard
Susan Keys
Read Ross
Jack VanCourt

First Presbyterian Church - Lansing

David Angus
Andrew Edimo
June Fitton
Ronald O'Connor

First Presbyterian Church – Mason

Carma Philip

First Presbyterian Church – Muskegon

Suzanne Carl
Ara Demirjian
Marianne Swick
Clark Ganson

The Presbyterian Church of Okemos

Mackenzie (Mac) Davis
John Thornburg
Benjamin (Frank) Webster

First Presbyterian Church – Paw Paw

Judith Haefner
Jim vanWestrienen

Westminster Presbyterian Church – Portage

Norman Carlson
Sally Mounger

First Presbyterian Church - Plainwell

Mary Hinds
Marilyn Koster
Robert Koster

North Kent Presbyterian Church – Rockford

Pat Dettmer
Fred “Ny” Dettmer

First Presbyterian Church – Schoolcraft

Judith Linders
James “Jim” Parker
Nancy Ann Rafferty

Spring Lake Presbyterian Church

Carol Jean Rutherford

Teaching Elders

Rev. Richard Budden

PRESBYTERY OF LAKE MICHIGAN
CONSENT AGENDA of the STATED MEETING
December 2, 2025

1. **To excuse** these members and elder commissioners at their request and to add those who will continue to request an excused absence up to the actual meeting: Joanna Bailey (VM), Elizabeth Hakken Candido (VM), Christopher Dorn (Ionia First), Karen Fitz LaBarge (Rockford North Kent), Hailey Malcolm (VM), Kathleen Robertson King (MAL), Barb Schreur (MAL), David Stubbs (VM)
2. **To approve** the Minutes of the Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, September 13, 2025, Online only.
3. **To file** the approved Minutes of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan Leadership Team on September 4, 2025, and October 2, 2025. Online only.
4. **To elect** Elder Linda Hardenbergh (East Lansing Eastminster) as Vice Moderator of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan for 2026.
5. **To commission** Elder Linda Hay and Elder Christine Berry to administer communion at Unadilla Presbyterian Church of Gregory, MI, effective through December 1, 2025 - November 30, 2026, with the requirement that she renew her training in 2026.
6. **To commission** Elder Kristy Payne to administer communion at Bethany Presbyterian Church of Gobles, MI, effective through October 31, 2025 - November 1, 2026, with the requirement that she renew her training in 2026.
7. **To commission** Elder Jodie Vanderstow to administer communion at First Presbyterian Church of Lake City, MI, effective through November 29, 2025 - November 30, 2026.
8. **To grant** the Session of Westlake Presbyterian Church of Battle Creek, MI, an exemption from G-2.0404 (Terms of Service) to allow Elder Sara Paulson to serve one additional year (Class of 2026) on Session.
9. **To transfer** the membership of Marilyn (Marnie) K. Semeyn and Edwin J. Semeyn from Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids, MI, to Fifth Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, MI.
10. **To receive** the Report of the Stated Clerk for today, as follows:

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK
Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence
December 2, 2025

1. **REVIEW OF 2024 SESSION MINUTES:** The review of the 2024 session minutes has been completed. The 2024 Session Minutes for the following congregations were approved without exception. Battle Creek First, Battle Creek Pennfield, Benton Harbor Fairplain, Big Rapids United, Brooklyn, Buchanan First, Cadillac First, Cassopolis United, Coldwater First, Concord First, Decatur First, Dimondale First, East Lansing Eastminster, Edwardsburg, Gobles Bethany, Grand Haven First, Grand Rapids Forest Hills, Grand Rapids North Park, Grand Rapids Westminster, Gregory Unidilla, Hastings First, Hesperia, Holland First, Holt First, Homer First, Ionia First, Jackson First, Jackson Westminster, Jenison Parkwood, Jonesville First, Kalamazoo First, Lake City First, Lansing First, Lansing Delta, Lansing North Westminster, Lyons/Muir, Marshall First, Mason First, Muskegon First, Niles First, Okemos, Plainwell First, Portage Westminster, Richland First, Rockford North Kent, Schoolcraft First, Spring Lake, Sturgis First, and Three Rivers/Centerville First.

The 2024 Session Minute reviews for the following congregations were not approved: Allegan First, Battle Creek Westlake, Benton Harbor First, East Lansing Korean, Kalamazoo North, and Stockbridge

2. **FOR CLERKS OF SESSION - 2025 ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORTS:** The PCUSA 2025 Annual Statistical Reporting System will be open for entry on January 2, 2026. The system can be accessed online in the Clerk's Portal on the tab marked Statistics using the user login and password you have been assigned. Clerks of Session are advised to begin collecting data for the report now so that when the system opens, information can be entered. A reminder that reports must be approved by session before the information is submitted. The deadline for the submission of statistical reports is February 13, 2026. If you have any questions about the statistical report, please contact Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom, Associate Clerk.
3. **BOUNDARY AND ETHICS TRAINING:** The PCUSA Constitution in the *Book of Order* mandates all councils (this includes sessions) to adopt and implement sexual misconduct policies "which shall include requirements for training which includes the topics of sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse prevention . . . at least every 36 months." (G-3.0106) The Presbytery of Lake Michigan also mandates sexual misconduct/ boundary training every 36 months for teaching elders, including retired ministers, commissioned ruling elders, ruling elders, and Christian educators who are active in the ministry of the Presbytery. If members of your session have not yet completed Boundary Training, please contact Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom, Associate Clerk, or Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence, Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk, for information about how to complete the training.

Upcoming 2026 Boundary Trainings:

January 20 - 12:30 - 4:30	Tuesday	Afternoon
February 4 - 9:30 - 1:30	Wednesday	Morning

March 21 - 10:00 - 2:00	Saturday	Morning
April 13 - 4:00 - 8:00	Monday	Evening
May 17 - 1:00 - 5:00	Sunday	Afternoon
June 5 - 10:00 - 2:00	Friday	Morning
October 21 4:00 - 8:00	Wednesday	Evening
November 2 - 10:00 - 2:00	Monday	Morning
December 5 - 9:30 - 1:30	Saturday	Morning

The Boundary Trainings are all via Zoom and led by Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence. They are for both Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders and includes the topic of sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse prevention training so satisfy the requirements of the Book of Order in G-3.0106.

4. REQUEST FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR PRESBYTERY MEETINGS:

The Stated Clerk asks that all requests for excused absences be made through the online system available on the Presbytery website or by using this link:

<https://lakemichiganpresbytery.breezechms.com/form/6ce58f>. *Requests for excused absences not requested through the online system may not be recorded correctly.*

5. DATES FOR STATED MEETINGS IN 2026: The dates for stated meetings of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan for 2026 are as follows:

- a. Saturday, March 14, 2026 – *DIMONDALE FIRST*
- b. Tuesday, June 9, 2026 – *MUSKEGON FIRST*
- c. Saturday, September 12, 2026 - *TBD*
- d. Tuesday, November 10, 2026 - *TBD*

Thank you to these congregations for generously hosting a meeting of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

6. REPORTS OF INSTALLATION COMMISSIONS:

An Administrative Commission appointed by the Presbytery of Lake Michigan met at 2:45 p.m. on November 16, 2025, at the United Church of Big Rapids, MI, to install the Rev. Amy Ruhf-Brien as Solo Pastor for an Indefinite period. With a quorum being present, the meeting was called to order with prayer by the moderator, Rev. Troy Hauser-Brydon (Grand Haven First). Present were Teaching Elder Rev. Michael Horlocker (Cadillac First) and Ruling Elders Susan Grand (United) and Amy Geren (Grand Haven First). Seated as a Corresponding Member were Rev. John Riedel (UCC, Grand West Association) and Rev. Devon Herrell (UCC, Chaplain at Large). Rev.

Michael Horlocker was appointed to serve as Clerk of the Commission. The Commission proceeded to the service. The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. with the benediction by the newly installed Rev. Ruhf-Brien at the close of the service.

7. REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSIONS:

First Presbyterian Churches of Allegan, MI

Presbytery of Lake Michigan

Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Church of Allegan, MI

December 2, 2025

No report.

First Presbyterian Churches of Decatur and Paw Paw, MI

Presbytery of Lake Michigan

Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Churches of Decatur and Paw Paw,
MI

December 2, 2025

The Paw Paw/Decatur A.C. continues to meet regularly with the transition team from Paw Paw and Decatur. We continue to advise them as needed. They are making good progress and continue to meet expectations and milestones in a timely manner. Elder Julie Chapman informed us that she will need to step away from her duties on the commission, and we thanked her profusely for her work and the support that she has given to the congregations.

Respectfully Submitted by

The AC for First Presbyterian Churches of Decatur and Paw Paw, MI

Rev. Scott Scheel (Edwardsburg)

Rev. Timothy Chon (VM)

Rev. Cathy Hoop (Holland First)

Elder Julie Chapman (Battle Creek First)

Delta Presbyterian Churches of Lansing, MI

Presbytery of Lake Michigan

Administrative Commission for Delta Presbyterian Church of Lansing, MI

December 2, 2025

The Administrative Commission (AC) was requested by motions passed by the sessions of both First Presbyterian Church of Dimondale and Delta Presbyterian Church “to approach Presbytery [PLM] about forming an Administrative Commission to explore Delta Presbyterian Church joining spiritually and physically with First Presbyterian Church of Dimondale. This means that Delta Presbyterian Church will consolidate with First Presbyterian Church of Dimondale.”

Those appointed to serve are Rev. Jeffrey O'Neill (HR), Ruling Elder Heather Myer (Eastminster GR), and Rev. Bill Pinches (Mason). The AC met for orientation on October 27, 2025. Rev. Jeffrey O'Neill will serve as Moderator, and Elder Heather Myer will serve as recording clerk.

The AC has met with Rev. Ben Rumbaugh, designated pastor of Delta Presbyterian Church and designated pastor at First Presbyterian-Dimondale, for discussion. The AC has also requested pertinent documents from each church.

Respectfully Submitted by
The AC for Delta Presbyterian Church
Rev. Jeffrey O'Neill (HR)
Rev. Bill Pinches (Mason First)
Ruling Elder Heather Myer (East Lansing Eastminster)

First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI

Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI
December 2, 2025

This was a season of turnover for the Administrative Commission and for Marshall, First. The Administrative Commission received the Rev. Sarah Schmidt-Lee (Validated Ministry, First Congregational Church Kalamazoo) as a new AC member. They also accepted the resignation of Rev. Amber Nettleton (MAL), and thanked her for her years of faithful service on the AC. As reported in September, The Rev. Charlotte Ellison's (HR) contract with Marshall First was not renewed, and the COM, with AC support, arranged for the Rev. Steve Kaszar (Concord/Homer) to serve as Session Moderator. Finally, three new elders were elected to the Session at Marshall, First. The AC created and is updating a contact list with all current AC members, relevant PLM staff and Marshall Session members.

In the midst of all of these changes, there has been a notable and positive shift in the quality of communications and relationships between the AC and the Session. Collaboration is happening and momentum is building. The AC has been providing the Marshall Session with a brief monthly AC update that can be shared in church publications, and asked the Session to contribute their own summaries of Session meetings, and to post Session minutes in a place where members can access them. Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence (Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk) and Rev. Kristin Stroble (COM Staff Support) led a Session training for Marshall Session members on October 19, 2025, and members of the session attended the Small Church event. Rev. Lane-Lawrence also met with an elder on October 30, 2025, to begin revising the Marshall bylaws.

Members of the Marshall Session are reaching out to the AC with questions, elders are seeking Session approval for new business, and existing policies are being unearthed, reviewed, and revised as necessary. The Session has decided to meet every other week to work through a backlog of session work that has been neglected.

Official Actions that have been taken by the AC:

- The AC met on 9/25/25, 10/02/25, 10/09/25, 10/16/25, 10/23/25, 10/30/25, 11/6/25, and 11/20/25
- September 25, 2025: In response to an inquiry from another retired pastor who was approached by the Marshall Session about moderating session, the AC voted to affirm the existing arrangement with the Rev. Steve Kaszar
- October 13, 2025: Elder Nancy Toth and Rev. Cal Bremer attended the Marshall, First Session meeting. At this meeting, they shared the AC recommendation that current Session members be asked to remain on Session through the duration of 2026, while bylaws are updated, a nominations committee is formed, and a three-year rotation schedule is established.
- October 27, 2025: Elder Nancy Toth and Rev. Sarah Schmidt-Lee attended the Marshall Session meeting and shared an evolving document of work priorities to help the Session focus its energy in this season of extra meetings.
- November 16, 2025: Elder Nancy Toth and Rev. Cal Bremer attended the Marshall Session meeting.
- December 1, 2025: Rev. Sarah Schmidt-Lee and Trustee Brad Sparks attended the Marshall Session Meeting.

Please join us in praying for God's blessing on this congregation and Session as they discern God's will for their future ministry.

Respectfully Submitted by
The AC for Marshall First Presbyterian Church
Sarah Schmidt-Lee (Validated Ministry)
Nancy Toth (Jackson First)
Brad Sparks (Grand Rapids Westminster)

First Presbyterian Church of Richland, MI

Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Church of Richland, MI
December 2, 2025

The Richland Administrative Commission continues its work. Since the last Stated Meeting on September 13, 2025, the AC representatives met with the Richland Session on September 10, 2025, on October 8, 2025, and on November 12, 2025,

either in person or by Zoom. In addition, some members have also met with the pastor and the clerk between meetings.

The Richland AC normally meets weekly by Zoom to discuss progress, issues to address, and guidance to provide to the Richland Session and other congregational leaders. Rev. Dr. Calvin Bremer (Assistant to Executive Presbyter) and Rev. Dr. Fran Lane- Lawrence (Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk), Rev Kristin Stroble (COM Staff Support) often attend our weekly Zoom meetings. Interim Pastor at Richland Presbyterian Church, Rev. Cal Nevenzel meets once a month with the AC by Zoom.

The Richland Session has taken action to reduce the number of paid church staff to balance the financial resources of the current congregation. Some staff have taken on additional duties and/or have some responsibilities shared with other paid or volunteer Staff.

Interim Pastor Rev. Nevenzel recently introduced to the Session a written report form for suggested use by all Session committees in which monthly reports of items for information and recommended actions/motions for Session discussion and decisions would be presented. The Richland Session has historically presented reports verbally but not in writing. This suggested change should help their meetings be more efficient and end in a timely manner.

We counsel and guide the Richland Session and congregation on the importance of the time spent with an Interim Pastor is for working through difficult issues and understanding their church dynamics and history. The AC continues to work closely with COM as it works with the Richland Church in the necessary steps toward the calling of a newly installed Pastor.

The Richland Session continues to make additional progress in reviewing, updating, and clarifying their church policies and procedures as they relate to committees, staff, and finances. The Nominating Committee is preparing a slate of elders to be presented and voted upon at their Annual Congregational Meeting in January 2026.

The AC members are grateful for the cooperative spirit that characterizes the relationship between the AC and the Richland Session and congregation. We request your continuing prayers for all involved.

Respectfully,
Elder Stuart Deming (Kalamazoo First)
Rev. David Milbourn (HR)
Rev. Dan Anderson (HR)

This concludes the reports of the Administrative Commissions.

This concludes the Clerk's Report

11. **To receive** the following report from the Commission on Ministry:

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY STATED MEETING
of the PRESBYTERY of LAKE MICHIGAN
December 2, 2025**

Since the last Presbytery meeting, the COM Plenary has met once (November 18, 2025), and the Eastern and Western Regions have met as needed. The following report deals with actions that the Commission has recommended to the Presbytery, actions taken by the Commission and its Regions on behalf of the Presbytery, and other matters of a general nature.

REPORT ON ACTIONS REGARDING CALLS, INSTALLATIONS, AND RELATED MATTERS:

1. **A motion prevailed** to approve the minutes of the COM Plenary meeting of August 26, 2025.
2. **A motion prevailed** to approve the minutes of the COM Regions since the May 27, 2025, Plenary meeting.
3. **A motion prevailed** to recommend to the Presbytery that it grant the Session of Westlake Presbyterian Church of Battle Creek, MI, an exemption from G-2.0404 (Terms of Service) for Elder Sara Paulson to serve an additional year of service (Class of 2026).
4. **A motion prevailed** to recommend to the Presbytery that Elder Linda Hay and Elder Christine Berry be commissioned to administer communion at Unadilla Presbyterian Church of Gregory, MI, effective through November 30, 2026, with the requirement that she renew her training in 2026.
5. **A motion prevailed** to recommend to the Presbytery that Elder Kristy Payne be commissioned to administer communion at Bethany Presbyterian Church of Gobles, MI, effective through November 1, 2026, with the requirement that she renew her training in 2026.
6. **A motion prevailed** to recommend to the Presbytery that Elder Jodie Vanderstow be commissioned to administer communion at Unadilla Presbyterian Church effective through November 30, 2026, pending a meeting with Rev. Amber Nettleton (MAL) and Rev. Michael Horlocker (Cadillac First) on November 19, 2025.
7. **A motion prevailed** to add Rev. Ruth Lowry (MAL) to the pulpit supply list.
8. Battle Creek Pennfield: **A motion prevailed** to approve the Mission Discernment Profile for a part-time interim pastor.
9. Big Rapids United: **A motion prevailed** to approve the commission for Rev. Amy Ruhf-Brien's installation: Rev. Troy Hauser-Brydon (Grand Haven First), Rev. Mike Horlocker (Cadillac First), and RE Susan Grant (Big Rapids United), and a RE from Cadillac First. The elder's name will be reported in the minutes.
10. Brooklyn: **A motion prevailed** to approve the Covenant Agreement between

Brooklyn Presbyterian Church and Rev. David Weber as full-time Interim Pastor, effective September 1, 2025 - August 31, 2026.

Cash Salary	\$43,852
Housing Allowance	\$23,613
Total Effective Salary	\$67,465
SECA Allowance	\$5,588
Pension, Medical Benefits, Dental, and Vision	Full
Vacation	1 week per quarter
Study Leave	2 weeks (including 2 Sundays)
Continuing Education	\$1,000
Professional Expenses	\$1,000
Books and other supplies	\$500
Reimbursement of Travel Expenses, including mileage at the current IRS rate, parking, and tolls	

11. Cassopolis United: **A motion prevailed** to approve the Covenant Agreement between the United Church of Cassopolis, MI, and Rev. Brian Madison as part-time (20 hours) Stated Supply pastor, effective September 1, 2025, to August 31, 2026.

Cash Salary	\$13,470
Housing	\$14,900
Total Effective	\$28,370
Board of Pensions	\$2,837
Professional Expenses	\$100
Professional Development	\$800
Mileage	\$100
Book Allowance	\$300
Vacation	44 days, including 6 Sundays
Professional Development	14 days, including 2 Sundays

12. Decatur First/Paw Paw First: **A motion prevailed** to approve the Covenant Agreement between the First Presbyterian Churches of Decatur and Paw Paw, MI, and Rev. Gail Monsma as full-time Interim Pastor, effective January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025.

Cash Salary	\$47,036
Housing	\$30,000
Total Effective	\$77,036

Board of Pensions	\$20,029
Dental/Vision	\$400
SECA	\$5,893
Professional Expenses	\$800
Professional Development	\$1,200
Mileage	\$2,250
Phone Reimbursement	\$600

Vacation	4 weeks, including 4 Sundays
Professional Development	2 weeks, including 2 Sundays
Spiritual Renewal	1 week, including 1 Sunday

13. Grand Rapids North Park: **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. Doug Brouwer as Moderator, effective October 5 - December 1, 2025, during Rev. Ofori-Nipaah's leave.
14. Hesperia First: **A motion prevailed** to approve the pastoral agreement between the Rev. Dr. Scott Paul Bonham, Rev. Laurie Hartzell, and First Presbyterian Church of Hesperia for the period of January 1, 2026, to December 21, 2026. The church will pay the pastors \$200 per Sunday, the Presbytery of Lake Michigan suggested pulpit supply rate for 2026, and mileage reimbursement at the approved IRS rate. Rev. Paul Bonham will receive \$25 per hour for pastoral care services rendered. Rev. Laurie Hartzell will moderate the session and will be paid \$50 for each session and/or congregational meeting moderated.
15. Holt: **A motion prevailed** to approve Rev. Catharine McCloskey-Turner's covenant as Parish Associate with First Presbyterian Church of Holt from September 1, 2025 - August 31, 2026.
16. Jackson First: **A motion prevailed** to approve \$1,200 from the Commission on Ministry budget to cover the cost of six months of coaching for Rev. David Schell with Rev. Trace Haythorn.
17. Lake City First: **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. Michael Horlocker (Cadillac First) as moderator effective September 29, 2025.
18. Lansing First: **A motion prevailed** to approve the covenant agreement between First Presbyterian Church of Lansing and Rev. Barbara Edema (RCA) as full-time stated supply pastor effective September 28, 2025, to January 10, 2026. Elder Mike Bryan abstained from the vote.

Effective Salary:	\$16,125
SECA Offset:	\$1,234
Professional Expenses:	\$250
Travel:	IRS Rate
Vacation:	1 week

19. Lansing North Westminster: **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. Jeff O'Neill (HR) to moderate the December 7, 2025, congregational meeting.
20. Schoolcraft First: **A motion prevailed** to approve the Mission Discernment Profile for a part-time installed pastor. **A motion prevailed** to approve the covenant agreement between First Presbyterian Church of Schoolcraft, MI, and Rev. Tom Kragt as part-time (25 hours) temporary supply pastor effective October 1, 2025, through January 4, 2026.

Cash Salary	\$7,121.13
Free Use of Manse with Utilities	
Retirement Contribution	\$525
Total Effective Salary	\$7,646.13
Travel	IRS Rate
Books/Professional Expenses	\$150
Professional Development	\$400
Vacation	1 week, including 1 Sunday
Study Leave	3.5 days

21. Spring Lake: **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev Kristine Aragon Bruce (Grand Haven First) as the moderator of the congregational meeting on October 12, 2025, as the moderator of Session until an interim is called, and to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Rev. Dan Anderson and Spring Lake Presbyterian Church effective October 12, 2025. A **motion** prevailed to approve the Interim Pastor proposal and salary level.
22. Sturgis First: **A motion prevailed** to approve the terms of call between the First Presbyterian Church of Sturgis, MI, and Mr. Craig Kunkle, if the way be clear, as full-time installed solo pastor for an indefinite period, effective November 30, 2025.

Cash Salary:	\$39,500
Housing Allowance:	\$30,000
Dental Allowance:	\$500
Total Effective Salary:	\$70,000
Benefits Plan Dues:	\$18,200
Travel:	IRS rates
Professional Development:	\$1,600
SECA offset:	\$5,355
Professional Expenses	\$2,600
Moving	Full Cost

Thirty (30) days of paid vacation, including 4 Sundays
Fourteen (14) days of professional development, including 2 Sundays
Follow the PLM Policy of Family and Medical Leave
Follow PLM guidelines on Sabbatical Leave

This concludes the report of the Commission on Ministry.

**PRESBYTERY OF LAKE MICHIGAN
REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
December 2, 2025**

The Commission met four times since the last Stated Meeting of the Presbytery—Regular stated meetings on September 23, 2025, October 28, 2025, and November 18, 2025, and a special meeting with Sheri Harris on August 4, 2025, to celebrate her call to Westminster Presbyterian Church in Rome, GA.

On July 22, 2025, we spent time celebrating the life of Elder Leslie Gilreath, faithful secretary for the CPM. On November 18, 2025, we met with Mx. Craig Kunkle, candidate called to Sturgis First to get to know him and help prepare him for his examination at the Presbytery meeting on December 2, 2025 .

The following report deals with the actions that the Commission has recommended to the Presbytery, actions taken by the Commission on behalf of the Presbytery, and other matters of a general nature.

1. **A motion prevailed** to approve the minutes of the Commission on the Preparation for ministry of May 27, 2025, July 22, 2025, August 26, 2025, September 23, 2025.

This concludes the report of the Committee on the Preparation for Ministry.

This concludes the Consent Agenda.

DRAFT

**MINUTES of the STATED MEETING
PRESBYTERY of LAKE MICHIGAN**

September 13, 2025 at 9:30 A.M.

First Presbyterian Church

111 Capital Ave NE

Battle Creek, MI 49017

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan forms and partners with faith communities to challenge, encourage, equip, and hold one another accountable as Christ's disciples.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE AND OPENING OF THE STATED MEETING

Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser-Brydon (Grand Haven First), Moderator, called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. with the lighting of the Christ candle and opening prayer. A quorum was present.

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CLERK

A motion prevailed to appoint Elder Lynne Ploeg (Jenison Parkwood), Elder Drucilla Wrasse (Buchanan First), Rev. Sheth LaRue (Benton Harbor First), and Rev. David Weber (Brooklyn) as temporary clerks.

SEATING OF CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

A motion prevailed to seat Mx. Omar Salinas-Chacón, PCUSA Immigration, Rev. Chip Hardwick, Synod Executive for Synod of the Covenant (Miami Valley), and Elder Jose Soto (Wabash Valley).

APPROVAL OF THE DOCKET

A motion prevailed to approve the docket with an amendment to add a brief report from the Nominating and Representation Committee before the worship service.

**INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF FIRST-TIME RULING ELDERS AND
CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS**

Rev. Troy Hauser-Brydon welcomed first-time elder commissioners and Christian educators.

WELCOME TO GUESTS AND VISITORS

Rev. Troy Hauser-Brydon welcomed guests and visitors. Rev. Hauser-Brydon recognized new pastors in the Presbytery, Rev. Cal Nevenzel (Richland First) and Rev. Amy Ruhf-Brien (Big Rapids United).

GREETINGS FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BATTLE CREEK, MI

DRAFT.2025.09.13. PLM Stated Meeting Minutes

Rev. Lorenzo Small (Battle Creek First) offered greetings and thanksgiving on behalf of the First Presbyterian Church of Battle Creek, Michigan, expressing gratitude for the congregation's work of welcome and hospitality within the local community. He offered thanks to the church staff and volunteers.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

A motion prevailed to approve the Consent Agenda with the removal of the Report of the Administrative Commission to First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI which was placed on the docket for discussion:

PRESBYTERY OF LAKE MICHIGAN CONSENT AGENDA of the STATED MEETING September 13, 2025

1. **To excuse** these members and elder commissioners at their request and to add those who will continue to request an excused absence up to the actual meeting: Mary Austin (VM), David Braak (VM), Jessica Bratt Carle (VM), Peggy Casteel-Huston (VM), Cathy Hoop (Holland First), Karen Fitz LaBarge (Rockford North Kent), Laurie Hartzell (Retired), Jessica Hauser-Brydon (MAL), Mackenzie Jager (Muskegon First), Linda Male (HR), Kirk Miller (Holt First), Kyle Nolan (VM), Bill Pinches (Mason First), Jim Pollard (GR Forest Hills), Linda Rubingh (VM), Scott Scheel (Edwardsburg First), Barb Schreur (MAL), Lynette Sparks (GR Westminster)
2. **To approve** the Minutes of the Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, June 10, 2025, Online only.
3. **To file** the approved Minutes of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan Leadership Team on August 7, 2025. Online only.
4. **To authorize** Elder Kerri Comai (Battle Creek Westlake) to administer communion to that congregation for one year, effective April 10, 2025, through April 9, 2026.
5. **To approve** the following recommendation of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan Commission on Ministry that Rev. Daniel Anderson be granted the status of Retired, effective October 27, 2025.
6. **To approve** the following recommendation of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan Commission on Ministry that Rev. Jan Jasperse be granted the status of Retired, effective September 30, 2025.
7. **To receive** the Report of the Stated Clerk for today, as follows:

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK

Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence

September 13, 2025

1. **REVIEW OF 2024 SESSION MINUTES:** The review of the 2024 session minutes has been completed. The 2024 Session Minutes for the following congregations were approved without exception. Battle Creek First, Battle Creek Pennfield, Benton Harbor Fairplain, Big Rapids, Brooklyn, Buchanan, Cadillac, Cassopolis, Coldwater, Concord, Decatur, Dimondale, East Lansing Eastminster, Edwardsburg, Goebles Bethany, Grand Haven, Grand Rapids Forest Hills, Grand Rapids North Park, Grand Rapids Westminster, Gregory Unidilla, Hastings, Hesperia, Holland, Holt, Ionia, Jackson First, Jackson Westminster, Jenison Parkwood, Jonesville, Kalamazoo First, Lake City, Lansing First, Lyons/Muir, Marshall, Mason, Muskegon, Niles, Okemos, Plainwell, Portage Westminster, Richland, Rockford North Kent, Schoolcraft, Spring Lake, Sturgis, and Three Rivers/Centerville.

The 2024 Session Minute reviews for the following congregations were approved with exceptions: Homer, (given until November 30, 2025, to complete a review of Sexual Misconduct and Child Protection Policies and a financial review), Lansing Delta (given until October 31, 2025, to complete a review of Sexual Misconduct and Child Protection Policies), and Lansing North Westminster (given until October 31, 2025, to complete a financial review). Corrections completed by congregations will be reported to the Presbytery at the stated meeting on December 2, 2025.

The 2024 Session Minute reviews for the following congregations were not approved: Allegan, Battle Creek Westlake, and Benton Harbor First.

The following congregations did not submit 2024 minutes for review: East Lansing Korean, Kalamazoo North, and Stockbridge.

2. **BOUNDARY AND ETHICS TRAINING:** The PCUSA Constitution in the *Book of Order* mandates all councils (this includes sessions) to adopt and implement sexual misconduct policies “which shall include requirements for training which includes the topics of sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse prevention . . . at least every 36 months.” (G-3.0106) The Presbytery of Lake Michigan also mandates sexual misconduct/ boundary training every 36 months for teaching elders, including retired ministers, commissioned ruling elders, ruling elders, and Christian educators who are active in the ministry of the Presbytery. If members of your session have not yet completed Boundary Training, please contact Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom, Associate Clerk, or Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence, Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk, for information about how to complete the training.

Upcoming Dates:

- September 13, 2025, at Battle Creek First - Ruling Elder Boundary Training
- September 20, 2025, at TBD - Teaching Elder Boundary Training

- October 11, 2025, at GR Forest Hills - Teaching Elder Boundary Training
- October 21 & 22, 2025, via Zoom - LeaderWise Boundary Training

*Training will be led by Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence and Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom

3. **REQUEST FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR PRESBYTERY MEETINGS:**

The Stated Clerk asks that all requests for excused absences be made through the online system available on the Presbytery website or by using this link:

<https://lakemichiganpresbytery.breezechms.com/form/6ce58f>. *Requests for excused absences not requested through the online system may not be recorded correctly.*

4. **DATES FOR STATED MEETINGS IN 2025:** The dates for stated meetings of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan for 2025 are as follows:

- a. Saturday, March 8, 2025 – *E LANSING EASTMINSTER*
- b. Tuesday, June 10, 2025 – *CADILLAC FIRST*
- c. Saturday, September 13, 2025 – *BATTLE CREEK FIRST*
- d. Tuesday, December 2, 2025 – *JENISON PARKWOOD*

Thank you to these congregations for generously hosting a meeting of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

5. **PROPERTY SALES:**

Westminster Presbyterian Church of Jackson, MI

On July 7, 2025 the Presbytery of Lake Michigan at a Special Called approved the sale of the property of Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2301 Ridgeway Road, Jackson, MI 49203 described below to Wendell Mark Riggie and Margaret Drew Riggie, if the way be clear, for the sum of three hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000.00) of land situated in the City of Jackson, Jackson County, Michigan:

Legal Description

BEG AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE S LN OF RIDGEWAY RD
WITH THE E LN OF SEC 20 TH W ALG
THE S LN OF RIDGEWAY RD 966 FT TO A PT FOR PL OF BEG OF
THIS DESCN TH S 0DEG 05'53"W
500 FT TH N 89DEG 52'W 400 FT TH N 0DEG 05'53"E 500 FT TO
THE S LN OF RIDGEWAY RD TH E
ALG S LN OF SD RD 400 FT TO BEG SEC 20 T3S R1W
000-13-20-276-007-00

This meeting also approved the recommendation that the Presbytery of Lake Michigan authorize the Stated Clerk, the Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence; the Treasurer, Elder Kirk Truesdell; or the President of the Corporation, Elder Beth Dyer, jointly or individually, to execute all documents necessary to implement this decision.

On August 6, 2025, Elder Kirk Truesdell, acting on behalf of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, closed on the sale of the above-described property to Wendell Mark Riggle and Margaret Drew Riggle for \$350,000 (Three hundred fifty thousand dollars).

6. REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSIONS:

First Presbyterian Church of Richland, MI

Presbytery of Lake Michigan

Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Church of Richland, MI

September 13, 2025

The Richland Administrative Commission (AC) continues its work. Since the last Stated Meeting on June 10, 2025, the AC representatives met with the Richland Session on June 11, 2025, on July 9, 2025, and on August 13, 2025, either in person or by Zoom. The August 13, 2025, Richland Session meeting began at 5:00 pm with a meal hosted by Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence. She provided additional training and guidance in Presbyterian polity, officer leadership, and some examples of dealing with congregational issues and their resolution.

The Richland AC typically meets weekly via Zoom to discuss progress, address issues, and provide guidance to the Richland Session and other congregational leaders. Rev. Dr. Calvin Bremer (Assistant to Executive Presbyter) and Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence (Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk) often attend our weekly Zoom meetings. They offer instructive and beneficial guidance to the AC. Interim Pastor, Rev. Cal Nevenzel, meets once a month with the AC by Zoom.

On July 14, 2025, the AC formally voted to grant Interim Pastor Rev. Cal Nevenzel approval to moderate Session meetings going forward. Rev. Seth Weeldreyer (Kalamazoo First) had served as Moderator of the Richland Session up to that time. He provided positive and sensitive leadership following the December 2024 retirement of former Pastor Rev. Mark Jennings.

We affirm our support of Rev. Nevenzel during her presence at our Zoom meetings and through other personal contacts. We endeavor to support her in her Interim Pastor work and offer beneficial guidance from our collective clergy/lay experiences.

We are committed to reminding the Richland Session and congregation how important and vital the time spent with an Interim Pastor can be for working through issues, understanding church dynamics and history, and preparing for the calling of an installed Pastor. Circumventing the benefits and time necessary for a good Interim

Pastor experience often results in unexpected and, sometimes, detrimental outcomes in the next calling of a pastor.

The Richland Session continues to make significant progress in reviewing, updating, and clarifying its church policies and procedures as they relate to committees, staff, and finances.

The AC members are grateful for the cooperative spirit that characterizes the relationship between the AC and the Richland Session and congregation. We request your continuing prayers for all involved.

Respectfully,
Elder Stuart Deming (Kalamazoo First), Rev. David Milbourn (HR), and Rev. Dan Anderson (Spring Lake)

First Presbyterian Churches of Decatur and Paw Paw, MI
Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Churches of Decatur and Paw
Paw, MI
September 13, 2025

No report.

This concludes the reports of the Administrative Commissions.

This concludes the Clerk's Report

8. **To receive** the following report from the Commission on Ministry:

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY STATED MEETING
of the PRESBYTERY of LAKE MICHIGAN
September 13, 2025**

Since the last Presbytery meeting, the COM Plenary has met once (August 26, 2025), and the Northern, Eastern, and Southwestern Regions have met as needed. The following report deals with actions that the Commission has recommended to the Presbytery, actions taken by the Commission and its Regions on behalf of the Presbytery, and other matters of a general nature.

**REPORT ON ACTIONS REGARDING CALLS, INSTALLATIONS, AND
RELATED MATTERS:**

1. **A motion prevailed** to approve the minutes of the COM Plenary meeting of May 27, 2025.
2. **A motion prevailed** to approve the minutes of the COM Regions since the May 27, 2025, Plenary meeting.
3. **A motion prevailed** to recommend to the Presbytery that Rev. Dan Anderson be granted the status of Retired, effective October 27, 2025.

4. **A motion prevailed** to recommend to the Presbytery that Rev. Jan Jaspers be granted the status of Retired, effective September 30, 2025.
5. **A motion prevailed** to approve Rev. Brian Madison (Cassopolis) to labor outside the bounds on the Queen Mary 2 ship from January 3, 2026, through January 19, 2026, and to celebrate communion on January 4, 2025, January 6, 2025, and January 11, 2025.
6. **A motion prevailed** to approve Rev. Timothy Chon to labor outside the bounds of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. Rev. Chon will be serving within the bounds of the National Capital Presbytery.
7. **A motion prevailed** to validate Rev. Timothy Chon's ministry as Senior Administrator and Faculty of Wesley Theological Seminary.
8. **A motion prevailed** to approve the COM Redivision of Regions effective October 1, 2025. Elder Heather Myer (East Lansing Eastminster) will be the Vice-Moderator of the East Region. Rev. Amber Nettleton (MAL) will be the Vice-Moderator of the West Region.
9. Battle Creek Pennfield: **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. Amber Nettleton (MAL) as moderator for the September 7, 2025, Congregational Meeting.
10. Big Rapids United: Rev. Sarah Juist (Jenison Parkwood) and Rev. Mike Horlocker (Cadillac First) conducted a credentials interview with Rev. Amy Ruhf-Brien on July 3, 2025. Rev. Ruhf-Brien submitted her Sexual Misconduct Policy Receipt, Conflict of Interest Disclosure, and Boundary Training Certificate to the Presbytery. **A motion prevailed** to approve the terms of call, if the way be clear, between the United Church of Big Rapids, MI, and Rev. Amy Ruhf-Brien as full-time installed solo pastor for an indefinite period, effective October 1, 2025.

Cash Salary	\$30,000
Housing Allowance	\$30,000
403b Contributions	\$5,100
Medical Allowance	\$156
Dental Allowance	\$144
Total Effective Salary	\$65,400
Board of Pensions	\$15,600
Professional Development	\$800
SECA Offset	\$4,500
Books and Professional Expenses	\$3,700
Moving Expenses paid in full	

30 days of vacation, including 4 Sundays
14 days of Professional Development, including 2 Sundays

11. Brooklyn Presbyterian: **A motion prevailed** to approve the covenant agreement between Brooklyn Presbyterian Church and Rev. David Weber as full-time interim pastor, effective September 1, 2025, to August 31, 2026.

Cash Salary	\$43,853
Housing Allowance	\$23,613
Total Effective Salary	\$67,466
Board of Pensions (27.5%)	\$18,553.15
SECA Offset	\$5,588

Professional Development	\$1,000
Professional Expenses	\$1,000
Books	\$500
Travel	IRS Rate
Vacation	4 weeks, including 4 Sundays
Professional Development	2 week,s including 2 Sundays

12. Grand Rapids North Park: Rev. Philomena Ofori-Nipaah's updated Terms of Call were approved by the congregation and now meet the minimum salary requirement for 2025.

13. Jackson Westminster: **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. Ben Rumbaugh as moderator from April 28, 2025, through July 28, 2025. **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. John Best (HR) as the moderator for the congregational meeting on June 15, 2025. Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom provided Clerk of Session training on May 19, 2025. **A motion prevailed** to approve a covenant agreement between Westminster Presbyterian Church and Rev. Judy Goodrow (UCC) as full-time stated supply pastor effective January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025.

Salary	\$47,370
Housing	\$15,000
Education & Meetings	\$2,000
Pension (UCC, 14%)	\$10,153

Vacation	4 weeks, including 4 Sundays
Professional Development	2 weeks, including 4 Sundays
Sick Time	2 weeks

*Westminster pays 50% of the compensation package

The property was sold for \$350,000 on August 6, 2025. Requests from Westminster for funds require approval by the Commission on Ministry. After a time of discussion and review, **a motion prevailed** to approve the "Request Form

for Westminster Presbyterian Church to Receive Funds” as amended. The region received a request for disbursement of \$25,500 to cover three months of cost-sharing expenses. **A motion prevailed** to approve the disbursement of \$25,500, pending receipt of session approval and minutes and completion of the Request Form.

The session requested clarification on whether Rev. Goodrow should attend Session meetings. The members of the region encourage Rev. Goodrow’s attendance at meetings of the Session. COM advised that the Session should vote to give her a voice at the meetings.

14. Jonesville First: **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. Karen Kelley (Retired) as moderator. Rev. Steve Kaszar (Concord/Homer) and Rev. Karen Kelley conducted an exit interview with Rev. Lynne Fry. Rev. Kelley and Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence conducted the exit interview with the Session on July 23, 2025. The Covenant of Closure was also signed on July 23, 2025. Rev. Lane-Lawrence conducted training with the Session on July 23, 2025, regarding the Session's work and the responsibilities of Ruling Elders.
15. Lake City First: **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. Michael Horlocker (Cadillac First) as moderator effective September 29, 2025.
16. Lansing First: Exit interviews with the Session and Rev. Stan Jenkins were completed on July 23, 2025. **A motion prevailed** to appoint Rev. Ben Rumbaugh (Dimondale/Lansing Delta) as moderator of the session, effective September 1, 2025. **A motion prevailed** to approve the dissolution of the call between Rev. Stan Jenkins and First Presbyterian Church of Lansing, MI, effective August 17, 2025.
17. Lansing North Westminster: Rev. Timothy Chon has accepted a position at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C as an Administrator and Faculty. Several meetings have occurred at North Westminster PC to explore options for the congregation. **A motion prevailed** to approve the covenant agreement between North Westminster Presbyterian Church of Lansing, MI, and Rev. Timothy Chon as part time (10 hours) stated supply pastor effective August 1, 2025,-December 31, 2025 with the following changes: end the sentence at December 31, 2025 - striking out the remainder of the sentence; insert a 30 day clause that either party can terminate the Agreement. Insert a paragraph indicating that COM will begin working with the session on a transition plan.

Cash Salary	\$5,000
Travel/Mileage	\$5,000
Professional Reimbursement	\$2,500
Pension Plan	\$2,500

A motion prevailed to remove Rev. Timothy Chon as Moderator of the Session and to appoint Rev. Kristin Stroble as moderator effective August 26, 2025.

18. Rockford North Kent: The congregation has paid its PILP loan in full.
19. Schoolcraft First: Rev. Jerry Duggins (Portage Westminster) was appointed to serve as the congregation's transition counselor. **A motion prevailed** to approve the covenant agreement between First Presbyterian Church of Schoolcraft, MI, and Rev. Tom Kragt as part-time (25 hours) temporary supply pastor effective April 1, 2025, through September 30, 2025.

Cash Salary	\$13,564.06
Free Use of Manse with Utilities	\$6,793.50
Retirement Contribution	\$1,050 (175/month)
Total Effective Salary	\$21,407.56
Travel reimbursed at IRS Rate	
Books/Professional Expenses	\$300
Professional Development	\$800
Vacation	2 weeks, including 2 Sundays
Study Leave	1 week, including 1 Sunday

20. Three Rivers/Centreville First: **A motion prevailed** to approve the covenant agreement between First Presbyterian Church of Three Rivers/Centreville, MI, and Rev. Clint Cozier as full-time Interim Pastor effective November 1, 2025-October 31, 2026.

Cash Salary	\$32,000
Housing	\$35,000
Deferred Compensation	\$5,000
Medical FSA	\$7,500
Total Effective Salary	\$79,500
Board of Pensions	\$9,540
SECA	\$5,962.50
Travel	\$1,000
Professional Expenses/Development	\$2,000
Vacation	4 weeks, including 4 Sundays
Study Leave	2 weeks, including 2 Sundays

This concludes the report of the Commission on Ministry.

PRESBYTERY OF LAKE MICHIGAN

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

September 13, 2025

The Commission met two times since the last Stated Meeting of the Presbytery—Regular stated meetings on July 22, 2025, and August 26, 2025. The following report deals with actions taken by the Commission on behalf of the Presbytery and other matters of a general nature.

1. **A motion prevailed** to approve the minutes of the Commission on the Preparation for Ministry of May 27, 2025, and July 22, 2025.
2. Candidate Elder Sheri Harris received a call to serve as pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Rome, GA. She was examined by the Cherokee Presbytery and will be ordained and installed on October 26, 2025. The Ordination can be livestreamed on Westminster's YouTube channel.
3. On August 4, 2025, an informal meeting was held to meet with Elder Sheri Harris to celebrate her call to Georgia.
4. The Commission welcomed 2 new members, Rev. Pat Weatherwax (HR) and Rev. David Schell (Jackson First).
5. The Commission mourns the death of our longtime and faithful secretary, Elder Leslie Gilreath (Fairplain).

This concludes the report of the Committee on the Preparation for Ministry.

This concludes the Consent Agenda

NOMINATING AND REPRESENTATION REPORT

Rev. Lisa Schrott (Okemos) presented the following nominee for consideration:

Presbytery of Lake Michigan Vice Moderator

Elder Benjamin Boerkoel (GR Westminster), Class of 2025

There were no nominations from the floor. **A motion prevailed** to close nominations from the floor. **A motion prevailed** to elect the nominee as presented.

WORSHIP

Mx. Omar Salinas-Chacón, PC (USA) Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Mission Specialist for Migration Accompaniment Ministries, along with several members of the Presbytery, led the service of worship. Mx. Salinas-Chacón read Jeremiah 4:23-28 and James 2:14-16. During the sermon, he described the work of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and its goal to help people whose lights have been dimmed. He encouraged the Presbytery to consider what can bring hope into the world through our humanity, and to provide food, shelter, and support for refugees, immigrants, and those seeking asylum. Mx. Salinas-Chacón shared his personal story of coming to the United States with his family seeking asylum. He encouraged members of the Presbytery

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to consider how to use their gifts and let God's grace enter the world. Elder Benjamin Boerkoel was installed as Vice Moderator of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. The offering was designated for the PC(USA) Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and \$1,196.89 was received. The Presbytery celebrated the Lord's Supper with the Rev. Lorenzo Small (Battle Creek First) presiding at the table.

The Presbytery recessed for a 17-minute break at 10:46 a.m. The meeting was reconvened at 11:03 a.m.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Mx. Omar Salinas-Chacón discussed the work of PC(USA) Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. He described how PDA often stays long-term to assist communities in crisis. He highlighted their work with refugee communities, providing the example of a Migrant Shelter in Tijuana, Mexico, that was in need of support and electricity. He described the work PDA is doing abroad by responding to the earthquakes in Afghanistan and work in Sudan and South Sudan. Mx. Omar Salinas-Chacón encouraged the members of the Presbytery to pray for PDA and donate gifts through One Great Hour of Sharing.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER

Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence offered thanks to Mx. Omar Salinas-Chacón for his leadership and for providing resources. Rev. Lane-Lawrence discussed the Overture approved by the PCUSA General Assembly in 2022, *On Declaring the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Be a Sanctuary and Accompaniment Church*. In adopting the document, the Presbytery of Lake Michigan would make clear its support of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers as a part of the Presbytery's identity. Adoption clarifies that congregations engaged in the work of sanctuary and accompaniment are indeed engaging in the work of the gospel, and strengthens the Presbytery's ability to support those ministries. Rev. Lane-Lawrence also clarified that adoption by the Presbytery does not require congregations to engage in sanctuary or accompaniment ministries. After a time of discussion, **a motion prevailed** unanimously to adopt the statement and declare the Presbytery of Lake Michigan to be a "Sanctuary and Accompaniment Presbytery." The Presbytery of Lake Michigan supports and encourages its congregations and members to support immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and their children, and to resist efforts by the government to separate families. Rev. Lane-Lawrence also reminded commissioners and pastors of the Small Church Summit, scheduled for October 4, 2025, and the new Transitional Ministry Cohort.

LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT

Rev. Gail Monsma (Decatur/Paw Paw First) reported on behalf of the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team recommended that the 2026 Presbytery Per Capita remain at \$27.76. After a time of discussion, **a motion prevailed** that the Presbytery per capita for 2026 remain at \$27.76.

The total Per Capita for 2026 will be \$42.42 (GA: \$11.26, Synod of the Covenant: \$3.40, and Presbytery: \$27.76).

The PC(USA) Book of Order requires that councils adopt an Anti-Harassment Policy (G-3.0106 Administration of Mission). The Leadership recommended approval of the proposed Anti-Harassment Policy. **A motion prevailed** to approve the following Anti-Harassment Policy.

Presbytery of Lake Michigan Anti-Harassment Policy

It is the Presbytery of Lake Michigan's belief that God has created all people in God's own image and thus has made us equal in Christ (Genesis 1:26). The Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is given shape and life and is meant to reflect our relationship to one another and to God. We firmly believe that God intends all human life to have worth and dignity in all relationships.

Through these relationships, we are bound to serve and respect the dignity of every human being (F-1.0301). This respect and dignity afforded to all of God's creation is through the creation and maintenance of a safe environment within our community, free of harassment.

This policy applies to members, staff, officers, and volunteers within the bounds of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. The Presbytery, in conjunction with existing policies and procedures and in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local anti-discrimination and harassment laws and regulations, enforces this policy, as stated, in accordance with the following definitions and guidelines.

- **Verbal Harassment:** Verbal harassment is harassment established by a pattern of conduct of unwelcome or unwanted spoken or written comments. Those comments can include, without limitation, insults, jokes, slurs, false and misleading information and threats. This could also include and is not limited to stereotyping based on a person's nationality, origin, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, body, medical conditions, disability, and appearance.
- **Nonverbal Harassment:** Nonverbal Harassment includes, without limitations, distribution, display, or discussion of any graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, or belittles. This may also include and is not limited to a show of hostility, aversion, or disrespect toward an individual or group because of nationality, origin, race, color, religion,

gender, sexual orientation, age, body, medical conditions, disability, and appearance.¹

- Both Verbal and Nonverbal Harassment include, without limitation, persistent unwanted contact (verbal or nonverbal), bullying, intimidation, and interference in the ministry of the church or organization.
- Sexual Harassment: Sexual Harassment is the behavior characterized by the making of unwelcome and/or inappropriate sexual remarks, physical advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal and/or physical conduct of a sexual nature.² Sexual harassment may take many different forms including, but not limited to, verbal, nonverbal, and physical sexual harassment. More information about this can be found in the Presbytery's Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct.
- Electronic Harassment: Electronic Harassment is the use of electronic communication to harass a targeted person or group, including, but not limited to, emails, blogs, social networking websites, online games, forums, instant messaging, Zoom, and other virtual conferencing modalities, text messaging, and mobile phone pictures and videos. Harassment perpetrated through these online media have come to be known as "cyber bullying."³
- Retaliation: Retaliation is any hardship, loss of benefit, or penalty imposed on any person in response to filing or responding to a bona fide complaint or discrimination or harassment.⁴
- In our efforts to create a church where all persons are treated with respect and dignity the Presbytery of Lake Michigan commits to:
 - Provide anti-harassment training for our members, staff, volunteers, officers, and leaders to encourage education, understanding, and growth;
 - Acknowledge and thoroughly investigate all allegations of harassment, providing support through the use of Book of Order defined processes.
 - Strive to create a Presbytery where harassment of all kinds is not tolerated or accepted, where all people of God are welcome and safe.

Acknowledgement

Lake Michigan is indebted to Philadelphia Presbytery who overtured the 225th General Assembly to amend G-3.0106 to require all councils to adopt a harassment policy. This policy is heavily drawn from the policy the Philadelphia Presbytery approved on April 30, 2024.

¹ U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Harassment. Accessed January 31, 2024. [https:// www.eeoc.gov/youth/harassment](https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/harassment)

² U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Sexual Harassment. Accessed January 31, 2024. [https:// www.eeoc.gov/sexual-harassment](https://www.eeoc.gov/sexual-harassment)

³ US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, Electronic Harassment – Concept Map and Definition. Accessed January 31, 2024. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/electronic-harassment-concept-map-and-definition>

⁴ US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation and Related Issues. Accessed January 31, 2024. <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-retaliation-and-related-issues>

Adopted - 9/13/2025

Appendix A

Sample Actions that Describe Harassment

Sample actions of conduct that are prohibited may include, but are not limited to:

- Spreading malicious rumors, gossip, or innuendo.
- Excluding or isolating someone socially.
- Intimidating a person.
- Undermining or deliberately impeding a person’s work.
- Physically abusing or threatening abuse.
- Removing areas of responsibility without cause.
- Constantly changing work guidelines.
- Establishing impossible deadlines that will set-up the individual to fail.
- Withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information.
- Making jokes that are obviously offensive by spoken word or email regardless of Intent.
- Intruding on a person’s privacy by pestering, spying or stalking.
- Assigning unreasonable duties or workload which are unfavorable to one person (in a way that creates unnecessary pressure).
- Underwork – creating a feeling of uselessness.
- Yelling or using profanity.
- Criticizing a person persistently or constantly.

- Belittling a person's opinions.
- Unwarranted (or undeserved) punishment.
- Unwarranted blocking applications for training, leave or promotion.
- Tampering with a person's personal belongings or work equipment.
- Using racist slang, phrases, or nicknames.
- Making remarks about an individual's skin color or other ethnic traits.
- Displaying racist drawings, or posters that might be offensive to a particular group.
- Making offensive gestures.
- Making offensive reference to an individual's mental or physical disability.
- Sharing inappropriate images, videos, e-mails, letters, or notes in an offensive nature.
- Offensively talking about negative racial, ethnic, or religious stereotypes.
- Making derogatory age-related comments.
- Wearing clothing that could be offensive to a particular ethnic group.
- Harassing communications can be verbal, written, electronic (e.g., email or text messages), or social media (e.g., X, FB, IG).

Appendix B

Steps to Prevent Harassment

1. Create a Safe Environment

Be vocal. Let your staff and congregation know you take harassment seriously. Those who work at and attend the church should feel safe if they need to come forward with an accusation of harassment.

Define policies. If there aren't policies in place concerning harassment in your church, create them now. The church must be prepared if an allegation surfaces. Provide awareness training.

Consider using an appropriate video to enhance discussion.

2. Keep a Safe Environment

Practice Accountability. One way to keep your staff accountable is to stay aware of any change in behavior or individuals. Declining performance, increased absences, inability to concentrate and/or changes in work habits could indicate an employee being harassed.

Check your insurance. Make sure your church insurance covers employment related claims, such as a harassment claim.

Address allegation. When an non-anonymous allegation surfaces, follow the guidelines in the Church Discipline section of the Book of Order.

3. Annual Requirement

Review during committee orientation. Each staff member, volunteer, officer, and member of the Presbytery needs to understand how to create a harassment-free environment. An annual review will help us to keep our eyes on the image of God in each other. Also review the guidelines in the Church Discipline section to know how to file an allegation when necessary.

Be certain to encourage policies in each congregation. Presbytery representatives should encourage the congregations within their bounds to adopt and annually review a similar policy.

Rev. Monsma reminded members that the Presbytery designated funds from the sale of property for grants to assist with the cost of those utilizing the Board of Pensions Transitional Pastors Participation Coverage.

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Elder Beth Dyer (Kalamazoo First) presented the first reading of the Proposed 2026 Budget. Members were instructed to send feedback and questions to the Moderator of the Budget and Finance Committee via email by October 6, 2025. The Proposed 2026 Budget will be presented for approval at the stated meeting on December 2, 2025.

Elder Dyer reported that the Trustees have approved the lease agreement between Hesperia Presbyterian Church and Cyndie Miller for the use of the Manse Property (126 Elm Street, Hesperia, MI 49421), effective April 7, 2025.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REPORT

Rev. Ben Rumbaugh (Lansing Delta/Dimondale) reported on behalf of the Commission on Ministry (COM). He introduced realignment of the COM regions into a West region and an East region. The Vice Moderator of the East Region will be Elder Heather Myer (East Lansing Eastminster), and the Vice Moderator of the West Region will be Rev. Amber Nettleton (MAL).

East Region: Battle Creek First; Battle Creek Pennfield; Battle Creek Westlake; Brooklyn; Coldwater First; Concord First/Homer First; Dimondale First; East Lansing Eastminster; East

Lansing Korean; East Lansing The Peoples Church; Gregory Unadilla; Holt; Ionia First; Jackson First; Jackson Westminster; Jonesville First; Lansing Delta; Lansing First; Lansing North Westminster; Lyons/Muir Federated; Marshall First; Mason First; Okemos; Stockbridge First; Sturgis First

West Region: Allegan First; Big Rapids United; Benton Harbor First; Buchanan First; Cadillac First; Cassopolis United; Decatur First; Gobles Bethany; Grand Haven First; Grand Rapids Forest Hills; Grand Rapids North Park; Grand Rapids Westminster; Hastings First; Hesperia First; Holland First; Jenison Parkwood; Kalamazoo First; Kalamazoo North; Lake City First; Muskegon First; Niles First; Paw Paw First; Plainwell First; Portage Westminster; Richland First; Rockford North Kent; Schoolcraft First; Spring Lake; Three Rivers/Centreville First

Rev. Rumbaugh presented a recommendation for the 2026 Minimum Terms of Call. After a time of discussion, a **motion prevailed** to approve the following Minimum Terms of Call for 2026. as \$44,869 plus free use of the manse and payment of actual utilities by the church, \$58,352 combined salary and allowance for housing and utilities allowance, or \$85,000 total compensation package, which must include all the following components: Cash Salary and Housing Allowance, Board of Pensions Benefits, and Professional Expenses.

**PRESBYTERY OF LAKE MICHIGAN
COMMISSION ON MINISTRY
A PRESBYTERY POLICY
MINIMUM TERMS OF CALL - 2026**

A. Cash Salary and Housing

1. \$44,869 plus free use of the manse and payment of actual utilities by the church, the value of the manse for pension purposes must be at least 30 percent of cash salary, plus annuity plus Social Security allowance, if negotiated.

or

2. \$58,352 combined salary and allowance for housing and utilities allowance. The exact amount for salary and housing for 2025 is to be determined by the pastor and session prior to December 31, 2025. The Book of Order (G1.00503) Business Proper to Congregational Meetings states that one business of the congregation is: "...reviewing the adequacy of and approving changes to the terms of call of the pastor or pastors..." Richard R. Hammer, J.D., LL.M., CPA states in his book "Tax Guide for Ministers & Church" that the church designates housing allowance "in advance (prior to the beginning of the new year or prior to beginning employment for a newly hired minister) and that the housing allowance "(1) represents compensation for ministerial services, (2) it is used to pay housing expenses, and

(3) it does not exceed the annual fair rental value of the home (furnished, plus utilities).”

or

3. \$85,000 total compensation package, which must include all the following components:
 - a. Cash Salary and Housing as outlined in 1. and 2. Above.
 - b. Board of Pensions benefits as outlined in Section B and C.
 - c. Professional expenses as outlined in Section D.

B. Board of Pensions Benefits Plan

Board of Pensions defined benefit pension, death and disability, long-term disability and Employee Assistance Program (10% of effective salary). Required for all clergy and encouraged for CREs and other church workers.

C. Board of Pensions Medical Coverage

- The Book of Order requires that congregations enroll Ministers of Word and Sacrament in installed pastoral service in the Congregational Pastors Package, which includes member-only medical coverage. (17.5% of Effective Salary)
- If family coverage is needed by the pastor, and the church was enrolled in the Transitional Pastor’s Plan in 2025, churches in 2026 shall cover the entire cost of the 2026 Transitional Pastor’s Participation (37% of effective salary).
- If dependent coverage is needed by the pastor, and the church was not enrolled in the Transitional Pastor’s Plan in 2025, churches in 2026 shall cover the cost of the 2026 Medical and Dependent Medical Coverage dues to no less than a total compensation package of \$85,000.

D. Professional Expenses.

1. Automobile expenses are to be vouchered and reimbursed at the current IRS rate.
2. Professional Development allowance of a minimum of \$800 is to be vouchered and may be accumulated for up to three years.
3. Book allowance is to be vouchered up to at least \$300 or more if negotiated.
4. Professional expenses allowance includes vouchered business costs such as subscriptions, pamphlets, professional membership, supplies, etc. as negotiated.

E. Professional Development and Vacation Time.

1. Professional development time (formerly study leave or continuing education) is two weeks and two Sundays annually and may be accumulated for up to three years.
2. Annual vacation is one month, including four Sundays. A month is at least 30 days including 4 Sundays.

F. Presbytery policy regarding Pastoral Sabbatical.

When a pastor has been in their congregation for at least seven years, the Commission on Ministry strongly encourages the session to talk with the pastor about a sabbatical period. Typically, this would be for three months or more, and the current terms of call would be in place during the sabbatical time. A sabbatical enables the pastor to do some longer term study or reflection which will enable them to return to the congregation refreshed and with new perspectives on ministry. The Commission on Ministry has models for how the church and pastor can plan for a sabbatical.

G. Presbytery policy regarding Minimum Terms of Call.

The Presbytery at its September 2026 meeting adopted the following recommendation of the Commission on Ministry: “that the minimum terms of call in effect for pastors serving churches beginning January 1, 2026, be either

1. \$44,869 plus free use of manse and payment by the church of actual manse utilities. The value of the manse for Board of Pensions purposes must be at least 30% of cash salary, plus annuity, plus Social Security allowance, if negotiated; OR,
2. \$58,352 combined salary and housing/utilities allowance; OR,
3. \$85,000 total compensation package, which must include all the following components: Cash Salary and Housing as outlined in 1. and 2. Above, Board of Pensions benefits as outlined in Section B and C, Professional expenses as outlined in Section D.

If a church cannot meet these requirements, the Session must annually submit a request to Presbytery through the Committee on Ministry to be excused from this requirement and outline the justification for such a request, indicating why this position should not be reduced to a part-time position. The minister must be in agreement with this request and indicate in writing a willingness to be compensated less than the minimum terms of call approved by Presbytery. Special provisions apply to teaching elders in part-time situations.

H. Presbytery Policy Regarding Family Leave

Terms of Call must include the Family Leave Policy of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. See Policy B-8.

Rev. Rumbaugh invited Elder Ruth Sorensen (Spring Lake) to recognize the ministry and retirement of Rev. Dan Anderson. Rev. Rumbaugh prayed a blessing over Rev. Dan Anderson's ministry with Spring Lake Presbyterian Church and his retirement.

Rev. Rumbaugh welcomed and recognized Rev. Calandra Nevenzel (Interim Pastor of Richland First) and Rev. Amy Ruhf-Brien (Pastor of Big Rapids United). He offered a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing over their ministries.

NOMINATING & REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Rev. Lisa Schrott (Okemos) reported on behalf of the Nominating and Representation Committee. Rev. Schrott reported the following resignation:

Rev. Stan Jenkins, Leadership Team (MAL), Class of 2025

Rev. Schrott recognized and presented the following slate of nominees for election to the respective positions and classes:

227th General Assembly Ruling Elder Commissioners

Elder Heather Myer (East Lansing Eastminster), Class of 2027

Elder Benjamin Boerkoel (GR Westminster), Class of 2027

Rev. Troy Hauser-Brydon, moderator, opened the floor for nominations, and there were none. **A motion prevailed** to close nominations from the floor. **A motion prevailed** to elect the slate of nominees as presented.

Rev. Schrott encouraged teaching elder members of the Presbytery to submit applications to serve as commissioners to the 227th General Assembly, June 22-July 2, 2026, in Milwaukee, WI. The Application deadline has been extended to October 15, 2025. Rev. Schrott also highlighted resources focusing on anti-racism, immigration, and LGBTQIA+.

SYNOD OF THE COVENANT COMMISSIONER REPORT

Elder Andy Thorburn (Paw Paw First), ruling elder commissioner to the Synod of the Covenant, reported on behalf of the Synod. Elder Thorburn introduced Rev. Charlotte Ellison (HR), the teaching elder commissioner, Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence (Synod of the Covenant Stated Clerk), and Rev. Dr. Charles B. Hardwick (Synod of the Covenant Executive). He described the resources and continuing education that the Synod offers and encouraged members to reach out to Rev. Ellison or him for further information.

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MARSHALL, MICHIGAN

The written report of the Administrative Commission for the First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI, was removed from the consent agenda for discussion. In addition to the written

report, Rev. Amber Nettleton (MAL), Moderator of the AC, offered the following information relevant to the work of the Administrative Commission. A summary of that information follows:

- The Administrative Commission (AC) has met nearly every week since December 2023, and has two representatives present at every Session and Congregational meeting.
- The AC has interviewed former pastors, COM liaisons, members of Session, current congregational members, and former congregational members to gain an understanding of the history, culture, conflict, and disorder within the church.
- The Session has taken an adversarial and hostile stance against the Presbytery and the AC, and has had difficulty making consistent forward progress toward order.
- Members of Session have often misinterpreted attempts by the AC to provide corrective suggestions as oppressive and have often attributed the AC a hidden agenda.
- The AC has worked diligently to develop a trusting relationship. Since verbal information is often misinterpreted by members of Session, the AC provides written follow-ups of conversations, especially those involving next steps. Even so, the Session regularly misses set deadlines for the completion of regular responsibilities.
- The AC has provided numerous officer and Session training to help strengthen the Session's skills related to PCUSA and Presbytery Policy, as well as Session responsibilities. Developing skills and understanding remains an ongoing challenge.
 - It is a frustration that the Session often does not meet in person, but instead regularly conducts business through text messages or emails, although the AC has let them know it is out of order to do so. The AC has emphasized the importance of the discernment process.
- The Session has had a difficult time completing its Mission Study.

Rev. Kristin Stroble (COM Staff Support) provided that the Commission on Ministry has partnered with the AC and maintains regular communication to support the work it has been doing with Marshall. Rev. Stroble provided the following observations

- The session
 - continues to be disordered. They have made some progress, but continue to embrace unhealthy patterns and practices
 - continues in a lack of communication with the congregation; the Session has been regularly reminded by the AC to be in communication with the congregation to share information
 - Continues with a lack of understanding of meeting decorum, including the role of the moderator, going off topic, and addressing issues not listed in the agenda, a lack of written reports, and chaotic meetings that often last three or more hours
 - continues with a lack of understanding related to Presbyterian polity and the Book of Order.
 - Continues with a lack of understanding related to official documentation

- Actions taken by text message or email and not recorded in the session minutes.
- Failure to record those present in meetings
- An abundance of spelling and grammar errors in minutes which also include incomplete sentences and omissions of actions.
- Failure to record first and last names

Related to current pastoral leadership, Rev. Stroble provided the following information

- The current pastoral leadership signed a covenant agreement as a pulpit supply pastor, with the clear understanding that it was a temporary arrangement.
- The covenant agreement was renewed several times at the request of the session and approved by the AC.
- The AC met with the pastor numerous times during the pastoral relationship to clarify her role as Stated Supply Pastor, leading Sunday worship and moderating the session. The AC clarified that she was not to involve herself in any tasks related to the mission study or future pastoral leadership.
- There has been an ongoing concern that the pastor either did not understand or was not adhering to the boundaries and expectations of the pastoral role.
- The AC conferred with COM relative to their concerns that Rev. Charlotte Ellison was overstepping the boundaries of the covenant agreement. Concerns including:
 - Interfering with the relationship between the Session and the AC, interpreting AC's actions to the session without encouraging them to speak directly to the AC. This created a triangulation.
 - The interference included a vocal derogatory interpretation of the AC, and Book of Order processes that the AC might have to engage to move the session forward (calling the process of original jurisdiction - a hostile takeover.)

Rev. Stroble observed the following

- COM has observed that the AC has been patient beyond expectation and gone above and beyond to work with the session rather than assume original jurisdiction.
- That the AC has remained professional, pastoral, and caring even in the face of hostility.
- That the AC has said on occasion to the Session that if a task is not completed, they would be forced to assume original jurisdiction. The session perceived these communications as threats rather than expressions of the next steps the AC would be forced to take.
- The AC is acting with due diligence in not approving an extension of the covenant agreement between the session and the current supply pastor due to the unhealthy dynamics and relationship that exist.

- The disorder that exists within the session and congregation continues to such a degree that it would not be a responsible decision to allow the congregation to search for an installed pastor. It is appropriate for them to seek an interim pastor who can help them return to order and establish a healthy relationship.

Rev. Charlotte Ellison rose to object to the word “inflammatory” used in the written portion of the Report of the Administrative Commission for the First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI, that was included in the written portion of the report. Rev. Ellison made a motion that the word inflammatory be stricken from the paragraph of the written report. An amendment to the motion to retain the word inflammatory but to add the actual words Rev. Ellison spoke as an explanation was placed before the presbytery. **A motion prevailed** to approve the amendment. After a time of discussion, **a motion prevailed** to approve the motion as amended. The revised written report amended as approved, appears below

The Administrative Commission provided the following written report.

Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI
September 13, 2025

The Members of the Administrative Commission (AC) continue to work diligently and pastorally with the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI.

Members of the AC continue to attend all Session Meetings, as they are able, either in-person or virtually, to provide continued support and clarity of communication.

After the resignation of the Clerk of Session, effective April 03, 2025, and after being presented with a deadline for action by the AC, a new Clerk of Session appears to have been elected, although the AC has not received minutes of the Session meeting at which this action was approved. Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence confirmed with the new Clerk, Elder Karen Earl, that she and PLM Associate Clerk, Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom, plan to be present in Marshall on September 03, 2025, to meet with the new Clerk of Session to provide training and orientation.

During the May 31, 2025, review of the 2024 session minutes, it was found that the minutes were not in order. Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom, PLM Associate Clerk, reviewed the minutes. She has communicated frequently with Marshall about the deficiencies in their minutes and provided language that would be acceptable. Some of the revisions submitted by the session contained minimal or no revisions. Rev. Groenenboom informed the Session of a deadline of August 31, 2025, to make the necessary corrections and edits to the 2024 Minutes to bring the minutes into order.

The Mission Study Committee continues its work with support from AC member Elder Nancy Toth. The Session canceled their June Session meeting to focus on the work of their Mission Study. The Mission Study Group (Session Members) cancelled several meetings to discuss their Mission Study. Two of the remaining four members had a Zoom meeting with Elder Toth during which they reviewed comments and recommendations related to previously submitted “Final Drafts”. The AC is currently reviewing the fifth iteration submitted on August 26, 2025, and has expressed comments/concerns about this document. The requested changes are motivated by a desire for clarity of expression and perceived acceptance by those reading this document.

The AC requested to meet with the Session on July 27, 2025, after not being informed of the date and time of the July Session meeting. Stated Supply Pastor, Rev. Charlotte Ellison, said this failure to inform the AC was an accident resulting from an email she failed to send to the AC. During the July 27, 2025, Session meeting, AC representatives, along with Rev. Dr. Cal Bremer and Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence, noted a propensity to ask questions that had been previously answered on more than one occasion, and for members of the session to focus on their perception of past events. In addition, the AC members and PLM staff members noted inflammatory language was employed both by members of the Session and by the Stated Supply pastor to describe processes provided by the PCUSA Book of Order. (For example, Rev. Charlotte Ellison on several occasions used the words *hostile takeover* to describe the process of the assumption of original jurisdiction provided by the PCUSA Constitution to assist councils in disorder. Members of the Administrative Commission pointed out each time that the terminology was inappropriate and inflammatory, but Rev. Ellison continued to use that language several more times during the conversation.) The AC members and PLM staff offered continued support and encouragement to the Session, including ordering of copies of the Book of Order for all Session members as well as informing them of upcoming training Sessions. Special mention was made of the ongoing support in assisting them in completing their Mission Study, as this will be a primary resource document for determining pastoral needs and ministry support.

The AC sent a letter dated August 01, 2025, to Rev. Charlotte Ellison, which stated: “In reviewing records, it was noted that your current Covenant Agreement with the First Presbyterian Church of Marshall, MI, concludes on September 2, 2025. After prayerful discussion, it was determined that if Session would like to renew the Covenant Agreement, the AC is willing to approve an extension for no more than 28 days, through September 30, 2025.”

On August 3, 2025, AC member Elder Nancy Toth received an email from a Session member indicating his inability to participate in continued Mission Study work given his resignation from Session effective that day (he was a member of the Class of 2025). He also informed Elder Toth that none of the others who were scheduled to meet that evening to work on the Mission Study would be available. When asked by the AC to reconsider his resignation, he declined.

On August 6, 2025, AC member Rev. Amber Nettleton was forwarded an email from the Clerk of Session, which had been composed by Stated Supply Pastor Rev. Charlotte Ellison, notifying the AC of the resignations of two more Session members, both Class of 2025, effective August 31, 2025.

Three individuals were elected to the Session at a congregational meeting held on August 24, 2025, to fill vacancies on Session noted above. The Session is working with the AC on drafting language to amend their By-Laws to bring them into compliance.

The AC was present with the congregation, along with Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence and Rev. Dr Cal Bremer, on Sunday, August 24, 2025, to hear from the congregation, clarify process, and detail continued plans of support for the Session and congregation in determining their pastoral needs and future ministry. This meeting lasted for nearly two and a half hours. Again, this meeting was punctuated with inflammatory comments and unfounded accusations made by Session members.

The AC, working with COM, has arranged for the Rev. Steven Kaszar (Homer/Concord) to moderate Marshall Session meetings beginning in October 2025.

Please join us in praying for God's blessing on this congregation and Session as they discern God's will for their future ministry.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m. Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser-Brydon closed the meeting with prayer and the extinguishing of the Christ Candle.

**The next Presbytery meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 2, 2025
at Parkwood Presbyterian Church
111 Capital Ave NE
Battle Creek, MI 49017**

APPROVED
Leadership Team Meeting Minutes
Presbytery of Lake Michigan via Zoom
1511 Helen Avenue, Portage, MI 49002
October 2, 2025 12:30 p.m.

Attendance Roll: Chris Dorn (TE-Ionia/DST), Jeanette Holton (RE-Benton Harbor First/AST), Gail Monsma (TE-Paw Paw/PLM Moderator), Lynette Sparks (TE-Westminster GR/M&O)

Staff: Fran Lane-Lawrence (Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk), Cal Bremer (Asst. to Exec), Kristin Stroble (COM Resource Staff)

Excused: Troy Hauser-Brydon (TE-Grand Haven/PLM Moderator), Beth Dyer (RE-Kalamazoo First/B&F Moderator), Lisa Schrott (TE-/N&R Moderator), Nick Marlatt (TE-Hastings/LT MAL)

Call to Order, Opening Prayer, and Quorum: Rev. Gail Monsma, moderator, called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m. and invited Rev. Chris Dorn to open the meeting in prayer. A quorum was present.

Adoption of the Agenda:

A motion prevailed to approve the agenda

Approval of the Consent Agenda:

A motion prevailed to approve the consent agenda, including the following items:

- A. **To approve** the Leadership Team Meeting Minutes of September 4, 2025
- B. **To approve** the Report of the EP/SC of October 2, 2025

Unfinished Business:

- A. Members of the Leadership Team received updates on active Administrative Commissions for the following congregations: Allegan, Westlake, Paw Paw/Decatur, Jackson Westminster, Richland, and Marshall.
- B. Members of the Leadership Team debriefed the September Stated Meeting. The feedback was positive, especially related to the worship and the message.
- C. Members of the Leadership Team affirmed that they would recommend that the Presbytery of Lake Michigan join the Presbytery of San Jose in submitting the overture entitled, *Repudiating Christian Nationalism and Affirming Our Faith Commitments*. Rev. Lynette Sparks agreed to present this overture to the Presbytery.
- D. Members reviewed the Presbytery meeting schedule. **A motion prevailed** to approve the following presbytery schedule to begin in the Fall of 2026.

September (In Person) Second Saturday – 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 pm

- Worship
- Focus:
 - Connectional/ Mission/ Education (Bring in speakers...)

- Proposed Budget
- Nominating/COM

November (In Person) Second Tuesday

- Day meeting and in person
- Shorter meeting - business only 10:00 - 2:00
- Worship
 - Installation of Officers
 - Celebrating the Saints
- Focus: Business & Budget

February (Zoom) Second Tuesday @ 6:00 pm

- Worship
- Focus: Business

June (In Person) Second Saturday

- Worship
- Connectional/ Mission/ Education (Bring in speakers...)

- E. Reminder that the Leadership Team needs to nominate new members for the Nominating and Representation Committee
- F. For Future: Discernment toward remote office - Fran

Discussion of the Business and Worship at Stated Meetings of the Presbytery: Fran Lane-Lawrence

A. Tuesday, December 2, 2025 - Jenison Parkwood

1. Worship
 - a. Celebration of the Lord's Supper
 - b. Installation of Moderator/Vice Moderator
 - c. Offering - PLM Candidate and inquirers
 - d. Preacher - Rev. Lynette Sparks
2. Overture - Repudiating Christian Nationalism and Affirming Our Faith Commitments
Lynette Sparks (15 minutes)
3. Report of B&F - Beth Dyer
 - a. Vote on Proposed Budget
5. Synod of the Covenant Report (10 minutes)
6. Report of EP - Fran Lane-Lawrence (5 minutes)
7. Nominating Committee Report - Lisa Schrott (10 minutes)
8. Youth Strategies Committee Kirk Miller (5 minutes)

Adjournment and Closing Prayer:

Rev. Gail Monsma, moderator adjourned the meeting at 1:38 p.m. Rev. Chris Dorn closed the meeting in prayer.

Next meeting: November 6, 2025
Via Zoom

Devotion: Jeanette Holton

**Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Anti-Racism Policy
December 2, 2025**

(To Be Presented to the PLM at the December 2, 2025 Stated Meeting)

Preamble

This policy is a statement of who we are and what we stand for. We believe in the sacred worth of all people and the value of diverse experiences and identities in the body of Christ. We seek to dismantle racism and white supremacy in all forms—personal, institutional, and systemic because we are called by Jesus to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. This is not only about what we reject, but about the beloved community we are actively building.

Theological Grounding

As a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Presbytery of Lake Michigan affirms that all people are created in the image of God and are beloved members of God’s family. We affirm the unity of the body of Christ across race, ethnicity, gender, culture, age, ability, and geography, and we root this work in Scripture: “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” — Galatians 3:28

“God does not show favoritism.” — Acts 10:34

We draw from F-1.0403 of our Constitution: “The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.”

Acknowledgement and Lament

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan acknowledges:

- The legacy of colonization, enslavement, and systemic racism that undergirds the institutions of this nation, the church, including the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.
- The ways we, as a body, have been complicit through silence, inaction, or participation in unjust systems.
- That white supremacy, structural racism, and implicit bias remain embedded in our ecclesial, social, and institutional life.
- That we stand on the unceded ancestral lands of Indigenous peoples, including the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Miami, and others who were displaced by colonial expansion and whose history has been marginalized.

- We lament the ongoing suffering and generational trauma caused by these systems, and we commit to a posture of humility and repentance as we seek justice.

Commitments to Action

In order to live into our baptismal calling and resist systems of injustice, the Presbytery of Lake Michigan commits to:

Formation and Education

- Providing regular antiracism and cultural humility training for presbytery staff, council members, and committee leaders.
- Incorporating diverse theological voices, especially BIPOC scholars, in our educational resources, liturgy, and programming.
- Promoting the use of Matthew 25 and Facing Racism resources throughout the presbytery.

Representation and Power-Sharing

- Ensuring diversity in leadership and nominations by partnering with the Presbytery's Committee on Nominating and Representation.
- Reviewing our structures and practices to eliminate barriers to participation for underrepresented voices.

Community Partnership and Public Witness

- Collaborating with mid councils and congregations engaged in antiracism ministry.
- Publicly naming and opposing racial injustice, including voter suppression, police brutality, economic disparity, and environmental racism.
- Lifting up the voices and leadership of those most impacted by injustice in our advocacy and witness.

Financial Stewardship and Reparative Action

- Committing to reparative financial practices, including support for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-led ministries.
- Expanding vendor and partnership relationships to include businesses owned by historically marginalized people.
- Exploring participation in initiatives like Restorative Actions that address wealth disparities rooted in systemic racism.

Accountability and Implementation

- This policy will guide the work of all Presbytery committees and initiatives.
- An annual review of progress will be conducted by the Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk and the Committee on Nominating and Representation, with the findings reported to the Presbytery.

- Complaints of racism or racial discrimination within the Presbytery's jurisdiction will be addressed promptly, transparently, with discretion and openness, and in keeping with our polity and values of justice and equity.

Closing Affirmation

We confess that the road to justice is long and requires persistence, courage, and grace. We embrace the call to build an intercultural church where all gifts are welcomed, all people are valued, and the love of Christ compels us to act boldly for justice.

“Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” — Amos 5:24

Overture to the 227th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

From the Presbytery of San Jose

Title: Repudiating Christian Nationalism and Affirming Our Faith Commitments

The Presbytery of San Jose respectfully overtures the 227th General Assembly (2026) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to take the following actions:

Rationale

A Time of Urgency and Moral Clarity

This is a time of profound spiritual and national crisis. When the US government appropriates scripture to baptize their wholly unbiblical and unconstitutional treatment of undocumented people (and, too often, documented people as well), – when plainclothes officers wearing masks and driving unmarked vehicles conduct raids on church property, farms, schools, factories and hospitals, when the military is deployed against our own people in our own streets and those with political power falsely conflate and claim spiritual authority, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is called to speak with courage and clarity.

We are witnessing a dangerous rise in political extremism, anti-democratic movements, and religious rhetoric used to justify exclusion, violence, and disregard of civil and human rights. At the center of this crisis is Christian Nationalism—a theological distortion that replaces faithfulness to Christ with idolatrous allegiance to coercive systems of power that seek control, enforce conformity, and undermine both democracy and the integrity of Christian witness.

Christian Nationalism is not merely a political ideology. It is a heresy that elevates nation, race and political authority above the sovereignty of God. It replaces the gospel of Jesus with a counterfeit religion of power and exclusion, syncretizing a narrow Christian identity with American citizenship, and harming people of color, immigrants, LGBTQIA+ persons, Indigenous people, women, and religious minorities.

As followers of Jesus Christ and members of a Reformed tradition committed to justice, peace, and the sovereignty of God, we cannot be silent. The Confession of 1967 reminds us, “In every age the church has expressed its witness in words and deeds as the need of the time required” (9.01). This is such a time. This overture calls upon the 226th General Assembly to define, denounce, and dismantle Christian Nationalism through bold theological witness and faithful institutional action.

Defining Christian Nationalism: Historical and Contemporary Realities

Christian Nationalism is deeply embedded in American history. From the Doctrine of Discovery and Puritan visions of a “city upon a hill” to the theological defense of chattel slavery, Jim Crow and segregation, U.S. Christianity has long fused religious authority—and the institutional power of the church—with national and racial supremacy.

Across U.S. history—from Manifest Destiny to Cold War-era civil religion—the merging of national, racial, and Christian identities has been used to sanctify inequality and conquest, cloaked in Christian language, symbols, and narratives. American Protestants—including Presbyterians—have at times reinforced this fusion by framing national superiority in theological terms, laying the groundwork for the rise of contemporary Christian Nationalism. Even seemingly benign actions—such as adding “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance or adopting “In God We Trust” as the national motto, later mandated on paper currency—wove Christianity into public life. These actions helped establish Christian cultural dominance in the civic sphere and reinforced the conflation of Christian faith with American identity—the defining feature of Christian Nationalism.

Yet while Christian Nationalism has shaped much of American religious and political life, the church has not always been silent. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has, at key moments, spoken out against injustice. We must continue that truth-telling today—for the sake of our witness and our future.

Today, Christian Nationalism seeks to merge a politicized version of Christianity with civic life, threatening democracy and religious freedom. As outlined in *Confronting White Christian Nationalism* (GACEIR, 2025) and the National Council of Churches’ 2022 statement, it:

- Fuses American civic life with a narrow Christian identity;
- Undermines religious liberty and pluralism;
- Promotes white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity;
- Sacrifices gospel truth for political power, often cloaking violence in theological language;
- Dehumanizes and denies the civil rights of immigrants and other marginalized groups.

Christian Nationalism poses a clear and present danger to both faith and democracy. The PC(USA) must respond with confession, courage, and institutional action.

Christian Nationalism Contradicts the Gospel and the PCUSA’s Theological Commitments

Christian Nationalism is incompatible with the gospel. Scripture reveals God’s Kingdom to be a kingdom of love and justice, not domination:

- Jesus brings good news to the poor and liberation to the oppressed (Luke 4:18–19);

- God calls us to justice, kindness, and humility (Micah 6:8);
- The greatest commandment is love of God and neighbor (Matt. 22:37–40);
- In Christ, all are one (Gal. 3:28);
- The church is a diverse, global body (Rev. 7:9);
- Faith must be chosen, not coerced (Josh. 24:15).

Christian Nationalism contradicts these teachings. It commits idolatry by elevating national identity and political power above Christ. It distorts the gospel, divides communities by rejecting the gospel's call to radical inclusion, and abuses religion as a tool for control, rather than a wellspring of love and liberation.

PC(USA) Confessions affirm:

- The **Barmen Declaration** (1934) rejects aligning church loyalty with political ideology;
- The **Confession of 1967** calls us to oppose racism and systemic injustice.
- The **Belhar Confession** (1986) denounces any theology that promotes racial or national superiority;
- **God Alone is Lord of the Conscience** (1988) affirms religious pluralism and separation of church and state
- **A Brief Statement of Faith** proclaims, "We trust in the one triune God... whom alone we worship and serve;"(1991)

Christian Nationalism stands in direct contradiction to these confessions and must be clearly, publicly rejected and actively resisted.

The PCUSA's Witness and Responsibility

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long record of public witness on matters of justice and religious liberty. The General Assembly has affirmed:

- Separation of church and state;
- Religious freedom for all;
- Dismantling structural racism;
- LGBTQIA+ inclusion;
- Protection of immigrants and refugees;
- Opposition to antisemitism, Islamophobia, and gender violence;
- Support for interfaith and global human rights.

Christian Nationalism violates every one of these commitments. Silence now would betray our confessional identity and call to discipleship.

Action Steps Toward Repudiation and Dismantling

1. Public Statement and Theological Clarification

The General Assembly instructs the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Co-Moderators of the 227th General Assembly (2026) to jointly:

- Publish a statement to publicly repudiate Christian Nationalism as a theological error and moral threat;
- Reaffirm the church's foundational theological convictions:
 - God alone is Lord of the conscience;
 - Christ alone is Head of the Church, not any state, party or political leader;
 - Allegiance to Christ surpasses all national or political loyalties;
 - Religious coercion is incompatible with the gospel;
- Issue a theological letter and study guide for sessions, sessions, mid councils (presbyteries, synods), PC(USA)-related theological institutions, and all colleges and universities historically related to the PC(USA), explaining why Christian Nationalism is incompatible with PC(USA) doctrine.

2. Truth-Telling and Confession

Commission a denominational report on the PCUSA's complicity in Christian Nationalism, from colonization and chattel slavery to cultural dominance and civil religion. Issue a call to repentance, repair, and propose an amendment to the Book of Confessions.

3. Public Policy Advocacy

Instruct the Office of Public Witness to monitor and oppose Christian Nationalist legislation, including:

- Religious coercion in public education (eg mandatory Biblical instruction, prayer, or display of religious symbols, etc);
- Reproductive rights restrictions (especially when framed as a Biblical mandate);
- Interference with equity in civic life (eg voter suppression, election disruption, civil rights violations, etc.)
- White supremacist and exclusionary laws targeting marginalized groups such as immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, people of color, women, religious minorities, and other vulnerable groups;
- Religious exemptions to discriminate against LGBTQ+ persons or any other group
- Any legislation justified by "Christian" or "Biblical" grounds
- Anti-Immigrant laws justified by "Christian" cultural identity
- Declaring the U.S. a Christian nation

4. Engages Legal Advocacy

Direct and authorize the Stated Clerk to file or join amicus briefs opposing laws that promote Christian Nationalism or merge state authority with narrow religious ideologies, while defending religious liberty, the separation of church and state, and equal civic participation.

5. Churchwide Education and Dialogue

Launch a national initiative to:

- Equip Presbyterians to recognize and resist Christian Nationalism;
- Foster respectful dialogue across spectrums of beliefs;
- Encourage reflection on civic rituals, demographic shifts, how democracy aligns with Christian values.

6. Theological and Ministerial Education

Require training on Christian Nationalism and its history in this country in seminaries, ordination exams, and clergy continuing education.

7. Public Solidarity with the Vulnerable

Reaffirm commitment to stand publicly with Christ in His support and presence among immigrants, refugees, people of color, Indigenous peoples, LGBTQIA+ persons, non-Christians, women, children, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable, marginalized groups.

8. Amendment to the Book of Order

Direct the Stated Clerk to send the proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote: Insert the following text as a new concluding paragraph to *Foundations of*

Presbyterian Polity → F-1.04054 “The Church and Its Political Context”:

“The church shall not align with any ideology that seeks to privilege Christianity in public life or conflate religious identity with national or ethnic supremacy. Christian Nationalism, in all its forms, which seeks to privilege a singular religious-cultural framework in civic life, is: incompatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ, a theological error, a threat to faithful witness, and contrary to the church.”

This constitutional change would provide theological and structural grounding for the whole PC(USA) – its membership, its ordered ministries, its councils – to resist Christian Nationalism.

Conclusion: For the Sake of the Gospel

Christian Nationalism is not the gospel. It distorts our faith, betrays our confessions, and endangers our neighbors, whom Christ commands us to love. The PC(USA) must speak truth, repent, and act boldly in defense of the gospel and the vulnerable. Now is the time.

Supporting/Resource Materials

- Amanda Tyler, *How to End Christian Nationalism*. BJC, 2022.
- Brian Kaylor and Beau Underwood, *Baptizing America: How Mainline Protestants Helped Build Christian Nationalism*. Chalice Press, 2024.
- GACEIR, *Confronting White Christian Nationalism*. PC(USA), 2025.
- National Council of Churches, *Christian Nationalism Policy Statement*, 2022.
-
- PC(USA), *Facing Racism*, 222nd GA, 2016.
- GA Statements: Immigration, Religious Freedom, LGBTQIA+ Inclusion, Human Rights.
- *Sojourners*, “ICE Quotes the Bible in a New Propaganda Video,” *Sojourners*, July 11, 2025, <https://sojo.net/articles/opinion/ice-quotes-bible-new-propaganda-video>

Supporting/Resource Materials for the Overture

Books

- Amanda Tyler, *How to End Christian Nationalism*. Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty (BJC), 2022.
- Brian Kaylor and Beau Underwood, *Baptizing America: How Mainline Protestants Helped Build Christian Nationalism*. Chalice Press, 2024.
- Jemar Tisby, *The Color of Compromise: The Truth About the American Church's Complicity in Racism* (2019); *How to Fight Racism: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice* (2021).
- Anthea Butler, *White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America* (2021).
- Kristin Kobes Du Mez, *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation* (2020).
- Katherine Stewart, *The Power Worshipers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism* (2020).
- Robert P. Jones, *White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity* (2020); *The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy and the Path to a Shared American Future* (2023).
- Samuel L. Perry and Andrew L. Whitehead, *Taking America Back for God: Christian Nationalism in the United States* (2020).

Reports & Articles

- GACEIR, *Confronting White Christian Nationalism*. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2025.
- National Council of Churches, *Christian Nationalism Policy Statement*, 2022.

- PC(USA), *Facing Racism*, 222nd General Assembly, 2016.
- PC(USA) 222nd, 223rd, 224th General Assembly Statements on Immigration, Religious Freedom, LGBTQIA+ Inclusion, and Human Rights.
- Sojourners, “ICE Quotes the Bible in a New Propaganda Video,” Sojourners, July 11, 2025, <https://sojo.net/articles/opinion/ice-quotes-bible-new-propaganda-video>
- Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) – Reports on Christian Nationalism, Religion & Politics, Race, and Democracy. <https://www.prri.org>

Church Documents

- The Book of Confessions. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- Book of Order: 2023–2025 Edition. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Organizations & Websites

- Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) – prri.org
- Faithful America – faithfulamerica.org
- Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty (BJC) – bjconline.org
- Christians Against Christian Nationalism – christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org

Narrative for 2026 Final Read Proposed Budget

The Budget and Finance Committee, in concurrence with the PLM Leadership Team, presented the First Read of the 2026 Budget at the September 13, 2025, Stated Meeting.

The designated email address: bnfmoderator@lakemichiganpresbytery.org was publicized as part of the Narrative for the First Read of the 2026 Budget. This address was publicized in the e-digest and in communications sent to Clerks of Session and members of the presbytery. Everyone was requested to use this email and to put their comments or questions in written form and submit them by October 06, 2025. No questions or comments were received by that date.

The interlude between the presentation of the First Read of the 2026 Budget and the creation of the Final Draft provided an opportunity to consider some additional information:

Presbytery approval, at September 13, 2025 Stated Meeting of a 0.0 % per capita increase for 2026 leaving the 2025 Presbytery of Lake Michigan per capita of \$ 27.76 the same for 2026. (General Assembly per capita and Synod of the Covenant per capita are set by actions of those bodies).

September 13, 2025, adoption of Terms of Call as recommended. The minimum for those receiving cash salary plus housing allowance was established at \$58,352 for 2026 as compared to \$ 56,740 for 2025. This represents a 2.84% increase.

The announcement by the Social Security Administration that Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits will increase for 2026 was delayed by the government shutdown. Usually, this information is a significant factor in making recommendations to the PLM. It could not be considered at the October 14, 2025 Budget and Finance Committee meeting.

The Budget and Finance Committee affirmed the use of 2.84 % as the cost-of-living increase for individual salary purposes. (c.f. pages 12 and 13 of First Read Narrative)

The B&F committee affirmed the desirability of presenting the budget as detailed in the First Read. As a reminder, we observe that the 2026 budget includes \$230,086 from Reserves. Since 2019 it has not been necessary to use money from the reserves. (c.f. page 10 of First Read Narrative)

The B&F Committee prepared a Final Draft of the 2026 Budget, and this Narrative for consideration and endorsement by the Leadership Team which met on November 6, 2025.

Recommended to Stated Meeting- December 02, 2025

The Budget and Finance Committee recommends no changes to the First Read of the 2026 Budget.

The 2026 budget reflects the reality that ours is a unified budget with multiple sources of income for our ministry together and it is a budget that can facilitate our ministry together.

Thank you for your support of our joint ministries, it affirms that we are a connectional denomination. Participation in Shared Mission giving, and robust commitment to per capita are vital to the ministries of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan bringing hope and light to our communities.

Recommended to Stated Meeting- December 02, 2025

					Presbytery of Lake Michigan	
					2026 Proposed Budget	
					<i>Stated Meeting December 02, 2025</i>	
	SUPPORT AND REVENUE	Proposed	Adopted	Adopted	Adopted	Adopted
		Budget 2026	Budget 2025	Budget 2024	Budget 2023	Budget 2022
	PER CAPITA					
	GA Per Capita	\$ 92,884	\$ 94,059	\$ 89,366	\$ 96,973	\$ 92,341
	Synod Per Capita	\$ 28,047	\$ 29,502	\$ 29,637	\$ 31,996	\$ 33,420
	Presbytery Per Capita	\$ 228,992	\$ 240,874	\$ 246,213	\$ 255,970	\$ 251,934
	Current Year Uncollectable	\$ (15,000)	\$ (15,000)	\$ (15,000)	\$ (15,000)	\$ (15,000)
	Per Capita Total	\$ 334,923	\$ 349,434	\$ 350,216	\$ 369,940	\$ 362,695
	SHARED MISSION					
	Presbytery Shared Mission	\$ 130,750	\$ 137,250	\$ 152,500.00	\$ 152,500	\$ 137,250
	G.A. Shared Mission	\$ 85,500	\$ 85,500	\$ 95,000	\$ 95,000	\$ 85,500
	Synod Shared Mission	\$ 2,250	\$ 2,250	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,250
	Shared Mission Total	\$ 218,500	\$ 225,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 225,000
	OTHER INCOME					
	Joy Foundation-Detroit Presbytery	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000
	Interest on Land Contract		\$ -	-	\$ -	-
	Investment Income	\$ 127,497	\$ 107,807	\$ 90,602	\$ 80,428	\$ 86,694
	Synod of Covenant for Higher Education	\$ 6,324	\$ 5,112	\$ 6,324	\$ 6,324	\$ 6,170
	GW Land Sales -Congregations	*	*	*	\$ 5,710	\$ 6,278
	GW Land Sales -Youth	*	*	*	\$ 6,472	\$ 6,475
	GW Land Sales- Unrestricted	*	*	*	\$ 3,370	\$ 3,335
	Monies from Project participants	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 16,500
	Transformation Grant			-		
	* per Stated Meeting 2022 12 6 decision					
	Other Income Total	\$ 157,821	\$ 136,919	\$ 120,926	\$ 126,304	\$ 137,452
	TOTAL ALL INCOME	\$ 711,244	\$ 711,353	\$ 721,142	\$ 746,244	\$ 725,146

	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 941,330	\$ 920,550	\$ 893,197	\$ 878,443	\$ 891,256	
	INCOME - EXPENSES	\$ (230,086)	\$ (209,197)	\$ (172,055)	\$ (132,199)	\$ (166,110)	
	ANTICIPATED FROM RESERVES	\$ 230,086	\$ 209,197	\$ 172,055	\$ 132,199	\$ 166,010	
	EXPENSES						
		Proposed	Adopted	Adopted	Adopted	Adopted	
		2026	2025	2024	2023	2022	
	ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT TEAM						
	Administration	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	
	Overture & Amendment Review	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 100	
	Policy & Proceedure Committee	\$ 10,100	\$ 10,100	\$ 15,100	\$ 100	\$ 100	
	Records Preservation	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	
	Session Records Review - mileage	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 600	\$ 300	
	Staff Search	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 10,000	
	Administration & Support Total	\$ 12,700	\$ 12,700	\$ 17,700	\$ 1,800	\$ 11,100	
	BUDGET & FINANCE						
	Administration	\$ 500	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 750	
	Financial Audit/Review	\$ 8,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 8,500	\$ 6,000	
	Budget and Finance Total	\$ 9,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 9,500	\$ 6,750	
	CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM						
	Administration	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	
	<i>Commission on Ministry</i>						
	Administration	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 1,500	
	Admin Commissions		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
	Advertising interim/small church pos.	\$ -				\$ 1,000	
	Background Screening	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	
	Child Care @ Stated Meetings	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	
	Clergy Counselling	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,500	

	COM Retreat/training	\$ 1,000	\$ 500				
	Emergency Aid/ Ministers	\$ -			\$ 2,000	\$ 1,500	
	Sabbatical Assistance	\$ 2,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000		
	Scholarships for Interim Training	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000		\$ 2,000	
	Validate Minister's Luncheon	\$ 500					
	Mission Insite Software	\$ 6,000					
	sub-total COM	\$ 17,500	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	
	<i>Mediation Committee</i>	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 315	\$ 1,000	\$ 500	
	<i>Response Committee</i>	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100	
	Vital Congregations Initiative **						
	Admin/Misc/contact w National Office	**	**	**	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,700	
	Cong Development- hosting	**	**	**	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,000	
	Community & Congregational- Surveys	**	**	**	\$ 2,500	\$ 7,000	
	Facilitator Training Conference	**	**	**	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,000	
	Facilitator Travel & cohort meetings	**	**	**	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,500	
	Materials and Resources- study guide	**	**	**	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,000	
	National VCI Allocation	**	**	**			
	** Now part of Matthew 25 Initiative						
	sub-total VCI	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,500	\$ 24,200	
	Congregation & Worshiping Comm Support	*	*	*	\$ 5,710	\$ 6,278	
	* per Stated Meeting 2022 12 6 decision						
	Kalamazoo North			\$ -		\$ 10,050	
	Korean Ministry ***				\$ 14,200	\$ 8,000	
	*** moved to Mission & Outreach						
	Cong Initiative and NWC	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000				
	Matthew 25 Initiatives	\$ 33,500	\$ 33,500	\$ 33,500	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	
	Ministry Connections	\$ -	\$ 3,800				
	Congregational Support Total	\$ 59,600	\$ 58,400	\$ 46,415	\$ 66,010	\$ 80,628	

	DYNAMIC LEADERS TEAM						
	Administration	750	750	750	\$ 750	\$ 750	
	Cohort Groups						
	Encouragement Project	100	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100	
	Service to Retirees	300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 250	\$ 250	
	sub-total Cohort	400	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 350	\$ 350	
	Justice Ministries	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	
	LeaderWise partner- Synod of Covenant	\$ 9,200	\$ 8,200	\$ 6,500		\$ 750	
	Leadership Development	\$ 5,100	\$ 5,100	\$ 6,400	\$ 6,400	\$ -	
	Liturgy Development Workshops	\$ 1,000	\$ 3,000				
	Presbytery Worship Group	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 1,200	
	<i>Preparation for Ministry Commission</i>						
	Administration	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 600	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	
	Candidates/Vocational Counsel/Asses	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,200	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	
	Candidates Ordination Exams	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
	Candidates/Inquirers Retreat	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	
	Candidate/Inquirer/Educator Travel	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 800	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
	Financial Assistance	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	
	sub-total CPM	\$ 11,500	\$ 11,500	\$ 11,100	\$ 11,500	\$ 11,500	
	Resource Center	\$ 4,200	\$ 4,200	\$ 4,200	\$ 4,200	\$ 4,500	
	Scholarships for continuing Educ	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000		
	Youth Activities. Montreat/Plunge/Trienniu	\$ 17,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 13,380	\$ 10,000	\$ 46,000	
	Youth Ministry & Scholarships	*	*	*	\$ 6,472	\$ 6,475	
	* per Stated Meeting 2022 12 6 decision						
	Dynamic Leaders Total	\$ 63,650	\$ 62,650	\$ 57,230	\$ 54,172	\$ 76,525	
	LEADERSHIP TEAM						
	Administration	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	
	Leadership Team Retreat	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 300	
	Moderator's Conference	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	

	GA Meetings and Retreat	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500			
	Presbytery Retreat	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,500	
	Leadership Team Total	\$ 7,000	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 5,800	
	MISSION & OUTREACH TEAM						
	Administration	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	
	G. R. Area Campus Ministries	\$ 20,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	
	Kazoo United Campus Ministries	\$ 20,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 29,600	
	U-Kirk Ministries (Lansing)	\$ 20,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	
	Korean Ministry	\$ 20,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 18,000			
	Ministry Sub-Total	\$ 80,500	\$ 76,500	\$ 72,500	\$ 54,500	\$ 66,100	
	Pres. Disaster Assistance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Mission and Outreach Total	\$ 80,500	\$ 76,500	\$ 72,500	\$ 54,500	\$ 66,100	
	NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	300	\$ 300	
	PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	
	Officers and Staff Salaries	\$ 399,500	394,540	\$ 383,049	\$ 371,892	\$ 352,222	
	Operational Expenses	\$ 100,100	\$ 89,850	\$ 85,200	\$ 87,000	\$ 78,100	
	See attachment for Detail						
	TOTAL PLM EXPENSES	\$ 732,650	\$ 709,240	\$ 676,694	\$ 651,974	\$ 677,825	
	Per Capita - General Assembly	\$ 92,884	\$ 94,059	\$ 89,366	\$ 96,973	\$ 92,341	
	Per Capita - Synod of the Covenant	\$ 28,047	\$ 29,502	\$ 29,637	\$ 31,996	\$ 33,240	
	GA- Shared Mission	\$ 85,500	\$ 85,500	\$ 95,000	\$ 95,000	\$ 85,500	
	Synod - Shared Mission	\$ 2,250	\$ 2,250	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,250	
	TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET	\$ 941,330	\$ 920,550	\$ 893,197	\$ 878,443	\$ 891,156	

Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Balance Sheet at 9/30/2025

ASSETS:	
Cash	35,854.52
General Investments:	
Investments - New Covenant Trust Mgmt. Fund	3,140,050.42
Investments - John Knox Memorial Fund	928,631.82
Investments - Investment & Loan Program	50,255.16
	<u>4,118,937.40</u>
Other Investments:	
Investments - Presbyterian Foundation - Sp. Assistance	48,458.05
Endowment - Presbyterian Foundation - Niger	71,067.35
Endowment - Presbyterian Foundation - Nicaragua	71,067.35
Escrow Account - Westminster of Jackson	300,731.20
	<u>491,323.95</u>
Total Cash & Investments	4,646,115.87
Accounts Receivable Per Capita	101,795.25
Fixed Assets - Original Cost less Depreciation	<u>2,584.33</u>
Total Assets:	<u>4,750,495.45</u>
LIABILITIES:	
Accounts Payable	22,962.80
Escrow Account - Westminster of Jackson	300,731.20
NET ASSETS:	<u>4,426,801.45 *</u>
TOTAL LIAB & NET ASSETS:	<u>4,750,495.45</u>
*Fund Balances:	
Unrestricted:	
Non-Designated:	
Operating Surpluses Prior Years:	484,605.99
Operating Surpluses YTD:	402,184.14
John Knox Memorial Fund	589,574.95
Church Dissolutions	1,308,282.20
Undesignated Funds	674,815.31
Presbtery Operating Cash Reserve	200,000.00
Total Non-Designated:	<u>3,659,462.59</u>
Designated:	
Congregational Vitality & Justice	81,448.63
Triennium Reserve Fund	110,091.91
Designated Church Dissolution Grants:	
Creative Ministries Grants	150,000.00
Church Dissolutions Grants	70,000.00
Mergers/Unions/Joint Witness Grants	48,000.00
John Knox Disaster Relief	45,000.00
Mental Health Ministry Grant	5,200.00
Misc. Designated	(3,901.75)
Total Designated:	<u>505,838.79</u>
Total Unrestricted:	<u>4,165,301.38</u>
Restricted:	
John Knox- Nicaragua	64,876.58
John Knox- Niger	64,876.58
Special Assistance Endowment Fund	47,233.40
Other Temporarily Restricted	84,513.51
Total Restricted:	<u>261,500.07</u>
Total Net Assets:	<u>4,426,801.45</u>

Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Summary of Operating, Designated and Restricted Funds
For the Year-To-Date Ended September 30, 2025

PLM Operating Fund:			Annual Budget
Support and Revenue		9/30/2025	2025
Per Capita	\$	364,434	\$ 364,434
Presbytery Shared Mission	\$	84,439	\$ 137,250
Investment and Other Income/Receipts	\$	428,557	\$ 136,919
Current Year Uncollectible	\$	-	\$ (15,000)
Transfer In	\$	-	\$ 209,198
Total Support and Revenue:	\$	877,430	\$ 832,801
Expenses:			
<i>ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT TEAM</i>	\$	1,321	\$ 12,700
<i>BUDGET & FINANCE</i>	\$	6,700	\$ 7,500
<i>CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM:</i>			
Administration	\$	-	\$ 500
Commission on Ministry	\$	2,498	\$ 12,500
Cong Initiative and NWC	\$	-	\$ 5,000
Mathew 25 Initiative	\$	-	\$ 33,500
Mediation Committee	\$	-	\$ 3,000
Ministry Connections	\$	-	\$ 3,800
Response Committee	\$	-	\$ 100
<i>DYNAMIC LEADERS TEAM:</i>			
Administration	\$	-	\$ 750
Encouragement Project	\$	-	\$ 100
Justice Ministries Group	\$	-	\$ 5,000
Leadership Development	\$	200	\$ 5,100
LeaderWise Partnership-Synod	\$	-	\$ 8,200
Liturgy Development Workshops	\$	-	\$ 3,000
Presbytery Worship Team	\$	3,438	\$ 6,500
Preparation for Ministry Commission	\$	1,589	\$ 11,500
Resource Center	\$	1,291	\$ 4,200
Scholarships for Continuing Education	\$	-	\$ 3,000
Service to Retirees	\$	-	\$ 300
Youth Activities/Montreat/Plunge/etc.	\$	(2,079)	\$ 15,000
<i>LEADERSHIP TEAM</i>	\$	-	\$ 6,500
<i>MISSION & OUTREACH TEAM:</i>			
Administration	\$	-	\$ 500
Campus Ministries	\$	57,000	\$ 76,000
<i>NOMINATING/REPRESENTATION</i>	\$	-	\$ 300
<i>PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION</i>	\$	-	\$ 300
Officers and Staff	\$	231,604	\$ 394,540
Office Operations	\$	76,836	\$ 89,850

**Summary of Operating, Designated and Restricted Funds
For the Year-To-Date Ended September 30, 2025**

PLM Operating Fund:

	Annual Budget	
Other Expense	\$ -	\$ -
Per Capita - General Assembly	\$ 72,179	\$ 94,059
Per Capita - Synod of the Covenant	\$ 22,669	\$ 29,502
Total Expenses:	\$ 475,245	\$ 832,801
Operating Revenue (Deficit) Over Expenses:	\$ 402,184	\$ -

Other Assemblies' Shared Mission Receipts:

GA Shared and Other Missions	\$ 164,289	\$ 85,500
Synod Shared Mission	\$ 5,130	\$ 2,250
Total Other Assemblies' Shared Mission Receipts:	\$ 169,419	\$ 87,750

Other Assemblies' Shared Mission Disbursements:

GA Shared and Other Missions	\$ 164,414	\$ 85,500
Synod Mission	\$ 5,130	\$ 2,250
Total Other Assemblies' Shared Mission Disbursements:	\$ 169,544	\$ 87,750

Designated & Restricted Fund Activity:

Revenue		
Candidates Scholarship Offerings	\$ 1,000	\$ -
Church Dissolutions	\$ 537,936	\$ -
Congregational Vitality & Justice	\$ 10,000	\$ -
J. Knox Missionaries - Nicaragua & Niger	\$ 3,795	\$ -
Peacemaking Offering-Presbytery	\$ 2,208	\$ -
Planning Clntrs/BksOrder/Outlook	\$ 2,869	\$ -
Special Assistance Endowment Fund	\$ 1,294	\$ -
Offerings - Presbytery Meetings	\$ 2,752	\$ -
Grants	\$ 7,500	\$ -
Two Cents A Meal	\$ 2,659	\$ -
Youth Activities	\$ -	\$ -
Various Other	\$ -	\$ -
Total Designated & Restricted Revenue:	\$ 572,013	\$ -

Expenditures:

Church Dissolutions	\$ 27,964	\$ -
Congregational Vitality & Justice Grants	\$ 14,070	\$ -
Disaster Relief - John Knox Memorial Fund	\$ 5,000	\$ -
GA Grants	\$ 3,000	\$ -
J. Knox Missionaries - Nicaragua & Niger	\$ 3,795	\$ -
Offerings - Presbytery Meetings	\$ 1,555	\$ -
Planning Clntrs/BksOrder/Outlook	\$ 3,635	\$ -
Special Assistance Endowment Fund	\$ -	\$ -
Total Designated & Restricted Expense:	\$ 59,019	\$ -

Total All Revenue/Receipts:	\$ 1,618,862	\$ 920,551
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Total All Expenditures/Disbursements:	\$ 703,809	\$ 920,551
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**Summary of Operating, Designated and Restricted Funds
For the Year-To-Date Ended September 30, 2025**

PLM Operating Fund:

Annual Budget

Total Rev Over/Under Expenses:

\$	915,053	\$	-

*Presbytery financial statements are based on modified fund accounting. Per capita revenues are accrued and uncollectible amounts are netted against the accrued per capita revenue.



Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Presbyterian Church [U.S.A.]

**2026 Budget Narrative
Stated Meeting
December 2, 2025**

Presbytery of Lake Michigan 2026 Proposed Budget

(Approved by LT on November 6, 2025)

Narrative Overview of Proposed 2026 Budget

I. Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals

The 2026 Presbytery of Lake Michigan (PLM) Budget is designed to reflect the mission, vision, values, and goals of the institution.

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan (PLM) 2026 Budget reflects the Strategic Plan adopted by the Presbytery in 2018. The plan established the following goals:

1. *PLM will work to **strengthen relationships** between*
 - a. *the Presbytery and its congregations*
 - b. *the Presbytery and its minister members*
 - c. *the Presbytery and Sessions*
 - d. *congregations*
2. *PLM will **resource and support congregations** for healthy and vital ministries.*
3. *PLM will develop and support **healthy and dynamic leaders** for congregations and validated ministries.*
4. *PLM will **fulfill its other responsibilities** mandated in G-3.03 in the Book of Order,*

II. Ministry Context

Ministry has been, and is taking place within our Presbytery through congregations, campus ministries, local and regional partnerships, and through the work of the Presbytery. The shape and delivery mechanisms for many of the component parts of our ministry changed during the pandemic and they continue to change as we adapt to provide ministry in a post-pandemic environment that continues to evolve.

Technology plays an increasingly important role in ministry. Every level of ministry, from the local to the global, has increased its use of technology. But ministry is by, for, with, and to people. In budgeting for 2026, we face the challenge of attempting to discern what ministry will look like in 2026 and what resources (human and financial) will be available to facilitate ministry.

Effects of Board of Pensions (BoP) decisions related to coverages and costs for the benefit plans that cover many of our church's employees which began in January 2025 are becoming

increasingly apparent. During 2025 certain adjustments to the roll out were made by BoP, the net effect of these adjustments are yet to be determined.

Some initiatives, like the Matthew 25 initiative, that were approved by the presbytery in the last few years will need additional or reallocated resources.

The First Read of the Proposed Budget 2026 is our best attempt to consider all the factors that affect our ministry together.

III. Societal Context

- A. A politicized atmosphere in our society contributes to diminished trust. The potential of working together to meet challenges has been and continues to be threatened by apathy and/or acrimony. Ascription of bad motives to those with whom we disagree regarding political, social, or ecclesiastical issues exacerbates diminished trust and threatens the ability of the connectional church to provide the ministry necessary in our world.
- B. American society continues to develop heightened awareness of how racism, privilege, injustice, structural oppression, and apathy are interrelated. This heightened awareness of the pervasiveness of racism within North American society and the injustices fueled and perpetuated by racism calls for a response by the Presbytery of Lake Michigan contextualized to our local or regional ministry setting.
- C. Societal anxiety is fed by uncertainty regarding the longer-term effects of COVID on human health and our society. We are uncertain regarding longer term impact of the changes that became part of our daily lives.
- D. Angst caused by violence, and especially gun violence, shows itself in our cities, small towns, and rural areas.
- E. Debates and initiatives regarding US citizenship and immigration have led to distress and uneasiness for many.
- F. Fear of war and terrorism has increased within the ministry context of the Presbytery.
- G. Economic uncertainty is fueled by stock market volatility, supply chain issues, fears of recession, and the potential for economic disruption brought on by international political unrest or upheaval.

IV. Our Presbytery Context

- A. The Presbytery enjoys stable executive leadership by the Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence, Executive Presbyter/ Stated Clerk.
- B. In person attendance for most of our congregations has declined significantly from pre-covid levels.

- C. Many of our congregations now report participation in virtual worship. For some this is a convenient way for shut-ins, for those whose health is compromised, or for those who are seasonal travelers to participate. For others who have moved away it affords the opportunity to worship with a congregation with whom they have historic ties.
- D. Some of our congregations are experiencing growth from members who have joined because of dissatisfaction with the stance and practices of their former less inclusive congregation/denomination.

E. Presbytery Revenues through June 30, 2025

1. Per Capita receipts were \$ 230,996
 - This is 63.38 % of the annual per capita expected.
 - Last year the percentage received at this time was 65.75%.
 - As of June 30, 2025:
 - 33 congregations paid their annual per capita in full
 - 9 congregations paid 50-99% of their per capita
 - 7 congregations paid between 1% and 49%
 - 10 congregations had not paid anything YTD.
2. Shared Mission receipts were \$ 54,430 compared with \$59,120 last year at the same time. \$ 54,430 represents 39.66 % of the 2025 PLM Shared Mission budgeted amount.
3. Presbytery Operating expenses YTD through June 30, 2025, were \$ 333,236 compared with \$354,300 for a similar period in 2024.

F. Limitations of Human Resources

1. Our Presbytery continues to shrink:
 - a) Membership reported in 2020 was 10,283,
2021 was 9,845,
2022 was 9,119
2023 was 8,677
2024 was 8,249
 - b) Annual losses range between 4.26% and 7.37% since 2020.
 - c) Membership reported for 2000 was 21,690 compared to 8,249 in 2024.
Stated differently, PLM's 2024 membership was 38% of what it was in 2000.
2. In the 2024 annual report cited above: 13 congregations reported a gain in membership with a total gain of 76 members (Four of our larger congregations with over 300 members accounted for 47 of the 76 members), 4 congregations reported the same number of members in 2024 as they did in 2023, 43 congregations reported loss of membership.
3. The median age of most of our congregations is much older than it was in 2000. Recent PLM statistics show that 43.08% of our members are over 71 years old.
4. The human resources for ministry and service are dwindling in most of our congregations and certainly within our presbytery.

5. As a result of this dwindling pool of human resources, congregations and the presbytery are vying for service from a smaller pool of persons.
6. The structure of the presbytery has been shrinking. But even with a smaller structure we often cannot fill the necessary positions in our structure with qualified and willing individuals. The Nominations & Representation Committee has repeatedly noted this problem in its communications with the Leadership Team and with the Presbytery at large.
7. Expenses for maintaining the organization do not contract at the same rate as the loss of members.
8. Budget & Finance and Leadership Teams believe that moving toward a more simplified structure assists in addressing the issues mentioned above but it does not solve the problem.

F. Effects on Revenue of the Continuing Decline in Participation

1. Congregational attendance (and sometimes support) may come from non-members.
 - a. A ten-year decline in average attendance from nearly 50% to 37% of membership was evident pre-pandemic.
 - b. As previously noted, most of our congregations' report that in person attendance is markedly less than attendance was pre-pandemic. In 2024 some congregations reported that non-members participated virtually in worship or small groups and contributed financially to the ministry. The longer-term effect of on-line/virtual worshippers on annual revenue is unknown currently.
2. Per Capita revenues are influenced by rate increases and the number of members:

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2024</u>
GA Budget	\$ 108,115	\$ 89,366
GA Per Capita	\$ 6.50	\$ 9.80
GA Actual Receipts	\$ 104,500	\$ 79,777
 Synod Budget	 \$ 54,057	 \$ 29,637
Synod Per Capita	\$ 3.25	\$ 3.25
Synod Actual Receipts	\$ 52,251	\$ 26,445
 Presbytery Budget	 \$ 235,178	 \$ 246,213
Presbytery Per Capita	\$ 14.50	\$ 27.00
Presbytery Receipts	\$ 233,115	\$ 222,304

3. Shared Mission financial experience can be summarized in this snapshot:

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2024</u>
GA Actual Receipts	\$ 161,005	\$ 207,884
Synod Actual Receipts	\$ 9,063	\$ 2,970
Presbytery Receipts	\$ 286,920	\$ 119,664

- G. Legitimate ministry needs and opportunities within the communities served by our congregations and worshipping communities far outstrip the Presbytery's ability to resource all those ministry opportunities. This reality has been discussed within Presbytery committees for at least the last eight years. This reality was formally brought to the attention of the Presbytery in September and December of 2019 through the Narratives accompanying the 2020 Budget that warned of likely reduction in monies allocated to ministry partners in the future. The PLM budgets adopted for each year 2021 through 2025 could not support all the ministry requests that were submitted. And this reality is also true for the 2026 Budget.
- H. The challenges faced by our Presbytery are common to many presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. While accumulated resources may vary, all of them are facing the realities that current giving cannot sustain the breadth and scope of historical ministries and/or development of new ministries as may have been true in the past.

V. Sources of Revenue for Budget 2026

The anticipated sources of revenue for the 2026 Budget include:

- Presbytery Per Capita
- Presbytery Shared Mission
- Other income
- Grant monies from PCUSA affiliated entities
- Financial reserves held by Presbytery of Lake Michigan

Note: The amounts for Synod and the General Assembly Per Capita and Shared Mission are a "pass through" in the 2026 Budget. That is, they show up both as revenue and as expense in the budget.

The expectation of the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) is that each presbytery will pay the full OGA per capita for all its congregations regardless of whether individual congregations pay their full per capita amount. The practice of the PLM has been to send in the amount that it collects from the congregations. The projected revenue and projected expenses for these items are the same in the 2026 Budget.

The GA meeting in July 2024 approved a per capita of \$ 10.84 for 2025 and \$11.26 for 2026. This translates into a 10.61 % annual increase for 2025 and a 3.87 % annual increase for 2026.

The Synod of the Covenant Trustees approved a Per Capita for 2025 of \$ 3.40 as compared with the 2024 per capita of \$ 3.25. This translates to a 4.62% annual increase. The Synod Trustees approved a Per Capita for 2026 in the amount of \$ 3.40.

A. Presbytery Per Capita

The 2026 Budget, as recommended and attached, assumes a Presbytery Per Capita of \$ 27.76

This represents an increase of \$ 0. This amounts to an annual Per Capita increase of 0.0%.

Please note that as membership decreases the per capita amount would need to increase by the same factor as the membership loss to provide the same number of dollars as in the previous year. Membership losses in the past year exceeded 4.95%. Budget and Finance and the Leadership

Team are recommending a budget that includes a slight increase in the amount taken from reserves recognizing that the PLM received monies from the closing of one of our congregations in 2025.

The Per Capita for the Presbytery was \$23.00 for the 2020 and 2021 Budgets. In 2022 it was \$24.50, and \$26.00 for 2023, and \$27.00 for 2024, and \$ 27.76 in 2025. Please note that it would require a Presbytery Per Capita of over \$ 60.00, if we did not use financial reserves or our “Other Income” to balance the budget.

B. Snapshot of Per Capita Increases

Per Capita	2024 Amount	2025 Amount	2026 Amount	Percentage Change
GA	\$ 9.80	\$ 10.84	\$ 11.26	3.87 %
Synod	\$ 3.25	\$ 3.40	\$ 3.40	-0- %
Presbytery	\$27.00	\$ 27.76	\$ 27.76	-0- %
Total per Capita	\$40.05	\$42.00	\$42.42	1.0 %

Please note that the Per Capita amounts for the GA and the Synod of the Covenant are set by those respective bodies and are not subject to change by individual presbyteries.

C. Shared Mission

Shared Mission recommended for 2026 reflects the specific receipt experience during the last few years. The PLM has seen the following decline in its annual Shared Mission receipts:

2020	\$142,870
2021	\$185,354
2022	\$140,305
2023	\$135,670
2024	\$119,664

While many of our congregations contribute to Shared Mission, well over half of them do not inform us of their intent to do so. While we are grateful for their participation, it does make accurate projection difficult. For some congregations the level of participation depends on whether there is money available after all local needs are met.

Shared Mission is the tangible expression of the connectional nature of the relationship within the PCUSA, our Synod, and our Presbytery.

D. Other Income

- Joy Foundation denotes monies received from an endowment administered by the Presbytery of Detroit.
- Investment Income- The amount of Investment Income projected each year is based on a formula using a 12-quarter rolling average applied to the Presbytery’s unrestricted assets. The 2026 applicable factor is 4.5% of the Presbytery’s unrestricted assets, this is the same formula as used for each year from 2022 through the 2025 budgets. We are aware that some congregations and institutions use higher or lower factors. In a time of economic uncertainty this figure represents a factor that Budget and Finance can endorse.

- Synod of the Covenant -Higher Education
The Synod returns part of the monies we send to it in the form of support for Higher Education. In 2022 the PLM received \$6,582. In 2023 the PLM received \$ 5,112. This was the amount budgeted for 2025. However, in 2024 the PLM received \$ 8,527 (apparently a bit of catch-up). The amount recommended for the 2026 Budget is \$ 6,324 as was the case in 2023 and 2024.
- Land Sales – Youth *
- Land Sales – Congregation *
- Land Sales - Unrestricted *
* In the past this included allocation of specified monies received from some of the Presbytery’s Greenwood Properties as delineated in the Presbytery’s December 2018 decision. On December 06, 2022, the Presbytery approved a recommendation to change that decision. The First Read of the 2026 Budget reflects that decision.

E. Reserves to Balance

The PLM’s unrestricted reserves as of June 30, 2025, were \$ 4,105,682 which includes \$ 3,608,691 of non-designated funds. Recently designated funds are described below.

At its December 05, 2023, Stated Meeting, the PLM approved a recommendation to designate funds for the support of vulnerable congregations. The monies which come from the sale of property of dissolved congregations were designated in the following amounts: \$70,000 for Dissolutions, \$50,000 for Mergers/Unions/Joint Witness, \$150,000 for Creative Ministries for Vulnerable Congregations.

Funds designated to each area are to be replenished, if possible, from the sale of property of congregations that may be dissolved in the future.

The PLM’s restricted funds as of June 30, 2025, were \$258,578.

For the past six years, the Presbytery has approved monies from the Financial Reserves to balance the budget, if necessary. In 2019 the amount was \$226,057; in 2020 it was \$155,787; in 2021 the amount was \$93,504, in 2022 it was \$ 166,010, in 2023 it was \$ 132,199, and in 2024 the amount was \$ 172,055. In none of those years did we take monies from Financial Reserves. A combination of factors contributed to this, including actual expenses which were lower than projected, income from grants that were not budgeted, appreciation of PLM investments, the PPP loan and forgiveness program, and the effect of the pandemic in limiting some programming.

In the current year, 2025, the amount budgeted from reserves is \$ 209,197; we wait to see if it is necessary to use some or all this money this year.

The amount budgeted from financial reserves in the 2026 budget is \$ 230,086.

Net Asset History

	PLM Net Assets as of 12/31
2015	\$ 1,077,408
2016	\$ 1,118,881
2017	\$ 1,144,643
2018	\$ 1,848,445
2019	\$ 2,213,997

2020	\$ 2,320,449
2021	\$ 2,520,812
2022	\$ 2,206,177
2023	\$ 3,588,141
2024	\$ 3,522,749
2025	as of 6/30 were \$ 4,364,260.

[Note: These are snapshots of value. Market volatility affects the value each day.]

The pattern of assets listed above remained relatively constant for the years 2019 through 2022 until the assets showed a large increase in 2023. This increase was largely due to the receipts from the sale of properties associated with the following dissolved congregations: Tustin Covenant, Lansing Mount Hope, Grand Rapids, Eastminster. The PLM also had an unrealized gain YTD on December 31, 2023. As noted above, the PLM made decisions in December 2023 regarding use of some of the monies derived from sale of properties.

The economic uncertainty noted under “III. “Societal Context” impacts the formation of the 2026 Budget. We believe there is a possibility that in 2025 the PLM will dip into its financial reserves.

We recognize the market value of our assets could increase, decline, or remain stagnant. The value of our assets on June 30, 2025, increased from January 01, 2025. The market performance of the PLM investments varied during this period, but monies received from the sale of our church buildings contributed to the increase in asset value. These and other factors were weighed by the Budget and Finance Committee in preparing the First Read 2026 Budget.

VI. The Role of the Presbytery

The Presbyterian Church (USA) is governed by councils. The councils are The Session, The Presbytery, The Synod, and the General Assembly.

A brief overview of the responsibilities of each presbytery is furnished in the Book of Order:

The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).

(Excerpt G-3.0301)

The presbytery has responsibility and power to:

- a. provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.
- b. provide that the Sacraments be rightly administered and received.
- c. nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ.

The presbytery fulfills its mandated functions in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, the Commission on Ministry, Commission on Preparation for Ministry, Judicial Commission, Office of the Stated Clerk, Committee on Nominations and Representation, Trustees/Budget & Finance Committee, maintaining ecumenical relationships, and maintaining relationships with the Synod and the General Assembly.

The presbytery's mandated tasks focus on assisting congregations in their efforts in fulfilling the mission of the church; presbyteries have the latitude to conduct their own programs as needed and as resources are available. The Budget and Finance Committee and the Leadership Team have focused on resourcing the mandated tasks first and then resourcing other ministries as monies are available.

VII. Continuity and Change

When presenting the 2020 Budget, the Leadership Team and the Budget & Finance Committee outlined the following course of action:

The Leadership Team and the Budget & Finance Committee share a commitment to using wisely and prudently the monies entrusted to the Presbytery. This involves investing the monies into ministry programs that will help fulfil the goals adopted by the Presbytery.

It also means that their intent is that the Presbytery will use unrestricted asset reserves to supplement annual income in order to accomplish its ministry goals for at least the next four years while aiming to retain adequate unrestricted reserves for the years of 2024 and following.

This year's budget reflects that commitment and continued movement toward that announced goal.

Projected income and ministry expenses for 2026 assume a movement to a "new normal." Projections are an art form and not a science; the recommended 2026 Budget represents the best efforts of the artists on the Leadership Team and the Budget & Finance Committee.

Narrative Related to Various Areas of Budget

Please note that the budget was created following a review of all ministry areas using submitted Ministry Action Plans (MAPS).

Administration and Support Team

The budget totals in this area reflect:

- A. The 2026 budgeted allocation for search is for possible support staff replacement(s) should that become necessary.
- B. Customary expenses for most areas of administration.
- C. Continuation of 2024 and 2025's increase in costs for conducting the mandated reviews of Session minutes. The importance of investing time and energy in these reviews to assist in alerting the Presbytery to difficulties in congregational practices has become evident in the last few years.
- D. Continuation of allocation to line item for policies and procedures for mandated anti-racism training because of an amendment to the Book of Order adopted by the General Assembly.

Budget & Finance Committee

The budget totals in this area reflect the anticipated costs for an Audit be done in 2026 on the 2025 financials. The Presbytery has an audit performed every three years with Financial Reviews in the two other years. (An audit was last performed in 2023 on 2022 financials.)

Congregational Support Team

The 2026 Budget recommendation reflects:

- A. The Commission on Ministry budget represents a shift in some line items for COM along with an increase of \$500 for a training retreat for COM leaders and purchase the software package (Mission Insite) at the cost of \$ 6,000 to assist congregations in identifying ministry opportunities, and a line item was added to provide a luncheon for those involved in validated ministries.
- B. Vital Congregational Initiative is eliminated as a separate line item as VCI is subsumed as part of the Matthew 25 Initiative. (See comments on “H” below)
- C. The Mediation Committee’s budget remains the same as requested and approved for 2025 and reflects the Committee’s plans to address some of the systemic issues that confront female pastors in conflict situations.
- D. The Response Committee budget remains the same as the 2025 budget.
- E. No funding in the line item titled “Congregational and Worshipping Communities Support” reflects the decision of the Presbytery in December 2022 to alter previous practice.
- F. Kalamazoo North was reduced in 2023 per their request for 2023 to reflect a shift in how the “Togetherness Group” Coordinator is compensated. North did not submit a request for funding in 2024, 2025, or 2026.
- G. Korean Ministries – This ministry was moved structurally to “Mission and Outreach” to reflect the reality that this ministry is a combination of campus and congregational ministry.
- H. The line item titled “Congregational Initiative and New Worshipping Communities” was added in the 2025 budget to provide support for unique initiatives and NWC that may arise as congregations explore new opportunities in a changing ecclesiastical environment. The same amount is proposed for 2026.
- I. The PC(USA) Mission Agency now links Vital Congregations, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty under the Matthew 25 rubric. At the December 2021 Stated Meeting the Presbytery of Lake Michigan voted to become Matthew 25 Presbytery. The monies allocated for Matthew 25 help provide the necessary resources to the Presbytery, its congregations, and its ministry partners for these commitments to be implemented.
- J. The line item titled “Ministry Connections” was added to the 2025 Budget. This ministry would meet the expressed need to bring together leaders to think and speak together about the “new normal” for ministry; and would celebrate the great things happening in validated ministries and congregations with the goal of making connections between similar ministries. We believe this need can be met through weekly zoom connections facilitated by Presbytery staff.

Dynamic Leaders Team

The 2026 Budget recommendation reflects:

- A. The Team Administration budget remains the same as in previous years.
- B. Support for the Cohort groups remains at the same level as in previous years.

- C. The allocation of monies for Justice Ministries to assess involvement of local congregations in work of justice ministries and to link, train, and help them access resources for the work of justice remains at the same level as in the 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 budgets.
- D. A partnership with LeaderWise provides training for ruling elders, pastors, and congregational leaders utilizing both in person and virtual learning modules. This reflects the vision articulated in Goal Number 3 for the PLM. And it reflects the expressed need for training and education within our congregations.
- E. Leadership Development utilizes an alternative source to provide training for ruling elders, pastors, and congregational leaders utilizing both in person and virtual learning modules. This reflects the vision articulated in Goal Number 3 for the PLM. And it reflects the expressed need for training and education within our congregations. The level of support remains at the same level as in the previous two years.
- F. There is a line for training congregational members who provide liturgical leadership. This is a response to a need that has been called to the Presbytery's attention. This initiative is done in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.
- G. Presbytery Worship budget was increased in 2023 to reflect the movement to in person presbytery meetings which entails increased travel expenses for guest preachers and/or keynote speakers. The recommended amount for 2026 is consistent with projected needs.
- H. The Commission on the Preparation for Ministry (CPM) 2026 budget is configured to reflect the needs of CPM.
- I. Resource Center remains at the same level as budgeted for 2025.
- J. The "Scholarships for Continuing Education" budgeted amount remains the same as in the 2025 budget, reflecting anticipation that leaders will again be attending in person sessions and/or enrolling for virtual learning in 2026.
- K. Activities, Montreat/Plunge/Triennium. The recommended budget provides support for Montreat, urban plunge and other currently planned youth activities as requested by Youth Strategies. The Presbytery has a Triennium Reserve, and the Trustees approved up to \$35,000 to come from the Triennium Reserve Fund in 2025 for this once every three-year event.
- L. Youth ministries and youth scholarships- The lack of monetary recommendation for 2026 reflects the decision of December 2022.

Leadership Team

The 2026 Budget recommendation for Leadership Team reflects anticipated needs in each area for 2026.

Mission & Outreach Team

The 2026 Budget recommendation reflects:

- A. The level of support for each Campus Ministry is reflective of our commitment to recognize the importance of these ministry efforts balanced with prudent use of financial resources consistent with the adopted goals of the Presbytery. It also reflects a decision to provide Presbytery financial support for each of them at the same level of financial support irrespective of location or history of support.
- B. The recommended amount for each ministry was increased for the 2025 budget from the 2024 level. The recommended amount for 2026 reflects an increase of \$1,000 for each campus ministry, or about a 5.26 % increase.

- C. Korean Ministries – This line item was moved from Congregational Support to this location in 2024 because this ministry is a combination of campus ministry and congregational ministry. The level of support was increased at that time to move them to parity with other campus ministries.
- D. “Presbyterian Disaster Assistance” is not budgeted for 2026 because the Presbytery has monies available for disaster assistance in a fund designated for that purpose which it received as part of the disposition of the John Knox properties.

Nomination & Representation Committee

This committee is critical to our functioning as a Presbytery. The recommendation reflects their expressed needs for 2026.

Permanent Judicial Commission

These monies are budgeted each year with the hope that this commission will not be pressed into use.

Personnel/ Staff Narrative

Budgets are established reflecting the positions expected to be filled at the time the budget is established. They do not represent contracts or monies to be paid to the individuals filling the positions. A termination of employment may lead to a shift in responsibilities or duties either increasing or decreasing an individual’s compensation. Staff responsibilities may be shifted to reflect competencies and changes in availability. As needs change, the staffing positions or competencies may change to reflect that reality. The recommendations for 2026 reflect the increasing dependance of technology and the services provided to our congregations to utilize technology. The recommendations also reflect the need for staff members to fulfill certain necessary functions as the number of qualified and available volunteers continues to decrease.

Salaries for Officers and Staff Salaries are presented as a single line item in the First Read 2026 Budget. The specific 2026 compensation rates for staff members will be set by those having supervisory responsibilities following a review of 2025 performance and delineation of expectations for 2026. This is consistent with the patterns established in many of our larger congregations and in many not-for-profit organizations.

Called Staff positions and compensation packages are approved by the Presbytery at the time the nominated leaders are presented for approval. The approved position descriptions indicate, “The supervision, review, and adequacy of compensation (of these positions) shall be reviewed by Leadership Team at least annually.” At the PLM’s Stated Meeting in December 2025 compensation recommendations will be presented to the body for the Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk, and the Treasurer.

The money for these salaries is included in the “Officers and Staff Salaries” line item along with monies for other staff positions.

The 2026 First Read Budget includes a \$4,960 increase for the Officers and Staff Salaries.

- The increase reflects a 1.26 % increase in this line item as compared to last year’s budget.
- Estimates for this year’s Social Security increase expected to be announced in October 2025 predominately range between 2.57 % and 3.0%.
- Composite look at over 1500 surveyed employers showed average salary increase budgets for 2026 to be 3.5 %.

- July 15, 2025, the Bureau of Labor Statistics released its June 2025 Consumer Price Index which showed its “all items index” rose by 2.7% over the previous 12 months.

The anticipated Staff configuration for 2026:

- Executive Presbyter/ Stated Clerk – Full-time called position with health and pension benefits.
- Bookkeeper – 12-16 hours per week.
- Associate Clerk – Full time position with benefits.
- Technology/Communication Support Manager – 20-24 hours per week.
- Treasurer – Salaried for 15 hours per week.
- Commission on Ministry Support – part time – 10 hours per week.
- Assistant to the Executive Presbyter – 80 hours per quarter plus additional hours as approved by Executive Presbyter at rate less than the minimum TOC rate for 2025. (Hours are primarily expended in staffing Administrative Commissions and/or dealing with Presbytery real estate matters. The future need for these hours is impossible to predict. The monies come from the sale of PLM properties.)

The Budget & Finance Committee and Leadership Team recognize that the Presbytery of Lake Michigan is a service organization with many similarities to school systems in which salary costs represent a significant portion of the budget. It also looks at data from our congregations.

Each year the congregations within the presbytery return information to the Stated Clerk related to finance. This data is compiled for all the congregations of the Presbytery. Please note that the data referenced below was collected for fiscal 2021. The format for 2022, 2023, and 2024 reporting did not include personnel costs as a separate category, so we had to rely on historical data from 2021 which was:

	Total for PLM Congregations
Annual Expenses	\$ 11,333,304
Personnel Costs	\$ 6,739,973
Personnel as % of total	59.47 %

The Personnel Expenses in the 2026 Budget as proposed would constitute 54.53% of the PLM Budget.

Operations Narrative

The Operations Budget for 2026 increased by \$ 10,250 reflecting experience in 2024 and through June 30, 2025, as well as anticipated need for 2026.

Administrative Commissions

Tracking costs associated with various administrative commissions. These costs are distinct from those which are related to the sale of Presbytery property for dissolved congregations.

Building Maintenance/Lease

Budget reflects lease costs and anticipated maintenance costs.

Building Utilities

Projected based on usage and utility rate increases.

Communications & Technology

First Read 2026 Proposed Budget Narrative
Stated Meeting September 13, 2025

Reflect changes in needed technology.

Computer Support

Reflects experience of 2019-2024 and YTD 2025.

Contract Service (payroll, recording clerk, other)

Reflects known and anticipated costs.

Congregational Connection/Directory/Software links for this service

Reflects known and anticipated costs.

Depreciation -Building and equipment

Equipment Acquisition

Reflects on-going needs to upgrade equipment and/or purchase new equipment.

Equipment Repair and Maintenance

Budgeted amount appears adequate based on history.

Fees and Service Charges

Budgeted amount based on history.

Insurance - Comprehensive

Reflects anticipated costs based on experience.

Insurance - Workers' Comp

Based on experience and anticipated participation.

GA Meeting and Retreat

Operational Expense involving General Assembly participation.

Governing Body Meeting Expense

Participation in Governing Body meetings when commissioners or staff members are delegated, requested, or instructed to attend.

Professional Expenses

These are predominately legal expenses incurred by the Presbytery. Proposed amount is reflective of 2019-2024 experiences, YTD 2025, and anticipated expenses for 2026.

Moderator/Vice Moderator Travel Expenses

Travel for Moderator/Vice Moderator in performance of official duties.

Moderator Training Expenses

Costs associated with education and training to serve in these functions.

Postage

Projected expense based on experience.

Supplies

Reflects experience.

Telephone/ General

Projected expense based on experience.

Website and email contact expense

Projected expense based on experience.

Vouchered Expenses

Projected expense based on experience and anticipated need.

Other Expense

Unclassified or miscellaneous expenses.

The 2026 Budget as presented is an investment in the Presbytery's collaboratively developed ministry priorities. It reflects the goals and priorities established by the Presbytery in 2018 and follows the trajectory of assumptions and commitments previously communicated to and approved by the Presbytery in the adoption of the previous annual budgets.

It reflects a best effort at faithful stewardship of the gifts and ministries that God has entrusted to the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

Recommendation to September 13, 2025, Stated Meeting that:

The 2026 Per Capita for the Presbytery of Lake Michigan be set at \$27.76

During the Stated Meeting on September 13, 2025, the First Read Proposed 2026 Budget, and its Narrative will be presented to the body with limited time for questions and comments.

Those desiring to gain clarification or to comment on the Budget and the Narrative are invited to submit comments or questions via email sent to bnfmoderator@lakemichiganpresbytery.org. **Please direct all questions and comments to this address and not to another email address for any member of the Budget and Finance Committee.**

Presbytery of Lake Michigan
2026 Terms of Call
Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence, Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk

Organization: Presbytery of Lake Michigan Name:

Beverly Frances Lane-Lawrence Effective Date:

January 1, 2026

Position: Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk, Head of Staff

Indefinite Period: X Full Time: X

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan feels called by the Holy Spirit to extend a call and promise you support and encouragement in your ministry position. The presbytery promises and obliges itself to provide the following annual compensation as Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk, Head of Staff:

I. Total Effective Salary

A. Cash Salary	\$40,223
8. Housing/Utilities/Furnishing Allowance	\$60,000
C. Employing organization contributions to 403(b)	\$12,000
D. Other allowances: N/A	
E. Manse amount (if applicable)	\$ N/A
F. TOTAL ANNUAL EFFECTIVE SALARY	\$112,233

Total of lines A-E

Full Medical Coverage and Pension up to 30%

Medical Coverage & Medical/Prescription Reimbursement	\$20,000
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Board of Pensions Dues:	\$11,234
Covenant Package (pension, death/disability, Temporary disability, employee assistance 10% of the effective salary)	

II. Vouchered/Reimbursable Expenses and Allowances

A. Travel - IRS rate prevailing at the time the expense is incurred. Yes

2025.December

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| B. Professional development | \$4,500 |
| C. Spiritual development/retreat | \$1,000 |
| D. SECA offset | 50% |
| <i>(50% or less - SECA offset greater than 50% MUST be included in calculating Effective Salary)</i> | |
| E. Books/other professional expenses (minimum - \$300) | \$1,000 |
| F. Other voucher/reimbursable expenses and allowances:
(Identify and list amounts) | |
| Cell Phone | Reimbursed portion of family plan |

III. Non-monetary terms of call:

- A. Forty (40) days of paid vacation, including six (6) Sundays
- B. Fourteen (14) days of Personal Spiritual Renewal, including two (2) Sundays, and is cumulative for 3 years
- C. Twenty-one (21) days of professional development time, including four (4) Sundays, and is cumulative for 3 years.
- D. Follow PLM Policy of Family and Medical Leave (B-08)
- E. Follow PLM Guidelines of Sabbatical Leave (C-608)
- F. Time to serve on GA, Synod committees, Presbytery boards or community organization boards.

("In addition to these pastoral duties, they are responsible for sharing in the ministry of the church in councils higher than the session and in ecumenical relationships".) G-2.0504 Pastoral Relationships, Book of Order

The Presbytery further promises and obliges itself to review the adequacy of this compensation on an annual basis

_____. Date: _____
Staff Person

_____. Date: _____
COM Representative

_____. Date: _____
Leadership Team Representative

2025 December

**Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Anti-Racism Policy
December 2, 2025**

(To Be Presented to the PLM at the December 2, 2025 Stated Meeting)

Preamble

This policy is a statement of who we are and what we stand for. We believe in the sacred worth of all people and the value of diverse experiences and identities in the body of Christ. We seek to dismantle racism and white supremacy in all forms—personal, institutional, and systemic because we are called by Jesus to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. This is not only about what we reject, but about the beloved community we are actively building.

Theological Grounding

As a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Presbytery of Lake Michigan affirms that all people are created in the image of God and are beloved members of God’s family. We affirm the unity of the body of Christ across race, ethnicity, gender, culture, age, ability, and geography, and we root this work in Scripture: “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” — Galatians 3:28

“God does not show favoritism.” — Acts 10:34

We draw from F-1.0403 of our Constitution: “The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.”

Acknowledgement and Lament

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan acknowledges:

- The legacy of colonization, enslavement, and systemic racism that undergirds the institutions of this nation, the church, including the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.
- The ways we, as a body, have been complicit through silence, inaction, or participation in unjust systems.
- That white supremacy, structural racism, and implicit bias remain embedded in our ecclesial, social, and institutional life.
- That we stand on the unceded ancestral lands of Indigenous peoples, including the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Miami, and others who were displaced by colonial expansion and whose history has been marginalized.

- We lament the ongoing suffering and generational trauma caused by these systems, and we commit to a posture of humility and repentance as we seek justice.

Commitments to Action

In order to live into our baptismal calling and resist systems of injustice, the Presbytery of Lake Michigan commits to:

Formation and Education

- Providing regular antiracism and cultural humility training for presbytery staff, council members, and committee leaders.
- Incorporating diverse theological voices, especially BIPOC scholars, in our educational resources, liturgy, and programming.
- Promoting the use of Matthew 25 and Facing Racism resources throughout the presbytery.

Representation and Power-Sharing

- Ensuring diversity in leadership and nominations by partnering with the Presbytery's Committee on Nominating and Representation.
- Reviewing our structures and practices to eliminate barriers to participation for underrepresented voices.

Community Partnership and Public Witness

- Collaborating with mid councils and congregations engaged in antiracism ministry.
- Publicly naming and opposing racial injustice, including voter suppression, police brutality, economic disparity, and environmental racism.
- Lifting up the voices and leadership of those most impacted by injustice in our advocacy and witness.

Financial Stewardship and Reparative Action

- Committing to reparative financial practices, including support for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-led ministries.
- Expanding vendor and partnership relationships to include businesses owned by historically marginalized people.
- Exploring participation in initiatives like Restorative Actions that address wealth disparities rooted in systemic racism.

Accountability and Implementation

- This policy will guide the work of all Presbytery committees and initiatives.
- An annual review of progress will be conducted by the Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk and the Committee on Nominating and Representation, with the findings reported to the Presbytery.

- Complaints of racism or racial discrimination within the Presbytery's jurisdiction will be addressed promptly, transparently, with discretion and openness, and in keeping with our polity and values of justice and equity.

Closing Affirmation

We confess that the road to justice is long and requires persistence, courage, and grace. We embrace the call to build an intercultural church where all gifts are welcomed, all people are valued, and the love of Christ compels us to act boldly for justice.

“Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” — Amos 5:24



Craig Kunkle Biography

Craig Kunkle grew up and lived most of his life in upper state New York with his four sisters and one brother. He received his Master's of Divinity from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 2000. His wife, Rev. Viktoria Berlik, was ordained in the Reformed Church in Hungary before transferring her membership to PCUSA. He has two adult children and two cats who stayed in New York. He has 25 years of experience as a Christian Educator and Youth Director, serving APCE as the North East Connector, PCUSA POINT person, and serving on the communication and resource team. He is also a longtime member of PYWA. Craig has served the church at the Presbytery, SYNOD, and National levels of the PUCUSA as a volunteer. He enjoys swimming, biking, running, hiking in the mountains, and rock climbing.

Craig Kunkle's Statement of Faith

I believe God created the world and us humans to be in a covenantal relationship with God, creation, and our fellow human beings. God tells us that the Covenant is "I will be your God, and you shall be my people." God gave us the law to understand what it means to be God's people. While God keeps their side of the relationship, we continue to fall short in keeping our side, which is called **sin**. But even in our state of unrighteousness, God chose to come to us as Jesus Christ, God **incarnate**, the perfect relationship between human and divine, to do what we could not. As Christians, we are called to bring God's presence into the brokenness of the world as Jesus Christ did for us. Through Jesus Christ's perfect faith, Jesus Christ gives us the **gift of Grace**, which saves us from the just end of our sins.

I don't know why this world was created in its finitude, but God, through the life and death of Jesus Christ, has the final word over this creation. God gives us this undeserved gift of Grace so that through that gift, we can focus on doing the work God has always called us to do here on earth. We are called to love God and others, repair relationships, seek justice, and defend the oppressed. We do not have to do this alone. Since Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, we have the Holy Spirit, God with us, to lead us.

The Holy Spirit equips and empowers God's people to do God's work. The **Church**, led by Jesus Christ, is where God's faithful people join together in relationship with one another and God, and through the **Holy Spirit**, hear God's Word, participate in sacraments, and hear God's call to heal all those in need.

The Trinity is a good example of god's diversity and unity. Three fully distinct yet perfectly one, and this perfect community points to God's ultimate end for us to live in a relationship with God and one another. This perfect union also points to our **stewardship of the planet**.

The world is full of injustice, suffering, and brokenness in people's relationships with God and each other. As the Priesthood of all Believers, God calls us to go out and be reconcilers as Jesus has reconciled us to God.

However, we will continue to be separated from God in this world. Although we work to bring the foretaste of God's kingdom here, it will not be realized until Jesus Christ comes again and makes all things new. It is this great hope to which Jesus attests, to which the Church points, and for which we hope.

Scripture is the one true revelation of God and the Trinity. Through the power of the Holy Spirit moving through the community of faith, these texts that point to God's presence with God's people were collected and preserved. But these are not historical documents; through

the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, they become the living Word of God whenever they are faithfully read or preached.

The **Sacraments** are implemented by God and commanded by Jesus Christ to benefit the people of God. They are signs of what God has done, is, and will do both for the individual and within the community.

During the **Lord's Supper**, we, through the power of the Holy Spirit, remember and proclaim everything God has done for us as individuals and all of humanity. We join with Jesus and all Believers in a meal that is always enough through the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit, this meal feeds us spiritually so that we can continue to do God's work in the world, helping those around us and fighting for justice. However, we also look forward to sharing this meal with Jesus in the New Creation.

In **Baptism**, we are sealed to God by the power of the Holy Spirit, dying with the same death as Jesus Christ and united with him in a resurrection like his into a new life and a new way of being. (John 6) Jesus Christ instituted baptism, and we are called into baptism by the Triune God. Baptism unites us as God's people, as the Priesthood of Christ, as the whole Body of Christ, and with God. Baptism is our public proclamation of everything God has done in our lives and our desire to be in a relationship with God and to participate in God's work in the world.

This new way of being sealed to us through baptism is God's call to bring Justice to a broken world in **mission**. We have been reconciled to God despite our broken relationship with him. We are now called to reconcile our relationships with others and help them reconcile with one another and God. We are to walk alongside and build relationships with those who struggle and seek a helping hand. Our mission is to take the "Balm of Gilead" into the wounded world.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATING and REPRESENTATION
DECEMBER 2, 2025
STATED MEETING of the PRESBYTERY of LAKE MICHIGAN (PLM)**

TO REPORT RESIGNATIONS:

- Rev. Laurie Hartzell (HR) from COM, West Region, Class of 2026
- RE Ben Boerkoel (GR Westminster), Nominating & Representation Committee, Class of 2027

TO REPORT NOMINATIONS TO THE NAMED POSITIONS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, or TEAMS

OFFICER APPROVED VIA CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Moderator Presbytery of Lake Michigan 2026

RE Linda Hardenbergh (East Lansing Eastminster)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY TEACHING ELDER COMMISSIONERS

Rev. Steve Kaszar (Concord/Homer First), Class of 2027

Rev. Kristin Stroble (East Lansing Eastminster), Class of 2027

Alternate TE – Rev. David Schell (Jackson First), Class of 2027

SYNOD OF THE COVENANT COMMISSIONER

Rev. Christine Barnes (Retired) Class of 2028

BUDGET AND FINANCE

RE Beth Dyer (Kalamazoo First), Class of 2028

Rev. Kyle Nolan (VM), Class of 2028

COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

RE Bari Johnson (Grand Haven First), Class of 2028

Rev. Brian Madison (Cassopolis United), Class of 2028

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY EAST

Rev. Karen Kelly (Retired), Class of 2026

RE Heather Myer (East Lansing Eastminster), Class of 2028

Nominating Urgent Need: Commission on Ministry (COM) West Region.

Are you a Ruling Elder with a willingness to serve the connectional church? Are you a Teaching Elder who knows a Ruling Elder with a willingness to serve the connectional church? The Nominating & Representation Committee is seeking applicants to serve on COM for the Western region of the Presbytery. Below is more information on the position. The majority of the meetings will be via Zoom, with occasional in person meetings. If you are interested or know a good candidate, please contact one of the members of the Nominating & Representation Committee (contact information at end of the report).

Focus: To develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor counselor to teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian

educators of the presbytery; to facilitate the relations between the presbytery and its congregations, teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian educators; and to settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery where possible and expedient.

Gifts Needed: Able to understand various policies and procedures established by the COM and the congregations within the presbytery.

Meetings: 4th Thursdays at 2:30 p.m. via Zoom

* Note at the September Presbytery Meeting, Elder Ben Boerkoel, (GR Westminster) and Elder Heather Myer, (East Lansing Eastminster) were elected as General Assembly Commissioners, class of 2027. The practice of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan is to seek gender balance for GA commissioners. For all positions, the Nominating and Representation Committee and strive for a balance of Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders, as well as to balance representation by race, geographic distribution, and church size.

REPRESENTATION

The Nominating & Representation Committee, with additional work by the Rev. Dr. Fran Lane Lawrence, Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk, has been discussing ways to support churches who are responding to pressures related to immigrant rights, refugee resettlement, LGBTQ+ support, anti-racism initiatives and economic stresses. If you or your church needs support in these areas, please reach out to Rev. Lane-Lawrence or a member of the committee.

Please note that the PLM website has a page devoted to Anti-Racism Resources. It is under the "Churches" tab and can be directly accessed through this link:

<https://lakemichiganpresbytery.org/churches/antiracism-resources/> If you have resources that have been helpful in the work of anti-racism, please send those along to Rev. Lane-Lawrence. And stay tuned for resource pages for other topics.

NOMINATING AND REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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| • Rev. Lisa Schrott | 318-286-3816 | pastorlisa@okemospres.org |
| • Elder Willye Bryan | 517-449-8279 | entpeople@yahoo.com |
| • Rev. Dr. Ruth Lowry | 616-915-8221 | pastor.ruth.pcusa@gmail.org |
| • Rev. Dr. Fran Lane Lawrence | 269-240-8155
269-381-6337 ext. 802 | flanelawrenceplm@gmail.com |