

## Provisional Minutes

### Tenth Stated Meeting of the New River Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church

**October 3-4, 2025**

**Reynolda Church, Village Campus**

2200 Reynolda Road

Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27106

#### **Friday, October 3, 2025**

#### **Learning Focus: NRP Identity**

As the New River Presbytery begins its fourth program year, it seemed wise to the Holy Spirit and to us to continue spending time intentionally building and developing our identity as a Presbytery, in Christ. To this end we are seeking to focus on what it means for healthy Ruling Elders to be Evangelical, Missional, Reformed, and Presbyterian in a Presbytery that strives to encourage, enable, and equip disciple making churches to plant disciple making churches.

#### **010-01 Call to Order and Prayer**

Moderator Teaching Elder (TE) Glen Holman called the tenth Stated Meeting of the New River Presbytery to order at 1:01 p.m. and opened in prayer.

#### **010-02 Welcome from Host Church**

TE Alan Wright, Pastor of Reynolda Church welcomed the New River Presbytery. He briefly introduced the historic Reynolda Village campus, encouraged the NRP by pointing to God's grace in the lives of Reynolda Church and led the NRP in prayer for the meeting.

#### **010-03 Opening Worship and a Symphony of Prayer**

TE Tom Clymer, Chaplain to the Presbytery lead the Presbytery in its opening symphony of prayer. Dr. Clymer reminded the Presbytery of two key facts:

- 1) Prayer is the chief exercise of faith, our first duty.
- 2) Intercessory prayer is hard work that requires boldness.

The NRP then leaned into the work of prayer for a dedicated season.

#### **010-04 Declaration of Quorum**

Stated Clerk TE Rufus Burton declared a quorum as evidenced by the following record of attendance.

**ACTIVE TEACHING ELDER ROLL (BoG 19-2A1)**

**STATUS**

**RULING ELDER  
COMMISSIONERS**

**Asbury Evangelical Presbyterian Church, West Field, North Carolina**

CP Terry Collins

Present

RE Ronnie Nunn  
RE Richard Warden**Bethel Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Claudville, Virginia**

TE Kevin Easter

Unexcused

Unexcused  
Unexcused**Berry Hill Presbyterian Church, South Boston, Virginia****Vacant (See Below)**

RE Judy Edwards

**Bouldin Memorial Presbyterian Church, Stuart, Virginia**

CP Richard Burnette

Present

Excused

**Buffalo Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, North Carolina**

TE Brian Marsh

Present

RE Chuck Seeger  
RE Janice Hawley**Christ Reigns Presbyterian Church, Winchester, Virginia (Mission Group)**

CP Alan Morrison

Excused

Unexcused

**Cleveland Presbyterian Church, Abingdon, Virginia**

TE Rick Laney

Unexcused

Unexcused  
Unexcused**Downtown Presbyterian Church, Lynchburg, Virginia (Mission Group)**

TE Rich Brown

Present

**Elon Presbyterian Church, Madison Heights, Virginia****Vacant**

RE John Oblinger

**Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Elkton, Elkton, Virginia**

TE Adam Snow

Excused

RE Paul Anderson

TE Dale Hagwood

Present

**Falling Springs Presbyterian Church, Hot Springs, Virginia**

TE Mike Matlack

Present

Unexcused  
Unexcused**First Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Roanoke, Virginia**

Don Hardman (PCMA)

Present

RE Scott Rice  
RE David Smith

**First Presbyterian Church, Eden, North Carolina**

TE Brad Milks	Present	Unexcused Unexcused
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**First Presbyterian Church, Martinsburg, West Virginia**

TE Rufus Burton (Stated Clerk)	Present	RE Joan Van Brunt
TE John W Cushwa	Present	

**FORGE Community Church, Greensboro, NC (Mission Church)**

TE Eric Shipton	Present	Excused
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**Galatia Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Eagle Rock, Virginia**

TE Emily Hook	Present	RE Richard Thompson RE Robin Thompson
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**Greenwood Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Covington, Virginia**

Vacant		Unexcused Unexcused
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**Hope Presbyterian Community Church, Waynesboro, Virginia**

TE Glen Holman	Present	Unexcused Unexcused
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**Hurley Presbyterian Church, Hurley Virginia**

CP Curtis Stacy (Also Roseann)	Unexcused	Unexcused
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**Lebanon Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Greenwood, Virginia**

Philip Rice (Stated Supply)	Excused	Excused
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**Mary's Presbyterian Church, Tazewell, Virginia**

CP Danny Whitt	Unexcused	Unexcused
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**Mebane Presbyterian Church, Mebane, North Carolina**

TE Tom Clymer (NRP/Supply)	Present	RE Shannon Taylor RE Haifa Shahin-Johns RE Rob Latimer
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**Memorial Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, North Carolina**

(Now Operating as FORGE Community Church) See Above

**New Life Presbyterian Church, Salem, Virginia**

TE Camron Smith	Present	Unexcused Unexcused
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**Northminster Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Madison Heights, Virginia**

TE David Garrison	Present	RE John Lange
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**Norton Presbyterian Church, Norton, Virginia**

TE Michael Porter	Unexcused	Unexcused Unexcused
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**Piedmont Presbyterian Church, Callaway, Virginia**

TE Brown Caldwell (Supply)	Present	Unexcused
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**Princeton Presbyterian Church, Princeton, West Virginia**

TE Edwin Pettus	Present	Unexcused Unexcused
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**Providence Presbyterian Church, Nathalie, Virginia**

Vacant		Unexcused Unexcused
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**Restoration Community Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina**

TE Gary McGhee	Excused	RE Andrew Morton
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**Reynolda Church, North Carolina**

TE Alan Wright	Present	RE Marion Blackwell
TE Chris Lawson	Present	RE Michael Comer
		RE Ty Newell
<b>Kernersville, North Carolina</b>		RE John Sumanth
CP Barrett Johnson	Present	RE Stephen Elmore
<b>Clemmons, North Carolina</b>		
TE Brandon Williams	Present	
<b>King, North Carolina</b>		
TE Chuck Estes	Present	
<b>Iglesia Reynolda, Winston-Salem, North Carolina</b>		
CP Amaury Hernandez	Present	

**River Oaks Community Church, Clemmons, North Carolina**

TE David Beaty	Present	RE Mike Bost
TE Sonny Flowers	Present	RE Danny Parrish
TE Andrew Wild	Present	RE Paul Scott
TE David Holcomb	Present	RE Frank Carter
TE Brian Edmonds	Excused	

**Rivermont Evangelical Presbyterian, Lynchburg, Virginia**

TE David Weber	Present	RE Eric Vess
TE Brett Eubank	Present	RE Bert Murphy
TE Shane Whelan	Present	RE Ben Moomaw

<b>Roseann Presbyterian Church, Roseann, Virginia</b> CP Curtis Stacy (Counted with Hurley)	Unexcused	Unexcused
<b>Slate Mountain Presbyterian Church, Meadows of Dan, Virginia</b> CP Jeff Dalton	Unexcused	Unexcused Unexcused
<b>Stuart Presbyterian Church, Stuart Virginia</b> TE Danny Redman	Present	RE Ann McConnell
<b>Thompson Valley Presbyterian Church, Tazewell, Virginia</b> CP Danny Whitt (Counted with Mary's EPC)	Unexcused	Unexcused Unexcused
<b>Walker's Creek Presbyterian Church, Marion, Virginia (Extinct)</b>		
<b>Walker's Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Pamplin, Virginia</b> TE Robert Barnett	Present	RE John Goin
<b>Warm Springs Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Warm Springs, Virginia</b> TE Marty Fields	Excused	Unexcused Unexcused
<b>Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bluefield, West Virginia</b> TE Jonathan Rockness	Present	Unexcused Unexcused
<b>Westminster Presbyterian Church, Burlington, North Carolina</b> TE Powell Sykes	Present	RE Kathy Sykes RE Jeff Holt
<b>Woodside Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Roanoke, Virginia</b> Evan Grey (Candidate Under Care)	Unexcused	Unexcused
<b>Wylliesburg Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Wylliesburg, Virginia</b> TE Peter Smith (Supply)	Excused	RE Barry Rakes
<b>Teachers (BoG 9-5B)</b> (None)		

**Evangelists (BoG 9-5C)**

TE Chris Haynes (Missionary PRMI Europe)	Excused
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**Administrative Members (BoG 9-5D)**

(None)

**Chaplains (BoG 9-5E)**

(None)

**Serving Outside the Boundaries (BoG 9-6)**

TE Rob Buchanan ( <i>RUN</i> Ministries)	Excused
TE Andy Koesters (Families Alive)	Present

**Transitional Pastor Teaching Elders (BoG 19-2A1)**

TE Benjamin Williams	Excused
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**Pastors Without a Call (BoG 19-2A1)**

(None)

**Retired Teaching Elders (Active) (BoG 19-2A2)**

TE Brown Caldwell (Counted with Piedmont)	Present
TE Bucky Hunsicker	Excused
TE Lowell Sykes	Excused
TE Barry Tucker	Present

**Associate Teaching Elders (BoG 19-2B1)**

TE Marina Gopadze	
TE Laura Spangler	Present

**Inactive (BoG 19-2B1)**

(None)

**Retired Teaching Elders (Inactive) (BoG 19-2B3)**

TE Clarence Brown	
TE Michael Brown	
TE Peter Smith (Counted with Wylliesburg)	
TE Robert Smith	
TE David Wood	

**Teaching Elders Under Sanction (BoG 19-2B)**

Two

**Officers of the Presbytery (BoG 19-3)**

TE E Pettus	Moderator	Present*
TE A Koesters	Missional Director	Present*
TE R Burton	Stated Clerk	Present*
Mr B. Kanode	IT Director	Present
TE B Eubank	Treasurer	Present*

\*(Counted with their ministry above)

**Candidates / Ministers to be Examined**

TE William Catoe	EPC PPNW
Timotheus Global-Worker	Westminster Church, NRP
Luke Dozier	Reynolda Church, NRP

**Guests & Observers**

Elizabeth Gibson	Guest	Northampton Church Planting Network
RE Shawn Stuart	Guest	EPCWO
Alma Whitfield	Guest	Myrtle Grove
Jeff Whitfield	Guest	Myrtle Grove
Kim Gravely	Observer	Asbury EPC
Carol Jessup	Observer	Asbury EPC
Michael Khuri	Observer	Asbury EPC
Maelyn Edwards	Observer	Berry Hill
Leigh Edwards	Observer	Berry Hill
Karan Puckette	Observer	Bouldin
Rhonda Burnette	Observer	Bouldin
Giselle Caldwell	Observer	Cleveland
Steve Hall	Observer	Downtown Presbyterian
Barbara Hardman	Observer	First EPC Roanoke, VA
Andrew Mitchell	Observer	First Church, Columbia SC ARP
Josh Hanson	Observer	Gateway Church
Jeff Overstreet	Observer	Mebane
Brian Johns	Observer	Mebane
Kathy Clymer	Observer	Mebane
Mary Meijboom	Observer	Pilot Mountain
Bert Meijboom	Observer	Pilot Mountain
Barbara Pettus	Observer	Princeton
Bridget Blackwell	Observer	Reynolda
Tom Spangler	Observer	Reynolda
Debbie Elmore	Observer	Reynolda
Carolanne Bost	Observer	River Oaks
Wes Tuttle	Observer	River Oaks
Katherine Tucker	Observer	River Oaks
Jeanette Redman	Observer	Stuart
Theresa Barnett	Observer	Walker's

Susan Holt	Observer	Westminster, Burlington
Lynn Limon	Observer	Westminster, Burlington
Deborah Rakes	Observer	Woodside
Naveed Hameed	Observer	

### Numerical Attendance Summary

	Present	Excused	Unexcused	Total
Teaching Elders (Full Members)	31	5	3	40
Teaching Elders (Retired Active)	2	2		4
Teaching Elders (Associate)	1			2
For Parity	34			46
Ruling Elders	34	6		
Officers of NRP	1			
Commissioned Pastors (counted as REs)	1	2	6	9
Candidates	3			
Guests	4			
Observers	31			
<b>Total in Attendance</b>	<b>107</b>			
Parity Report TE/RE	34/35			

#### 010-05 Election of Moderators-Elect

The NRP Leadership Team nominated RE Marion Blackwell of Reynolda Church to be Moderator-Elect for 2024-2025 and TE Cameron Smith to be the Moderator-Elect for 2025-2026. There were no further nominations from the floor. The Moderator then put the question to the New River Presbytery: Shall RE Marion Blackwell, and TE Cameron Smith be Moderators-Elect for their respective terms?

**Motion was sustained to elect RE Marion Blackwell, Moderator-Elect for 2024-2025 and TE Cameron Smith Moderator-Elect for 2025-2026.**

#### 010-06 Approval of the Docket

Moderator Holman set before the Presbytery a motion to approve the docket.

**Motion was sustained to Approve the Docket**

#### 010-07 Approval of the Minutes of the Ninth Stated Meeting of the New River Presbytery.

Moderator Holman set before the Presbytery a motion to receive the Minutes of the 009 Meeting (5/2-5/3 2025) as they had been corrected.

**Motion was sustained to Approve the Minutes as they had been corrected.**

#### 010-08 Approval of the Minutes of the First Called Meeting of the New River Presbytery.

Moderator Holman set before the Presbytery a motion to receive the Minutes of the 01C Called Meeting (5/19/2025) as they had been presented.

**Motion was sustained to Approve the Minutes as they had been received.**

**010-09 Communications and Referrals**

The Stated Clerk reported to the Moderator that the descending overtures from the 45<sup>th</sup> General Assembly had been received and that the NRP would take up the business referred by the 45<sup>th</sup> Assembly at the 011 Meeting in February of 2026.

**010-10 Introduction of Guests and First Time Commissioners**

Moderator Holman encouraged the presbyters to introduce their guests and for TEs to help introduce any first-time commissioners.

**010-11 Moderator's Report**

Moderator Holman gave a brief report on his work and encouraged the Presbytery to faithful perseverance in evangelistic work. The Moderator concluded his report with prayer.

**010-12 Missional Director's Report**

TE Andy Koesters began by leading the NRP in prayer for the work of the churches. After a brief exhortation from Scripture, The Missional Director explained that **in 2026** there will be an important change to the Church Health Coordinator role and its responsibilities. TE Koesters will continue to be the missional director but will no longer have the title of Church Health Coordinator. **TE Chuck Estes will take on the role of Church Health Coordinator** and will take on the responsibilities of Refocus, Evangelism and Church Health Coach training. The Missional Director will continue to travel around the presbytery for church health purposes and be in charge of the Transitional Pastor segment of church health. This will go into effect in January of 2026. TE Koesters then concluded his report with prayer.

**010-13 Stated Clerk's Report**

TE Rufus Burton began his report with a brief prayer. He then gave the following report:

**A Report of the Findings of the Judicial Commission (The Conclusion of 007-11.A)**

The New River Presbytery, having found Jeffrey D Smith guilty of immorality, imposes the following sanctions:

**Indefinite Suspension:** Whereas you, TE Jeffrey D Smith are guilty by your own confession of the sin of immorality, we, the Presbytery of New River, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, do now declare you

suspended from the exercise of your office until you give satisfactory evidence of repentance.

/s/ TE Danny Redman, Moderator

/s/ TE Bradley A. Milks, Clerk

**B TE Ron Cox** was moved to the retired roll of the NRP on June 1, 2025. (009-18.A4)

**C TE Barry Tucker** was moved to the retired roll of the NRP on June 1, 2025. (009-18.A3)

**D Requiring Action: Piedmont Church**

**The Piedmont Church**, having completed in good order the G.5-10 process in the presence of the named NRP representatives (009-18.A6) officially requests to be released into baptistic independency. The Stated Clerk made the motion, on behalf of the Leadership Team and the Moderator put the question to the NRP.

**Motion was sustained to release the Piedmont Church into baptistic independency.**

**E** Minutes of the Commission to Ordain and Install  
**Christopher D Haynes** as Evangelist Serving as Missionary  
**Hope Community Church, Waynesboro, Virginia**  
11:00 4 May 2025 Waynesboro, Virginia

The Commission, according to the appointment of the Presbytery of New River, met at Hope Community Church, Waynesboro, Virginia with Teaching Elders: Glen Holman, Dale Hagwood, and Ruling Elders: Bob Simmons, Tommy Musselman, and Marty Porter, and was opened with prayer by TE Glen Holman. There was a quorum present. TE Glen Holman was elected as Moderator and TE Dale Hagwood as Clerk. Also sitting with the Commission was RE Kristine Rand (First Church, Norfolk, PC(USA)).

TE Glen Holman presided and led the congregation in a worship service. Dr. Holman preached from a sermon from 2 Timothy 2:1-7, after which TE Dale Hagwood recited the proceedings of Presbytery leading up to this service, and propounded the constitutional questions to both the minister and the congregation. These being answered in the affirmative, Christopher Haynes was ordained with prayers and the laying on of hands of the Presbytery as Evangelist serving as Missionary, agreeably to the Word of God and the form of government. The charge to the Missionary was delivered by TE Hagwood. The service was concluded with the benediction pronounced by the newly ordained Evangelist. The minutes were read and approved, and the commission was adjourned with prayer by TE Holman.

/S/Glen Holman, Moderator      /S/Dale Hagwood, Clerk      4 May 2025

**F      Sessional Minutes Review**

The Stated Clerk gave the following report on the review of Sessional Minutes

<b>Asbury</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Bethel	Not Submitted	
Berry Hill	Not Submitted	
<b>Bouldin</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Buffalo	Not Submitted	
Christ Reigns (Mission Group)		
Cleveland	Not Submitted	
Down Town (Mission Group)		
<b>Elon</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>EPC, Elkton, VA</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>Falling Springs</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>First EPC, Roanoke VA</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
First, Eden, NC	Not Submitted	
<b>First, Martinsburg, WV</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>Galatia</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>Greenwood</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>Hope Community</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Hurley	Not Submitted	
<b>Lebanon</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Mary's	Not Submitted	
<b>Mebane</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>Memorial/FORGE</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>New Life, Salem VA</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>Northminster</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Norton	Not Submitted	
<b>Piedmont</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>Princeton</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Providence	Not Submitted	
<b>Restoration</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Reynolda	Not Submitted	
<b>River Oaks</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
<b>Rivermont</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Roseann	Not Submitted	
Slate Mountain	Not Submitted	
<b>Stuart</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Thompson Valley	Not Submitted	
<b>Walker's EPC, Pamplin</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
Warm Springs	Not Submitted	
Westminster, WV	Not Submitted	

Westminster, NC	Submitted	Reviewed
Woodside	Not Submitted	
Wylliesburg	Not Submitted	

**G 2025-2026 Parity Report**

38 Churches; 1 Mission Church; 2 Mission Groups Sending: 92 REs  
 38 TEs in Pastoral service, 2 Serving Out of Bounds Sending: 40 TEs  
*No Adjustment needed* (40TEs x 2REs = 80 92REs > 80)

**H Important Due Dates**

1. First Lord's Day after the first Monday in January:  
 Ministerial Reports are Due (11 January 2026)  
 "Annual Report on Teaching Elders" <https://epc.org/downloads/>
2. First Lord's Day in February  
 Previous Year Session Minutes are Due (1 February 2026)

TE Burton then encouraged the Elders of the NRP to do all things decently and in order. He concluded his report with a prayer for the peace and good order of the New River Presbytery.

**010-14 Church Alive Team (CDC cf. NRP VII.3.B)**

The Moderator then invited the Church Alive Team to make its report. TE Chuck Estes led the NRP in prayer for the work of church health, church multiplication, and church vitality. After a brief presentation on the committee's work and the progress of God's kingdom in the NRP.

**A Resources for Church Health**

TE Estes re-introduced the presbyters to the various resources available to enable the work of ministry in the NRP. TE Estes made particular mention of the ReFocus Training available to the elders and congregations of the NRP.

**B Resources for Church Multiplication and NRP Networks**

TE Estes spent significant time on the barriers to church planting and encouraged the NRP to pray for the planting of new churches. He spoke with excitement about the growing communities of North Carolina within the bounds of the NRP and encouraged Sessions to think small and start small:

- 1) Small Bible Study groups in a new area.
- 2) Mission focused small groups.
- 3) Established Church supported outreach.

The Chair particularly encouraged the elders to "plant the kingdom" in order to foster its growth. As a part of this work, the NRP now has access to demographic and psychographic data allowing Sessions to better know their communities. The resource is available to Sessions at the heavily discounted price of \$100 through the CAT.

**C Church Vitality**

TE Estes highlighted the work of RE Cathy Sykes and the CAT's work on ReFocus training available to the churches of the NRP. He exhorted the elders to be outward looking in their ministries and encouraged the churches to pursue greater congregational health.

TE Estes then concluded his report with a fervent season of prayer.

## **Break**

### **010-15 World Outreach Committee**

The Moderator gavelled the meeting back into order and invited TE Robert Barnett, Chair of the World Outreach Committee to the podium to give his report. TE Barnett opened his report with prayer and turned the NRP's attention to Psalm 67 and the Psalmist's prayer that all the nations of the earth would know the saving power of the Lord. He then directed the Elders to the written report the Assistant Clerks had distributed.

#### **A Building Missional Culture**

TE Barnett walked the elders through the beautifully printed materials and highlighted the ways in which the NRP can live into its ENGAGE commitments to evangelize the Uzbek and Punjabi peoples. In particular TE Barnett encouraged participation in the KAIROS course and spoke to the ways the at the World Outreach Committee would like to see every congregation in the NRP fully engaged in World Outreach by 2030. The Chair also highlighted the work of RE Marion Blackwood, Moderator-Elect and his work with Advancing Native Missions in their work of fostering native missionaries to unreached people groups. For the bulk of his report, however, TE Barnett introduced three Global Workers who each addressed the Presbytery.

#### **B Shawn Stuart, EPCWO**

The Chair introduced RE Shawn Stuart, who is part of the EPC World Outreach, and specifically tasked with the development and recruitment of the next generation of Global Workers. He pointed to several exciting developments in the Mission Field, and spoke to the powerful movement of God in our world. He also pointed to the newly established Livingstone Award to be awarded to congregations with remarkable engagement in world mission.

#### **C Jeff Whitfield, Greater Europe Mission**

RE Jeff Whitfield spoke about the work of Greater Europe Mission, and his work as a counselor helping to address the pastoral needs of those on the cutting edge of missionary work in Europe, especially to those who work with displaced and traumatized populations.

#### **D Uzbekistan Update**

The Chairman also introduced RE TM a Global Worker in Central Asia, who reported on the ways in which local congregations can engage in working to support the efforts to evangelize Central Asia. His report was welcome and exciting. He closed his portion of the report with prayer for the unreached people of special concern to the NRP.

TE Barnett then thanked the Presbytery for its work in World Outreach and World Mission. He thanked the speakers and concluded his report for the evangelization of the world.

### **Break**

#### **010-16 Order of the Day**

At the invitation of Moderator Holman, TE Alan Wright, Pastor of Reynolda Church led a remarkably powerful study of the importance of Benediction and Blessing. Dr. Wright emphasized the foundational nature of blessing in the Christian life and taught the Elders practical ways to bless and be a blessing.

After the conclusion of his presentation, Reynolda Church made copies of Dr. Wirght's book, *The Power to Bless*, available to the Elders of the NRP, and the Moderator invited TE Wright to close the afternoon portion of the meeting with a benediction and prayer over the evening meal.

### **Dinner Break**

#### **010-17 Evening Worship & Celebration of the Lord's Supper**

At 7:00, in the sanctuary of the Reynolda Church, TE Chris Lawson called the New River Presbytery to worship. During the service TE Powell Sykes, Pastor of Westminster Church, Burlington, North Carolina, and Chair of the Ministerial Committee, preached a sermon on John 8:31-59 entitled, "What is True Freedom." After the sermon and a season of prayer TE Alan Wright presided at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

### **Saturday, October 4, 2025**

#### **010-18 Call to Order and Prayer**

Moderator Holman reconvened the meeting at 8:30 a.m., declared a quorum and opened the session in prayer.

#### **010-19 Morning Devotion**

Timotheus Global-Worker, Candidate for Ministry and member of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bluefield, West Virginia, was introduced by the Moderator and asked to lead the morning devotional exercise. After a brief prayer, Tim preached a devotional sermon from Isaiah 44:1-5, entitled "Water in a Thirsty Land." At the conclusion of his sermon he led the Presbytery in an extended season of prayer for the advancement of God's kingdom.

#### **010-20 Ministerial Committee Report**

At the invitation of the Moderator, TE Powell Sykes, Chair of the Ministerial Committee began his report by leading the Presbytery in prayer for the work of the ministry and

the ministry of the congregations of the NRP. He exhorted the NRP to fully live into an evangelical, missional, Reformed and Presbyterian ministry.

The Chair then gave the NRP two items for information:

**A Ministerial Committee Items for Information:**

- 1 TE Don Hardman** (PCMA) is finishing his contract at **First Evangelical Presbyterian Church or Roanoke**, and the Ministerial Committee using its authorized powers (007-20.F/G.10-7) has agreed to allow the Session of FEPC and Dr. Hardman to determine the convenient end of his Transitional Service.
- 2 Shawn Morrison**, an ordained EPC teaching elder residing within the bounds of the NRP, currently without active membership in a presbytery of the EPC, has been approved by the Ministerial Committee to serve as pulpit supply for the **Elon Presbyterian Church**. As a temporary pastoral relationship this falls under the authorized powers granted by NRP (007-20F/G.10-7). The Rev. Mr. Morrison is scheduled to be examined at the 011 meeting of the NRP in February of 2026.

**B Ministerial Committee Omnibus Motion**

TE Sykes then moved the Omnibus motion on behalf of the Ministerial Committee:

- 1** To excuse those members and commissioned pastors who had requested to be excused because of hard providence: TEs Rob Buchanan, Christopher Haynes, Benjamin Williams, Brian Edmonds, Marty Fields, Gary McGhee, Adam Snow, retirees Bucky Hunsiker, Lowell Sykes, Peter Smith, Stated Supply Philip Rice, and CP Alan Morrison.
- 2** To excuse the sessions that had requested to be excused because of hard providence: Bouldin, FORGE, and Lebanon.
- 3 Scott Whitener**, Candidate under care of the NRP has requested the transfer of his candidacy from the NRP to the Presbytery of Florida, the Caribbean, and Spain, where he now resides as a student at Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando, Florida. (G.11-2H).
- 4 TE Brown Caldwell** is 70 and therefore retired. He, and the Session of Hope Community Church, Waynesboro, Virginia, request the NRP to authorize his call as Transitional Pastor for one year expiring October 2026 (G.14-1D1).
- 5 TE John Cushwa** is 70 and therefore retired. He, and the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Martinsburg, West Virginia, request the NRP to authorize his call as Assistant Pastor for another year expiring October 2026 (G.14-1D1).
- 6 TE Peter Smith** is 70 and therefore retired. He, and the Wylliesburg EPC, request the NRP to authorize his service for another year expiring October 2026 (G.14-1D1).
- 7 TE Benjamin Williams** is 70 and therefore retired. He, and the Forest Hills EPC, where he serves with the concurrence of the Costal Mid-Atlantic Presbytery as *Transitional Pastor* to Forest Hills EPC, request the NRP to authorize his call for another year expiring October 2026 (G.14-1D1).

**8 Authorizing Resolution**

That the New River Presbytery grant the Ministerial Committee authority to process Temporary Pastoral Relationships (G.10-7) for one (1) year, expiring at the 013 Meeting of NRP, October 2026.

**The omnibus motion was sustained.**

**B The Examination of TE William Catoe and Timotheus Global-Worker**

TE Sykes then conducted the examination of **TE William Catoe**, to be transferred from the Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest to the NRP as Stated Supply of the Berry Hill Presbyterian Church (G.10-7A2a), and **Timotheus Global-Worker**, Candidate of the New River Presbytery, to be ordained as an EPC World Outreach Worker (Evangelist serving as Missionary G.9-5C1).

TE Sykes led the NRP in examining **TE William Catoe** and **Timotheus Global-Worker**. They were examined with respect to:

- 1) Their experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ and progress in spiritual growth.
- 2) Theology and Sacraments
- 3) English Bible
- 4) The Book of Order
- 5) The History of the Church and the Reformed Tradition
- 6) The nature and work of the office of Teaching Elder.

TE Catoe and Timotheus took one exception a piece to the *Westminster Standards*, and then explained their exceptions to the Elders. The Moderator then put the question to the body.

**The Motion was sustained to allow TE Catoe's and Mr. Global-Worker's exceptions to the Westminster Standards.**

The Examination was closed, and TE Catoe and Timotheus Global-Worker and their families were excused. The body deliberated and prayed before the Moderator put the question to the body: Shall TE William Catoe and Timotheus Global-Worker be received as Members of the NRP?

**The Motion was sustained to receive TE William Catoe and Timotheus Global-Worker as Teaching Elders of the New River Presbytery.**

**C The Call of TE Elect Timotheus Global-Worker**

- 1 The Ministerial Committee, having assured itself that EPCWO and Pioneers are adequately providing for the worldly needs of TE Elect Global-Worker as a missionary in Central Asia, moved that Timotheus be an Evangelist serving as missionary (G.9-5C.1) with the primary duty of preaching the gospel. Further,

that the NRP authorize TE Elect Global-Worker to administer the sacraments in that role.

**Motion was sustained to call TE Elect Timotheus Global-Worker as Evangelist serving as missionary.**

- 2 An Administrative Commission comprised of:
- 1) TE Jonathan Rockness (Westminster, Bluefield)
  - 2) TE Robert Barnett (Walkers)
  - 3) RE Dave Thomas (Westminster, Bluefield)
  - 4) RE Rick Peacock (Reynolda)
  - 5) RE Larry Emerson (Princeton)

To conduct a service of ordination and commissioning at 5:00 PM on October 5, 2025, in the sanctuary of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bluefield, West Virginia. Further, that the NRP invite TE Dave Thomas (Retired, PSE), and RE Gabriel de Guia (EPCWO) to sit with the commission.

**Motion was sustained to Authorize the named commission to conduct the service of ordination and commissioning.**

**D The Invitation of TE William Catoe to Stated Supply**

To authorize TE William Catoe as Stated Supply to the Berry Hill Presbyterian Church, South Boston, Virginia (G.10-7A2a). TE Catoe authorized to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and to moderate the Session for a definite term from 5 October 2025 through 5 October 2026.

Effective Salary

- A. Annual Cash Salary: \$12,000.00
- B. Housing Allowance: \$36,000.00
- 1) Amount for retirement plan \$4,800 (being 10% of Salary)
- 2) Life Insurance contribution \$216
- 3) FICA allowance ½ SECA upon request
- 4) Reimbursable Accounts
- 5) Automobile Mileage Reimbursement at the current IRA rate.
- 6) Annual Vacation: *Four (4) weeks or One (1) Month*
- 7) Study Leave: *At least Two (2) weeks, cumulative up to Six (6) weeks*

**Motion was sustained to authorize the invitation of TE William Catoe as Stated Supply of the Berry Hill Presbyterian Church was sustained.**

TE Sykes then thanked the NRP for its piety, diligence, and attention. He then concluded his report with prayer.

**Break****010-21 Stewardship Committee Report**

TE Brett Eubank, Chair of the Stewardship Committee began his report by leading the Presbytery in prayer for the work of the Stewardship Committee and for the financial health of the NRP and her congregations. After describing the ways in which the Stewardship Committee was working to advance the cause and purpose of the NRP, TE Eubank gave the following detailed financial report:

**A NRP Per-Member Asking vs. Percentage of Income Comparison (thru 8/31/2025)**

Church	POI 2024	POI YTD 2025	Difference	Projected EOY
Asbury	\$544.00	\$0.00	-\$544	\$544.00
Bethel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Berry Hill				Welcome to NRP
Bouldin Memorial	\$581.64	\$500.00	-\$82	\$1000.00 Increased giving by \$419 annually.
Buffalo	\$3,820.00	\$2,770.00	-\$1050	\$4870.00 Increased giving by \$85 monthly
Christ Reigns (MG)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cleveland	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Elon	\$1,494.00	\$0.00	-\$1,494	\$1,1494.00
Elkton	\$4,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$2,000	\$4,000.00 Semi-Annual - Flat
Falling Spring	\$1,198.00	\$0.00	-\$1,198	\$1,198.00
First EP Roanoke	\$6,522.00	\$0.00	-\$6,522	\$6,522.00
First Eden	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
First Martinsburg	\$1,818.00	\$452.00	-\$1,367	\$1,818.00
Galatia	\$750.00	\$0.00	-\$750	\$750.00
Greenwood	\$1,075.00	\$794.00	-\$281	\$1,075.00
Hope	\$2,200.00	\$1,425.00	-\$775	\$2,850.00 Increased giving by \$162.50 (quarterly)
Hurley	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lebanon	\$1,825.00	\$1,369.00	-\$456	\$1,825.00 Quarterly Flat
Mary's	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mebane	\$4,800.00	\$2,400.00	-\$2,400	\$4,800 Quarterly Flat
Memorial/FORGE (MC)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
New Life	\$781.25.00	\$320.00	-\$462	\$1,278.00 Increased giving by \$503 (annually)
Northminster	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Norton	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Piedmont	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

<b>Princeton</b>	\$1,850.00	\$925.00	-\$925	\$1,850.00 Quarterly Flat
<b>Providence</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Restoration</b>	\$500.00	\$0.00	-\$500	\$500.00
<b>Reynolda</b>	\$13,020.96	\$8,681.00	-\$4,340	\$13,021.00 Monthly Flat
<b>River Oaks</b>	\$23,220.00	\$16,626.00	-\$6,594	\$25,125.00 Increased giving by \$125 (monthly)
<b>Rivermont</b>	\$18,737.61	\$12,981.00	-\$5,756	\$19,472.00 Monthly Flat
<b>Roseann</b>	\$1,000.00	\$750.00	-\$250	\$1000.00 Quarterly Flat
<b>Slate Mountain</b>	\$1,425.00	\$1,425.00	\$0.00	\$1,425.00
<b>Stuart</b>	\$2,625.00	\$2,365.00	-\$263	\$3,150.00 Increased giving by \$131 (quarterly)
<b>Thompson Valley</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$875.00
<b>Walker's</b>	\$1,250.00	\$0.00	-\$1,250	\$1,250.00
<b>Warm Springs</b>	\$2,232.37	\$976.00	\$1,257	\$2,232.00
<b>Westminster, Bluefield</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Westminster, Burlington</b>	\$1,200.00	\$600.00	-\$600	\$1,200.00 Quarterly Flat
<b>Woodside</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Wyliesburg</b>	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$0.00	\$750.00 Annually Flat
<b>Total</b>	\$99,220.00	<b>\$62,104.00</b> 62% of 2025 Budget received	-\$37,116 38% of 2025 Budget still needed	\$105,874.00

**B NRP Balance Sheet (through 8/31/2025)****ASSETS**

<b>Current Assets</b>		<b>8/31/2025</b>	<b>8/31/2024</b>
	Operating: Pinnacle Bank	\$11,147.94	\$21,192.32
	Money Market: Pinnacle Bank	\$41,150.18	\$41,212.92
	CD: Pinnacle Bank	\$107,134.34	\$103,639.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>\$159,432.46</b>	<b>\$166,044.24</b>

**LIABILITIES**

		\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

**EQUITY****Unrestricted Net Assets**

	General Fund	\$47,177.32	\$62,102.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	<b>\$47,177.32</b>	<b>\$62,102.90</b>

**Restricted Net Assets**

	Grace and Mercy Fund	\$2,281.23	\$2,281.23
	Church Development Committee Fund	\$81,814.82	\$81,018.36
	Chaplain Fund	\$575.39	\$575.39
	Missions Fund	\$3,489.67	\$5,513.67
	Missionary Emergency Fund	\$4,576.62	\$4,576.62
	Women's Fund	\$4,352.56	\$4,352.56
	Church Health Fund	\$8,664.85	\$5,623.51
	Emergency Relief Fund	\$7,500.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>Restricted Net Assets</b>	<b>\$112,255.14</b>	<b>\$103,941.34</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Equity</b>	<b>\$159,432.46</b>	<b>\$166,044.24</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Liabilities and Equity</b>	<b>\$159,432.46</b>	<b>\$166,044.24</b>

**C New River Presbytery Income Statement (Through 3/31/2025)**

<b>Account</b>	<b>2025 YTD ACTUAL</b>	<b>2024 YTD ACTUAL</b>	<b>VARIANCE</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Per Member Asking/POI	\$62,103.69	\$64,840.73	-\$2,737.04
Per Member Asking Prior-Year	\$2,713.91	\$2,370.19	\$343.72
Presbytery Offering	\$976.00	\$1,924.09	-\$948.09
Individual Giving	\$0.00	\$375.00	-\$375.00
Church Giving	\$0.00	\$2,750.00	-\$2,750.00
GA Church Health Initiative	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00
Interest Income	\$3,001.02	\$3,046.95	-\$45.93
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$74,794.62</b>	<b>\$81,306.96</b>	<b>-\$6,512.34</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Compensation</b>			
Missional Director Stipend	\$26,000.00	\$26,000.00	\$0.00
Stated Clerk Stipend	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
IT Director Stipend	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Treasurer Stipend	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>\$46,000.00</b>	<b>\$46,000.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Personnel</b>			
Travel-Missional Director	\$3,274.23	\$3,390.30	-\$116.16
Travel-Stated Clerk	\$3,850.33	\$4,502.34	-\$652.01
Office Expense	\$159.90	\$5.08	\$154.82
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>\$7,284.46</b>	<b>\$7,897.81</b>	<b>-\$613.35</b>
<b>Professional Fees</b>			
IT Expenses	\$1,292.83	\$496.17	\$796.66
Treasurer Expenses	\$1,102.92	\$905.61	\$197.31
Liability Insurance (D/O)	\$2,910.53	\$2,869.68	\$40.85
Licenses/Fees	\$581.84	\$593.74	-\$11.90
Bank Fees	\$15.00	\$6.11	\$8.89
<b>Total Professional Fees</b>	<b>\$5,903.12</b>	<b>\$4,871.31</b>	<b>\$1,031.81</b>
<b>Committees/Commissions</b>			
Commissions	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Executive Council	\$2,020.54	\$1,724.88	\$295.66
Ministerial Committee	\$1,100.94	\$936.30	\$164.64
Stewardship Committee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
World Missions (Outreach)	\$3,900.00	\$4,574.70	-\$674.70
Presbytery	\$855.11	\$692.02	\$163.09
General Assembly	\$889.81	\$0.00	\$889.81
<b>Total Committees/Commissions</b>	<b>\$8,766.40</b>	<b>\$7,927.90</b>	<b>\$838.50</b>

<b>Benevolence</b>			
Minister's Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Presbytery Offering	\$877.00	\$1,924.09	-\$1,047.09
Commissioner's Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Benevolence – Other	\$0.00	\$750.00	-\$750.00
<b>Total Benevolence</b>	<b>\$877.00</b>	<b>\$2,674.09</b>	<b>-\$1,797.09</b>
<b>Church Development Committee</b>			
New Church Plant Support	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Church Planter Health Insurance	\$1,151.43	\$0.00	-\$1,151.43
Church Plant Coordinator	\$3,750.00	\$0.00	\$3,750.00
Church Planter <small>Assessment/Coaching</small>	\$200.00	\$1,450.00	-\$1,250.00
CDC Travel	\$1,037.60	\$0.00	\$1,037.60
Church Planting Team Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Church Health Team Travel	\$456.07	\$722.38	-\$266.31
Transitional Pastor <small>Coaching/Training</small>	\$130.00	\$2,980.80	-\$2,850.80
Church Revitalization	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Presbytery Equipping	\$2,504.56	\$0.00	\$2,504.56
<b>Total Church Develop. Comm.</b>	<b>\$14,229.66</b>	<b>\$5,153.18</b>	<b>\$9,076.48</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$83,060.64</b>	<b>\$74,524.29</b>	<b>\$8,536.35</b>
<b>NET INCOME/LOSS</b>	<b>-\$8,266.02</b>	<b>\$6,782.67</b>	<b>-\$15,048.69</b>

Having concluded his report on the current state of the Presbytery's finances and having answered questions. The Chairman then moved the 2026 Budget on behalf of the committee:

#### **D New River Presbytery 2026 Proposed Budget**

<b>Account</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>	<b>2025 (thru 8/31)</b>	<b>2026 Budget</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Contributions – POI/PMA	\$100,000.00	\$64,817.64	\$118,250.00
Contributions – Church	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Contributions – Individual	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
GA Church Health Initiative	\$12,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$12,000.00
Presbytery Offerings	\$2,500.00	\$976.00	\$1,500.00
Interest Income	\$2,500.00	\$2,927.07	\$3,000.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$119,000.00</b>	<b>\$74,720.67</b>	<b>\$136,750.00</b>

**Expenses****Compensation**

<b>Missional Director Stipend</b>	\$39,000.00	\$26,000.00	\$36,000.00
<b>Stated Clerk Stipend</b>	\$18,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$20,000.00
<b>Church Health Coordinator Stipend</b>	\$5,500.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
<b>IT Director Stipend</b>	\$6,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$6,000.00
<b>Treasurer Stipend</b>	\$6,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$6,000.00
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>\$74,500.00</b>	<b>\$46,000.00</b>	<b>\$74,000.00</b>

**Personnel**

<b>Travel-Missional Director</b>	\$5,000.00	\$3,274.23	\$6,000.00
<b>Travel-Stated Clerk</b>	\$6,000.00	\$3,850.33	\$6,000.00
<b>Office Expense</b>	\$500.00	\$159.90	\$250.00
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>\$11,500.00</b>	<b>\$7,284.46</b>	<b>\$12,250.00</b>

**Professional Fees**

<b>IT Expenses</b>	\$1,000.00	\$1,292.83	\$1,000.00
<b>Treasurer Expenses</b>	\$1,500.00	\$1,102.92	\$1,500.00
<b>Liability Insurance (D/O)</b>	\$3,000.00	\$2,910.53	\$3,000.00
<b>Licenses/Fees</b>	\$1,000.00	\$581.84	\$600.00
<b>Bank Fees</b>	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Professional Fees</b>	<b>\$6,500.00</b>	<b>\$5,903.12</b>	<b>\$6,100.00</b>

**Committees/Commissions**

<b>Commissions</b>	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
<b>Executive Council</b>	\$2,000.00	\$2,020.54	\$2,000.00
<b>Ministerial Committee</b>	\$1,500.00	\$1,100.94	\$1,500.00
<b>Stewardship Committee</b>	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
<b>World Missions (Outreach)</b>	\$4,000.00	\$3,900.00	\$5,000.00
<b>Presbytery Meetings</b>	\$2,000.00	\$855.11	\$1,000.00
<b>General Assembly</b>	\$0.00	\$889.81	\$0.00
<b>Total Committees/Commissions</b>	<b>\$10,100.00</b>	<b>\$8,766.40</b>	<b>\$10,100.00</b>

**Benevolence**

<b>Minister's Assistance</b>	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
<b>Presbytery Offering</b>	\$2,500.00	\$877.00	\$1,500.00
<b>Commissioner's Assistance</b>	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
<b>Benevolence – Other</b>	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$750.00
<b>Total Benevolence</b>	<b>\$4,000.00</b>	<b>\$877.00</b>	<b>\$3,000.00</b>

<b>Church Development Committee</b>			
<b>New Church Plant Support</b>	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00
<b>Church Plant Coordinator</b>	\$5,000.00	\$3,750.00	\$5,000.00
<b>Church Planter</b> <small>Assessment/Coaching</small>	\$1,500.00	\$200.00	\$1,500.00
<b>Church Planting Team Travel</b>	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
<b>Church Planter Health Insurance</b>	\$0.00	\$1,151.43	\$4,800.00
<b>CDC (DBA CAC/T) Travel</b>	\$2,000.00	\$1,037.60	\$2,000.00
<b>Church Health Coach Travel</b>	\$2,000.00	\$456.07	\$2,500.00
<b>Transitional Pastor</b> <small>Coaching/Training</small>	\$2,500.00	\$130.00	\$2,000.00
<b>Presbytery Equipping</b>	\$3,000.00	\$2,504.56	\$3,000.00
<b>Dropped in 2026:</b>			
<b>Church Revitalization</b>			
<b>Total Church Develop. Comm.</b>	<b>\$26,500.00</b>	<b>\$14,229.66</b>	<b>\$31,300.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$133,100.00</b>	<b>\$83,060.64</b>	<b>\$136,750.00</b>
<b>NET INCOME/LOSS</b>	<b>-\$14,100.00</b>	<b>-\$8,339.97</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

After explaining the proposed budget, and answering specific questions, the moderator opened the floor to debate the budget. At the conclusion of debate, the Moderator put the question to the Elders, shall the NRP adopt the proposed budget?

**The Motion to Adopt the Proposed 2026 Budget was sustained.**

TE Eubank then concluded his report with prayer.

### **BREAK**

#### **010-21 Westminster Standards Equipping Time**

The Moderator reminded the NRP of the relevance of the *Westminster Standards* for encouraging, equipping, and enabling disciple making churches to plant disciple making churches. TE Rufus Burton, the Stated Clerk, and member of the Assembly's Ad-Interim Committee on Same Sex Attraction and Ordination Standards was then invited into the pulpit of the Reynolda Church to give an overview of the Ad-Interim Committee's work and its very heavy reliance upon the Westminster Standards.

TE Burton began with prayer and read from a portion of Psalm 119. He explained the AIC's charge from the 44<sup>th</sup> Assembly, and the work they have done in revisions on the Human Sexuality Position Paper, A Pastoral Letter on Same Sex Attraction and the Book of Order. The task given by the Assembly was to clarify, align and strengthen the EPC's Witness on the matter of SSA and ordination. The EPC's the current difficulty had arisen

because the 1986, 1994 and 2017 Papers were deemed insufficiently robust for addressing “Side-B” and issues arising from Same-Sex Attraction (SSA). The committee was formed to address how the EPC should consider the expectations for penitence and sanctification of someone who experiences ongoing same-sex attraction but remains committed to the historic and orthodox biblical sexual ethic, and then to address in what circumstances such a person would be qualified for ordained office in the EPC. In obedience to the Scriptures and the *Westminster Standards*, the 44th General Assembly created the AIC as part of a concerted effort to push the denomination towards a strengthened witness into the Side-B issue.

There is Broad Agreement on what we are agreed:

1. Homosexuality is a sin.
2. God forgives repentant sinners.
3. Christian Marriage is the context of human sexuality.

What might be perceived as difficulties is when Church Courts (i.e., Presbyteries and Sessions) make decisions for the entire EPC in examining and ordaining individuals. Ordination is done within these Courts but is not a local option that varies from Court to Court. In principle single men and women are ordainable (Robert Murray McCheyne, J. Gresham Machen, John Murray) but when referring to SSA and the complex cultural evolution of “alphabet language” (i.e., LGBTQ+) the EPC Courts require deeper knowledge of the biblical languages and theological meaning to address this issue. “The Bible says it, I believe it, that settles it.” This approach doesn’t speak, in this case, to the theological issues the EPC is facing. There is an awareness that the EPC needs to speak in such a way that we are heard by the people we are speaking to in our Congregations and in our witness to the world.

The AIC is making recommendations to three edits to The Book of Government, to the Human Sexuality Position Paper and to the Human Sexuality Pastoral Letter. Some criticize that the AIC has not written a “report.” The only “Report” is a record of the date, location, attendance, and expense of meetings. The results of the work of those meetings are the recommendations being offered to the 46th General Assembly and the EPC Presbyteries. Again, this is not a study of a new thing – this is a sin of which we are aware, and the AIC is offering a way to clarity, and a deeper understanding of the *Westminster Standards*, especially WLC 137-139.

The Next Steps in our Process involves the AIC Committee Members visiting Presbyteries. In early Spring 2026 the AIC will make its final adjustments to the three documents previously mentioned. The AIC is working under three basic commitments at the center of theology:

1. The Fall into the Estate of Sin and Misery.
2. Progressive Sanctification and Indwelling Sin.
3. Redemptive History: Creation-Fall-Redemption-Consummation

Three overarching schemes informed the AIC's approach: the fall into the estate of sin and misery; the Christian's condition as simultaneously saint and sinner and what that means for progressive sanctification and indwelling sin; and the movement of creation-fall-redemption-consummation. The position paper contains most of this.

- Sin and misery: We are morally corrupt, sin proceeds from our corrupt nature (original sin, total depravity), and our corrupt nature and its impulses (concupiscence) are themselves sin. We live in a broken world, and our bodies, affections, and environments are both broken and weakened.
- Progressive Sanctification and Indwelling Sin: When we are united to Christ, we are 1) regenerated, 2) are made holy, and 3) are growing in holiness. However, our original sin remains in us (indwelling sin, concupiscence) all life long, and our growth in holiness occurs in a non-linear manner. Yet, the Christian inevitably grows in holiness because of our union with Christ. That growth includes strength in resisting sin and the Holy Spirit enabling us to flee temptation and mortify our sin/flesh.
- Redemptive History: The garden was good, the new creation is better, and we live in the times between. Moral perfection will not be true of the Christian until glory, Satan now attacks us with suffering and temptation ("The ongoing experience of temptation is not a sign of sin or lack of sanctification"), and the hope of healing is not a return to the garden but the new creation.

### **Application of AIC's Recommendations to SSA**

#### *Application to SSA (#1)*

"Rather than use the term SSA as a precise, clinical category, we employ it as a conceptual umbrella-term that encapsulates homoerotic sin, activity, lust, desire, temptation—both volitional and indwelling—as well as latent propensity to that sin or temptation, along with an intense sense of affinity for the same sex. Throughout this letter we use the term SSA while addressing the different specific instances and experiences that fall under its scope."

SSA is used to refer to sin, temptation, and suffering/affinity, and the specific application depends on the context within our paper. Because of the changing nature of Alphabet language (i.e., LGBTQ+), the AIC is covering all its bases in how the term, and ones like it, are used in different settings and doing things this way because of the genre of our documents.

*Application to SSA (#2)*

Homoerotic desires and actions are sinful and must be repented.

Homoerotic desires and actions are sinful and must be repented. Temptation is not itself necessarily sin, and so temptation to homoerotic desires and actions must be fled. Indulging temptation is sin and must be repented. We use “unnatural” once in the Pastoral Letter but primarily use the language of “sin” since that is the dominant biblical, confessional, and constitutional term and the most readily understood.

*Application to SSA (#3) Addressing Latent Propensity*

Addressing Latent Propensity = “If I were to be tempted, it would be in this way” A Latent Propensity is brokenness and weakness in the estate of sin and misery but is not sin itself. Weakness of this kind must be guarded against and healing prayed for. Satan will attack from one of Four Cardinal Directions:

- 1) Power, 2) Money, 3) Honor, 4) Pleasure

*Application to SSA (#4) Central Commitments Made for Side-B*

There are central commitments for Side-B that are propounded, falsely, as fact: SSA is Immutable, SSA is Morally Neutral (sometimes praiseworthy) and SSA leads to deeper relational affinity.

**What AIC affirms is:** SSA is a result of the fall, SSA is not to be celebrated and SSA is accompanied by no blessings.

SSA as relational affinity (i.e. the Side B position) is a misnomer. SSA is a result of the Fall and so is not accompanied with blessings and so should not be celebrated. Healing from sin and misery occurs in different ways in this life, but moral restoration does not require a growth in sexual desire for people of the opposite sex (though that might happen). See ESP Pastoral Letter, p. 5, ll. 25-29 Side-B Specifically Denied

*Application to SSA (#5) Identity - Understood in relation to Christ to whom we are united by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Identity is a multi-faceted concept. Regardless of how “identity” is used, we must understand ourselves in relation to the Christ to whom we are united. That means we are sanctified and therefore must repent of sin. That means we are indwelt with the Spirit and must flee temptation. That means any brokenness/weakness in this life is fleeting while our condition as children of God will endure. Applied to SSA: repent of sin, flee temptation, understand our weakness in light of Christ.

## **Application of AIC's Recommendations to Ordination**

### *Application to Ordination (#1)*

- Officers are examples to the flock, that includes character and moral conduct. Our Recommendations to amend Book of Order Chapter 9 and 12.
- Officers of the church are to be examples to the flock, and that includes character and moral conduct.

We are recommending that the Book of Government be amended to include requirements for godly character for ordination and specifically address sexual purity in self-description, conviction, character, and conduct. We don't single out SSA/homosexuality in the Book of Government because we want to cast a broad net in the actual constitution but do specifically address sexuality because it is such a pressing issue in our world. To make sure there is no confusion on this point we include references to the Book of Discipline and the Westminster Larger Catechism's exposition of the 7th commandment.

IMPORTANTLY: Our work adopted and adjusted the Presbyterian Church in America's (PCA) language. The AIC's most binding recommendation learns from the PCA and helps to solidify the conservative Presbyterian witness making it clear that the EPC is not the PCA with looser ordination standards.

### *Application to Ordination (#2) Ordaining Courts and the Exercise of Wisdom*

AIC's Recommendations gives guidance on how courts should conduct examinations. This is guidance because we are Presbyterian, and this is guidance. All ordaining courts already exercise wisdom in how they examine candidates, and that doesn't change here. In the pastoral letter the AIC provides guidance on how ordaining courts should conduct examinations in light of SSA and the new requirements in the Book of Government. This is guidance, because we are presbyterian and pastoral letters are guidance.

First, candidates who disclose/are known to experience SSA should be examined for a long record of godly example setting: Do they indulge sin? Repent? Flee temptation? Do they flaunt their condition of misery, or do they hold out hope for healing in glory? Once courts establish this (in other words, do candidates actually conform to standards being put into the Book of Government) then the courts should move on to other diagnostic questions.

These questions are designed to ensure that the candidate has the character and witness appropriate for church office. It's been asked what happens if candidates lie —

well, then the courts can later discipline them for deceit. Or what happens if candidates change or understand themselves differently down the road — the letter provides guidance on sorting through this, but the principles remain the same: What’s your witness in acting in a godly way, repenting, and fleeing temptation?

*Application to Ordination (#3) Ordaining Courts and the Exercise of Wisdom*

- Candidates and Officers should defer to the guidance of their ordaining courts in their public self-description.
- Candidates and officers should defer to the guidance of their ordaining courts in their public self-description, and ordaining courts should be patient and compassionate in understanding before exercising their authority in this area.

Closing Thoughts

Can someone who has experienced SSA be ordained by a court? Some have asked for a simple yes/no on this. The answer is that no, candidates/officers whose witness doesn’t conform to the biblical requirements should not be ordained, and yes, those whose witness does conform to the biblical requirements may be considered for ordination. Whether or not someone who experiences/describes themselves as SSA has a witness that conforms to the biblical requirements is dependent on all the above contingencies, just like any other Christian who deals with indwelling sin, besetting temptation, and experiences life in a broken world.

After an extended period of questions and answers, the moderator invited the Stated Clerk to end his presentation with prayer for the peace, unity, and purity of the New River Presbytery and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Joyfully taking up this glad duty TE Burton ended his presentation with prayer.

**Break**

**010-22 Election of Missional Director and Stated Clerk**

The Missional Director and the Stated Clerk had each completed three years of service in their roles (NRP VI.4/5). The Moderator thanked them for their service.

On behalf of the Leadership Team the Moderator then nominated TE Andy Koesters to be Missional Director and TE Rufus Burton to be Stated Clerk for an additional three (3) year term expiring October of 2028. The Moderator then opened the floor for further nominations. As there were no further nominations, the Moderator put the question

to the New River Presbytery. Shall TE Koesters and TE Burton serve in their respective roles for an additional three years?

**Motion to elect TE Andy Koesters as Missional Director and TE Rufus Burton as Stated Clerk for an additional three year term ending October 2028 was sustained.**

**010-23 Installation of the 2026 Moderator**

TE Glen Holman invited RE Marion Blackwell, the Moderator-Elect to the Moderator's Chair and led the NRP in a brief installation service for the new Moderator. Dr. Holman gave RE Blackwell the symbols of the office and welcomed him to the work. Dr. Holman led the NRP in prayer for Moderator Blackwell's work, and RE Blackwell led the NRP in a prayer of thanksgiving for Dr. Holman's faithful ministry.

**010-24 Expression of Thanks to the Host Church**

RE Blackwell, the Moderator, then led the Presbytery in an expression of thanks to the host church, and prayed for the minister, elders, deacons, members, and friends of the Reynolda Church, Village Campus praising God for their generous hospitality.

**010-25 Date and Time of the Next Meeting**

**February 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> 2026, River Oaks Community Church, Clemmons, North Carolina**

**010-26 Adjournment**

Having been successfully moved, seconded, and sustained, Moderator Blackwell adjourned the 010<sup>th</sup> Meeting and closed with Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

*/S/ Rufus T Burton*

Rufus T Burton, Stated Clerk