



## 156<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of East Tennessee

*Tuesday, November 14, 2023, 10:00am*

### WELCOME AND THANK YOU!

Thank you for being a part of the 156<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

“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.” — PCUSA Book of Order, G-3.0301

### HERE’S THE PACKET

The packet is posted **TWO (2) weeks before the meeting** so you’ll have time to read ahead. Our staff works hard on the packet so you’ll have good opportunity to prepare, time for questions, and an invitation to consider who we are and why we gather.

**EMAIL ADDRESSES for presenters are included in the packet.** This is new. If you have questions before the meeting, email and ask the presenter – usually a committee moderator – during the 2 week prep period.

# Deadline for registration is 3:00pm Tuesday, November 7th.



## REGISTRATION

<https://www.presbyteryeasttn.org/meetings>

**Deadline for registration is 3:00pm Tuesday, November 7th.**

Register by clicking the meeting link at: <https://www.presbyteryeasttn.org/meetings>.

**There will be no virtual/Zoom option for this meeting.** Only an option for NON COMMISSIONERS to watch live via YouTube.

Lunch will be cooked and provided by the members of our host church, Korean Presbyterian Church, Chattanooga.

There will be childcare provided for those that need it at no additional cost. Please bring lunch for your child.

## EXCUSED ABSENCES

<https://www.presbyteryeasttn.org/meetings>

- Pastors (members of PET or laboring in the bounds of PET),
- Commissioned Pastors (Ruling Elder in service to a PET congregation), and
- Elected church Commissioners (Ruling Elders elected as church representatives)

If you're unable to attend the meeting, **request an EXCUSED ABSENCE.**

- Go to <https://www.presbyteryeasttn.org/meetings>.
- Click where it says **Excused Absences** and submit your information on the form.

# Meeting Schedule

9:30 a.m.	In-person registration begins
10:00 a.m.	Convene
12:00 p.m.	Lunch

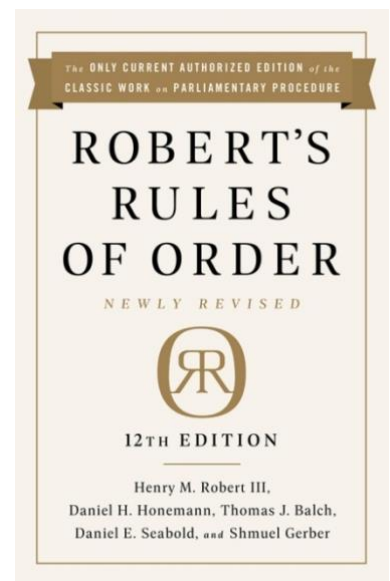
## 1 Convene

- 10:00 am - Opening Prayer by Moderator Carl McDonald ([eieio@chartertn.net](mailto:eieio@chartertn.net))
- Declaration of Quorum
- Welcome from Host Church
- Introduction of New Commissioners and Guests

## 2 Rules for Participants

**In-person participation is governed by Robert's Rules of Order.**

1. Speakers must go to a microphone, as able.
2. Share your name and role at the presbytery meeting.
3. Tell the presbytery whether you're speaking for or against a motion.
4. Speak ONLY to the Moderator.
5. Whenever possible, those speaking will alternate between those speaking for and those speaking against a motion.
6. Presbyters may not rise to speak a second time until all others have had the chance to speak a first time.
7. The Moderator states the motion.
8. The Moderator takes the vote and announces the vote and the results of the vote.
9. The Moderator moves on to the next order of business.



# 3 Setting the Agenda

Vice Moderator (Ilsun (PK) Kim, [pastoriskim@gmail.com](mailto:pastoriskim@gmail.com)) moves the Agenda.

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## 5 Worship

Installation Commission of the Installation of Rev. Dr. Wendy Neff as General Presbyter of the Presbytery of East Tennessee

Rev. Peter Ryoo, Korean Presbyterian Church, Chattanooga

Rev. Margaret Poteet, Rivermont Presbyterian Church

Rev. Rachel Parsons-Wells, New Providence Presbyterian Church

Dr. Frank Harris, Bethel Presbyterian Church

Mrs. Cheryl Labagh, First Presbyterian Church, LaFollette

Mr. Carl McDonald, New Providence Presbyterian Church and Moderator of the Presbytery of East Tennessee

## 6 Consent Agenda

The Moderator, Carl McDonald, presents the Consent Agenda to stand approved if no objection. Any Presbyter may ask that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda for debate and vote.

### 6.1 Serve Committee

Moderator: Katina Sharp, [revkatinasharp@gmail.com](mailto:revkatinasharp@gmail.com)

**Motion:** Serve moves to adopt the Covenant between Sunset Gap and the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

(Appendix A or this Dropbox link) <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/iqbkks3aqher74yrrx9vf/2023-07-21-Sunset-Gap-Covenant.docx?rlkey=935t32js6lqfnkeg9710lbadm&dl=0>

## 7 Greetings: Dr. Bryan Coker, Maryville College

Dr. BRYAN F. COKER became the Maryville College President on July 1, 2020, serving as only the 12th President in a history exceeding 200 years. The College's Board of Directors issued Coker a new contract in mid-2022, securing his presidential tenure through 2027.

As President, Coker has set forth four primary areas of focus for the College:

- Futureproofing the College, amidst the current realities of higher education;
- Embracing our opportune and scenic location, as one of the world's greatest learning laboratories;
- Embracing a history and legacy of diversity, equity, and inclusion, as a call to action today; and
- Embracing the liberal arts as the best preparation for both the everyday and for the unexpected.

He is an ordained elder and liturgist in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and is currently a member of New Providence Presbyterian Church in Maryville.

Originally from Western North Carolina, Coker received his B.A. from Rhodes College, is a member of the College's Hall of Fame, and was previously recognized as Rhodes's first-ever Young Alumnus of the Year. He holds an M.Ed. from the University of South Carolina, and a Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee



## 8 General Presbyter Report

Wendy Neff, [wendy@presbyteryeasttn.org](mailto:wendy@presbyteryeasttn.org)

The last eight weeks as General Presbyter of the Presbytery of East Tennessee have been full and wonderful. I have enjoyed coffee, lunch, or just a visit with 30 pastors, CLPs, and ruling elders. I've attended 25 meetings related to the ministry and mission of the presbytery. I've met with 3 sessions to introduce myself and help with transitions. I've joined at least 12 phone calls related to the work of the presbytery and engaged in many more that were spontaneous. I've had the great joy to attend 10 PET events from church birthday celebrations to installation services. And I attended a conference that gathers presbyters from across the denomination to learn and fellowship with one another.

I'm taking advantage of the 90 day companion offered to mid council leaders. My companion is a general presbyter who is in her 5th year of service. She and I meet weekly by zoom. I will also begin professional coaching offered through the denomination to new General Presbyters. I'm grateful for this support and guidance as I do this new work in your midst. And I'm thankful for the presbyters I've met who are great people seeking to serve their presbyteries with energy, intelligence, imagination and love as they also come alongside one another to seek best practices and share of their experience.

My sense of the Presbytery of East Tennessee that has been formed from visits, meetings, celebrations, and a few challenges is that you are a faithful people seeking to serve God and God's people where you are. I hope to continue to lift up the wonderful ministry you are doing so you can celebrate and learn from one another. I hope also to seek ways with you of building up and nurturing our connections for the sake of the church. I will continue to share resources from the PCUSA, Board of Pensions, the Presbyterian Foundation, and other related groups that will support your ministry and mission.

I give thanks for all of you who serve the presbytery on committees. The work you do is invaluable to the ministry and mission we do together that benefits our churches and communities. The staff of the PET is amazing. They do their work with joy and grace and commitment to the church. Join me in thanking them for being the best at what they do.

Thank you for entrusting this work to me. It is my privilege to be doing it with you. I look forward to more coffees, lunches, special events, and meetings as we finish out 2023 and look toward 2024. May God do abundantly far more than we could ever ask or imagine here in the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

## 9 Committee Reports

### 9.1 Property Committee

Moderator: John Thomason, [jht854@gmail.com](mailto:jht854@gmail.com)

**No Report**

### 9.2 Committee on Preparation for Ministry

Moderator: Susan Reisinger, [sreisinger1201@icloud.com](mailto:sreisinger1201@icloud.com)

**No Report**

## 9.3 Serve Committee

Moderator: Katina Sharp, [revkatinasharp@gmail.com](mailto:revkatinasharp@gmail.com)

### **For Information:**

As a celebration of becoming a Matthew 25 Presbytery, a year ago, Serve challenged the Presbytery to collaborate a project to raise \$25,000 for RIP Medical Debt (eliminating \$2.5 MILLION in medical debt for those who are in the hardest financial situations). We are currently at \$24,777.45! Can you chip in a few dollars to help us hit our goal before the end of the Presbytery meeting? You can donate here:

<https://ripmedicaldebt.org/campaign/presbyteryeasttn-40122/>

In order to help us plan Presbytery mission work, Serve would like to know more about what your congregation is currently doing to serve the community and the world. Please take a moment to complete this brief (less than 2 minutes!) survey. It's ok if more than one person from your church takes the survey, so what's stopping you from doing it RIGHT NOW? The survey can be accessed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D95Z8L2>  
Be on the lookout in the Presbytery newsletter for information about 2024 Mission Opportunities still in the works!

## 9.4 Nominating Committee

Moderator: Mary Boyd, [maryboyd1@gmail.com](mailto:maryboyd1@gmail.com)

**Motion:** The Nominating Committee moves the following persons to serve on the following committees or capacities

### **2024 Presbytery Moderator**

Il Sun Kim (Minister Korean Presbyterian, Knoxville)

### **2024 Presbytery Vice Moderator**

Doris Thomas (RE Emmanuel Presbyterian, Knoxville)

### **Commissioners to General Assembly 2024**

Louden Young (Minister, New Providence Presbyterian, Maryville)

Brynne Crow (Minister West Emory Presbyterian, Knoxville)

Jaclyn Beeler (RE Westminster Presbyterian, Knoxville)

Ryan Brown (RE Northminster Presbyterian, Chattanooga)

YAAD - Lauren Gahan (Erin Presbyterian, Knoxville)

Alternate - Mark Curtis (Minister First Presbyterian, Knoxville)

### **Committee on Ministry**

Class of 2025

Jake Horton (RE Bethel Presbyterian, Kingston)

Class of 2026

Gayle Burns (CLP First Presbyterian, Sevierville)

Mark Curtis (Minister First Presbyterian, Knoxville)

Barry Simmons (CLP Gatlinburg Presbyterian, Gatlinburg)

Daryl Fansler (RE Fountain City Presbyterian, Knoxville)

**Congregational Relations and Development Committee**

Class of 2026

Beverly Steyn (RE Second Presbyterian, Chattanooga)

**Committee on Preparation for Ministry**

Class of 2026

Susan Reisinger (Min, Retired)

**Equip Team**

Class of 2026

Jennifer Gahan (RE Erin Presbyterian, Knoxville)

**Finance Committee**

Class of 2026

Dean Farmer (RE Second Presbyterian, Knoxville)

David Mullins (RE First Presbyterian, Oak Ridge)

**Outdoor Ministries Team**

Class of 2026

Jon Faraone (Min Center Presbyterian, Tellico Plains)

**Permanent Judicial Commission**

Class of 2030

Sharon Youngs (Min First Presbyterian, Oak Ridge)

**Outdoor Ministries Team**

Class of 2024

Rebecca Pierce (RE Bethel Presbyterian, Kingston)

## 9.5 Congregational Relations and Development Committee

Moderator: Andy Morgan, [andypmorgan@gmail.com](mailto:andypmorgan@gmail.com)

**For Information:**

CRDT has completed the tech grant and has granted more than 20 technology grants to congregations and ministries around the presbytery. We have helped to equip communities of faith with everything from drones and Nintendo Switches to AED machines and live-streaming equipment. To meet a surge of demand for technology funds, CRDT unanimously decided to leverage operational funds (line budget) to meet these needs.

We will be meeting with Wendy in the coming months to help us determine our committee aim after the the grant has been administered.



## 9.6 Equip Committee

Moderator: Barbara Adamcik, [barbara@wpcknox.org](mailto:barbara@wpcknox.org)

### **For Information:**

#### **Hope House is excited to welcome their new Executive Director, Dr. Tiffanie Wilson.**

Dr. Tiffanie Wilson lives in Chattanooga with her husband, Joey, and their three children: Sephi, Marly Grace, and Finn. She holds a doctorate specializing in Leadership and Spiritual Formation from George Fox University in Portland, Oregon. Her academic background encompasses master's and bachelor's degrees centered on Biblical studies, Theology, and Spiritual Direction.

*It is a tremendous privilege to step into the role of Executive Director / Campus Minister of Hope House and to serve the vibrant student community of UTC. The mission of Hope House deeply resonates with my core values, and I am wholeheartedly dedicated to continue the work of providing a welcoming and inclusive space that exemplifies Christ's love for all people. I look forward to connecting with Equip and learning more about the work everyone is doing amidst student ministry!*

#### **Hope House Report**

The mission statement of Hope House is "Making God known through the radical hospitality of Jesus Christ". Right now, Hope House is participating in this radical hospitality primarily through feeding hungry college students. Several years ago, research found that 43% of UTC students struggled with food insecurity. With the rising cost of food and housing, especially post pandemic, I imagine this percentage is significantly higher.

I recently posted a survey asking students how Hope House was serving them. Here are a few samples from students:

"I really rely on food from you all throughout the week! I meal prep around it... it is such a big help to know I don't have to always worry what I am going to eat."

"It provides me with at least one if not two meals a day."

"If it weren't for Hope House, there would be times I wouldn't be able to eat."

When asked what challenges students are facing, having money for food was a significant concern.

Radical hospitality certainly includes all manner of meeting needs, including caring for one's spiritual life, but I can't think of a more basic need to meet in the name of Christ than ensuring students' bellies are full. It's hard enough to attend school and keep your mind sharp to learn and study. It would be much harder to do while hungry. I'm proud to be a part of this PCUSA network that is loving and serving students so well!

## 9.7 Finance Committee

Moderator: John Begovich, [johnmbegovich@gmail.com](mailto:johnmbegovich@gmail.com)

### **For Information:**

Your church should have received a stewardship letter and a form to submit your pledged giving to the presbytery for 2024. Please complete that as soon as possible.

## 9.8 Outdoor Ministry Committee

Moderator: Jean Davidson, [rev2jean@gmail.com](mailto:rev2jean@gmail.com)

### For Information

#### Many Thanks

- Thank you to everyone who participated in the Fall Workday in September. Because of volunteers from PET congregations, we were able to restore access and clean up trees on 2<sup>nd</sup> Peninsula making it safe for groups and programming again. There was also much work done on our Archery range by building a new road & replacing the handrail on the range deck. Thanks to you, we have been able to provide archery and camping to schools & groups this fall. We are so grateful for your hard work!
- Thanks to Rev. Roy Scarbrough (Bakers Creek & Clover Hill), Wayne Carter, CLP (First Pres. Cleveland), Rev. David Duggan (Retired-West Emory) for taking time to teach school children about God's creation as part of our River Ridge Environmental Education Program this fall.
- A very big thank you to the 81 families and 16 congregations and organizations who have donated to this ministry so far in 2023. As we look ahead 2024, we invite you to be part of all the ways God is touching lives here. To give by credit card click "Donate" on the top right corner of the website. To make a gift by check send by mail to the camp address at 591 W. Rockwood Ferry Road Ten Mile, TN 37880. Please contact us by email ([admin@johnknoxcenter.org](mailto:admin@johnknoxcenter.org)) to give a gift of stocks, bonds, or to set up donations from your Donor Advised Fund.



#### Pavilion Restroom Update

- The Pavilion Restrooms are taking shape! The plumbing has been roughed in; water line tied into the existing line & hooked up. The electrical line from the breaker box has been run. The foundation has been poured and we are doing some leveling & block work around the foundation while we wait the 21 days for the concrete to solidly cure. We are still working with TVA to determine the best location for the field lines to limit the disturbance of cultural artifacts.

#### Upcoming Opportunities at John Knox Center

- This year we hosted our largest longest staying group ever!! 120 college athletes from the Purdue Rowing Team joined us for 8 days in March, and they are coming back! **We need your help** to welcome and provide great hospitality for them **March 9-16, 2024**. We are looking for volunteers and those wishing to be paid. This is spring break for most schools & a great opportunity for high school & college students to gain experience & make some extra money. We also love retirees who can lend a hand. Please contact us now if you can help with food service during any of those days.
- Does your congregation have quilters? Our quilting retreat "Sewing on the River" still has spaces available **January 28-February 9, 2024**, you can customize the length of stay that works for you. Check our website under the EVENTS tab for information and registration!
- **Summer Camp** dates for 2024 are on our website at [johnknoxcenter.org](http://johnknoxcenter.org) & listed below, registration begins for **NEW campers December 1<sup>st</sup>**. Campers from 2023 get a head start by registering starting **November 1**.

- Please encourage the young adults in your congregation to **apply to serve on Summer Camp Staff NOW!!** The digital application is available on our website. We are looking to fill several positions: **Counselors, Social Media Specialist, Nurse, Lifeguards & Support Staff.** We want the young adults who mean so much to our campers to be from our congregations. Help us find the best staff possible!

**2023 Program Recap**

- 13 PET churches sent campers to Summer Camp
- 33% of the campers this summer were new to JKC.
- Scholarship funds totaling \$2,015 were given out thanks to the generosity of donors.
- 5 of our PET churches provided additional scholarship monies for campers from their congregations to attend equaling \$5,812.50.



**Thank you to the 3 PET churches that sent the most campers this summer:**

- **Sequoyah Hills – 13**
- **1<sup>st</sup> Pres. Knoxville – 9**
- **Rivermont - 8**

- Our River Ridge Environmental Education Program will have hosted **1,400 participants** by the end of this year!
- 20 schools attended from 1 day to 3-day overnight programs in 2023. 4 of those schools were new to us.
- Instructors & volunteers taught **344 90-minute class sessions in 2023.**



**HIRING // Full-time // Program Director - John Knox Center – Ten Mile, TN  
\$31,000-\$34,500 – Salary/Exempt - Benefits Package Included – Onsite Residence Required - Private Housing Included**

John Knox Center is in search of a full-time Program Director who is an energetic Christian leader to guide our programs and be part of the overall camp ministry. Primary role of this position is to develop, administer, promote, and lead the day-to-day operations of our growing summer camp program, environmental education program, special events and guest group hospitality. The ideal applicant would be a positive proactive person who is excited about giving every camper and guest the best experience possible, willing to jump in & lend a hand wherever is needed to meet that goal.

John Knox Center is an ACA accredited camp located in Ten Mile, TN on 140-acre property. Site amenities include swimming, canoeing, kayaking, ropes course, archery, and hiking trails throughout the property and the best sunsets anywhere. We are nestled in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains and boast 3.9 miles of shoreline on Watts Bar Lake (Tennessee River). During the summer approx. 200 campers and 15 staff come from around the world to be in Christian community together. This small number gives us the ability to form lasting bonds with all our campers. In the fall and spring, our River Ridge Environmental Education Program hosts

approx. 1,500 participants each year. Rental guests come for retreats, teambuilding and to participate in our own events year-round. To see more about who we are, find us at our websites at: [johnknoxcenter.org](http://johnknoxcenter.org) For additional questions about the role, reach out to Bri Payne, Executive Director at [execdirector@johnknoxcenter.org](mailto:execdirector@johnknoxcenter.org) or (865) 376-2236.

Applicants should submit a letter of interest and resume with contact information for 3 references to [execdirector@johnknoxcenter.org](mailto:execdirector@johnknoxcenter.org) Applications will be accepted until position is filled.

### Summer Camp 2024

Camp Session	Ages/Grade	Date
Covenant Partners	16 – 18	June 2nd- June 12 <sup>th</sup>
Day Camp 1	4 - 10	June 3rd – June 7 <sup>th</sup>
Mini Camp	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	June 9 <sup>th</sup> – June 12 <sup>th</sup>
High School Adventure	9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	June 5 <sup>th</sup> – June 14 <sup>th</sup>
Marathon	4 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	June 16 <sup>th</sup> – June 28 <sup>th</sup>
Middle School Adventure	5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	July 5 <sup>th</sup> – July 12 <sup>th</sup>
Voyager Camp	4 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>	July 7 <sup>th</sup> – July 12 <sup>th</sup>
Night Owl	6 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	July 14 <sup>th</sup> – July 17 <sup>th</sup>
Day Camp 2	4 - 10	July 15 <sup>th</sup> – July 19 <sup>th</sup>

## 9.9 Committee on Ministry

Moderator: Tim Reynolds, [treynolds@2ndpres.org](mailto:treynolds@2ndpres.org)

### For Action:

- 1) **Motion:** That the Presbytery of East Tennessee sustain the examination for ordination of Ms. Jessica Lewis as a Minister of Word and Sacrament.
- 2) **Motion:** That the Presbytery of East Tennessee validate the ministry of Ms. Jessica Lewis in her role as director of the MAST program at Maryville College.
- 3) **Motion:** That the Presbytery of East Tennessee receive Jessica Lewis into active membership, pending her ordination as Minister of Word & Sacrament.

## Jessica Lewis – Journey of Faith

I did not grow up attending church with my family or on a regular basis, but when I did tag along with friends and grace the Sunday school rooms, it was usually in a Southern Baptist church in my small hometown in Alabama. While in elementary school, I was certain of God's presence and care for me. I vividly remember the blizzard of 1993, my mom waking me up to join the family downstairs by the fireplace, and I spent 5 seconds to grab my teddy bear and my Bible I had received at Christmas a few months earlier. Though it was hard for me to understand the language used in that fake red leather King James version Bible, I knew it was important.

As I moved into middle school and high school, I joined friends on youth retreats and the occasional church services. I found joy in going on youth trips with the Catholic church with my best friend, and I remember how welcoming they were to me. I was lucky to worship with a variety of denominations from Church of Christ and Assembly of God to Methodist and Catholic. Though the wideness of welcome was there in many of these places, I never felt like it was where I belonged.

When I started as a freshman at Maryville College, I had started regularly attending the large Southern Baptist church back home. I decided to be baptized in that church during the spring semester of my freshman year, but it was an experience that instead of solidifying my place in the fellowship of that community, it left me seeking another place to encourage my faith. On the Maryville College campus, I found that place. In the chapel at MC, I learned that a woman could stand behind the pulpit and preach (thanks, Anne McKee!), and be a messenger of God's love and mission, and do so even with men in the congregation listening and learning. It was there where I sat in chapel and learned that God loves wholeheartedly and unconditionally. It was there where I found my questions to not be a sign of me rejecting faith but as a marker of growth and seeking understanding. During my years as a student at MC, I was encouraged to truly look and see: to see the image of God in the people that didn't look like me, to see the wonders of God's love in the creation around me, to see God at work in the hands and feet of my neighbors, and to see myself as beloved and called.

After I graduated from Maryville College, I spent a year working as a nanny and feeling lost without that foundational faith family of my college career. I was grateful to eventually be connected with a PC(USA) church in Laurel, Mississippi through my MC campus minister. I worked as the Director of Christian Education at First-Trinity Presbyterian Church for 12 years. During my tenure there, I married my husband Josh, and we had our three sons: Patton, Jack, and Noah. Motherhood and family life taught me more about the vastness of God's mercy than I had learned in my sporadic faith formation of my earlier years. I was yearning for more, to be able to adequately express my faith and share it with the youth and children in my care. That church, my family, and my mentors supported me in my call to attend seminary. Since August 2018, I have been a part-time seminary student with the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary through their distance learning program. Though I have covered classes on church history, doctrine, and Greek to name a few, the community that has grown from this education has taught me that God's love is more expansive even still.

I am currently the MAST (Maryville Adventures in Studying Theology) Program Director at Maryville College, and I am proud to be back in the place that has played such a prominent role in my faith formation. My goal is to continue the mission of supporting our students and providing a safe place for them to ask questions, to learn about faith through various experiences and perspectives, and to be loved wholeheartedly as they are.

## Statement of Faith – Jessica Lewis

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of all that is, seen and unseen.

I believe God is holy, set apart, and beyond the complete understanding of humanity. I believe God is all powerful, all knowing, and ever present. I believe God is love, and I believe we are able to love only because God loved us first (1 John 4:19).

I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came to earth, was born of the Virgin Mary, was fully human and fully divine. I believe Jesus died on the cross as the truest mark of love. I believe Jesus was dead, buried, and was raised from the dead on the third day. I believe salvation is obtained through Jesus' death and resurrection. I believe in the forgiveness of sins and eternal life that salvation promises.

I believe in the Holy Spirit. I believe the Holy Spirit is our constant counselor and guide, who builds up the church in faith, hope, and love. I believe the Holy Spirit leads us to worship God. I believe the Holy Spirit sends us out into the world around us to proclaim the good news, seek justice, and work for peace.

I believe in the Triune God: Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. I believe in one God, in three persons. I believe in this holy mystery of three in one, and I am thankful for the many ways God is present and active in our lives.

I believe the scriptures give us insight to who God is and how God loves God's creation, including people. I believe the scriptures hold truth and love, and these attributes are not dependent on the factuality of its contents. I believe that the scriptures were written by imperfect humans and inspired by the Holy Spirit in order to point us to Christ, and I believe in the authority of Scripture as the living Word of God.

I believe in the catholic church. I believe the church is called to join God who is already at work in the world, to share the love of God with others, and to join together in worship and fellowship. I believe the church is the Body of Christ, composed of people of different times, places, races, genders, sexualities, orientations, and opinions.

I believe the sacraments, baptism and communion, are visible means for us to experience the invisible grace of God and respond with our gratitude for that grace. In baptism, we are welcomed into the Body of Christ, claimed by God, and made one with Christ. I believe that communion is a sign of God's covenant and a call for the church to remember and reaffirm our baptismal promises regularly within a community of faith.

I believe that I am a child of God. I believe that I am saved by grace, which is God's free gift of love that I do not deserve and cannot earn. I believe I cannot boast of this grace, yet I am called to extend it to others. I believe that I am made in the image of God, which means I am called to reflect God's goodness, wisdom, and love wherever God calls me to be in this world.

- 4) **Motion:** That the Presbytery of East Tennessee approve the revised Committee on Ministry Manual. <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/nfjq4vlbk0rsp0qx1v4ik/COM-Handbook-Proposed-Revisions.docx?rlkey=sa3xr00ha4qdz5enxjddphg1c&dl=0>

***For Information:***

*CLP Training Program*

The Commissioned Lay Pastor Co-hort began their second course together on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. Over the course of the next couple of months, they will be studying Biblical Exegesis with the Rev. Dr. Wendy Neff. This group of seven elders and members of congregations across the presbytery is engaging their work with joy and dedication. Thanks to First Presbyterian Oak Ridge for offering space for this group to meet for their Saturday classes. If you want to learn more about the commissioned lay pastor program in the PET, contact the presbytery at [Presbytery office](#). We will be happy to put you in touch with those leading this program and/or the current students. You can learn more about the CLP program at [www.presbyteryeasttn.org/commissioned-lay-pastors](http://www.presbyteryeasttn.org/commissioned-lay-pastors). You can also contact Sharon Youngs, pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Oak Ridge, and CLP Task Force moderator ([fpcpastor@live.com](mailto:fpcpastor@live.com)).

*COM Handbook Revisions*

The proposed COM handbook revisions were designed to focus more on being proactive in promoting the health of the congregations of the Presbytery of East Tennessee, as well as to be more nimble in responding to the needs of the Presbytery, its members, and its congregations. The major changes in policy, powers, and responsibilities are summarized below. In addition, there were a number of language changes that did not substantively change the content of the manual but updated and streamlined the language to be consistent with language currently used in the Book of Order and the Presbytery of East Tennessee. The forms used by the COM were also updated for consistency and clarity. If the manual is approved, these forms will be available on the PET website.

*Authority to Act on Behalf of the Presbytery*

The following (in bold) were added to the list of items for which the COM was already granted authority to act on behalf of the Presbytery, provided all such actions are reported to the next stated meeting of the Presbytery:

- **Review and approve Ministry Discernment Forms**
- Find in order **and approve** calls issued by congregations
- **Examine**, approve and present calls for services of teaching elders in installed positions
- **Review and** approve temporary pastoral relationships
- Examine, **approve**, and present for membership teaching elders **in good standing** transferring from other presbyteries
- **Review terms of call approved by sessions for compliance with Presbytery minimum requirements**
- **Grant requests from teaching elders for release from exercise of ordered ministry (G-2.0507) with the reasons for such release recorded in the minutes of Presbytery**
- **Validate the ministries of those teaching elders involved in specialized ministries in a non-congregational setting**
- **Call meetings of sessions (G-3.023)**

*Liaisons and Clusters*

In an effort to maintain healthy relationships with all the congregations of the Presbytery of East Tennessee, every congregation will be assigned a COM liaison. Assignments will be made according to the geographical clusters outlined in the COM Manual and the responsibilities of the COM liaison are listed in this section of the manual. COM liaisons will be in regular contact with their congregations. If any congregation, pastor, or CLP has a question or concern pertaining to the responsibilities and work of the COM, the COM liaison will be available to help.

### *Examinations*

The primary substantive change to the examinations policy is that the COM has the discretion approve the examination of any transferring or retired minister in good standing on behalf of the Presbytery. If the COM chooses to approve the examination, the transferring or retired minister will be introduced to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting. The Presbytery will not re-examine the transferring or retired minister but will vote only to receive them into membership and to concur in their call, if applicable.

### *Requirements for CLP's*

This section was updated in both language and content to reflect our current method for commissioning ruling elders for particular pastoral service in the Presbytery.

### *Sabbatical Policy*

This section was updated to give better guidance to both congregations and pastors for sabbatical leave.

### *Sexual Misconduct Policy*

This was removed from the COM Manual. Our recommendation is that the proper place for this is in the Presbytery Manual.

### *Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training Policy*

This was approved by the COM in the spring of 2023. It was reported to the Presbytery at that time. It is now included in the COM Manual.

### *Family Leave Policy*

This policy was added to the COM Manual in compliance with the most recent General Assembly's decision to require that congregations provide family leave for pastors. This policy gives congregations more specific guidelines for family leave than were added to the Book of Order.

### *Actions by the Committee on Ministry since the last meeting of Presbytery:*

1. Affirmed that the position of MAST Director at Maryville College fulfills the requirements of validated ministry as outlined in the Book of Order (G-2.0503a).
2. Approved Rev. Dr. Carl Grosse to labor within the bounds of the Presbytery and approved the covenant between Fountain City Presbyterian Church and Rev. Dr. Grosse.
3. Elected Rev. Wyn Bryant to serve as the COM representative to the Presbytery Stated Clerk search team.
4. Approved the installation commissions and services for:
  - a. Rev. Dr. Cheryl Bourne at Mars Hill Presbyterian Church (August 27, 2023, 4:00 p.m.)
  - b. Rev. Dr. Richard Coble at Westminster Presbyterian Church (September 17, 2023, )
  - c. Rev. Chad Wright at Lake Forest Presbyterian Church (October 22, 2023, 3:00 p.m.)
5. Approved the installation minutes for:
  - a. Rev. Dr. Cheryl Bourne, August 27, 2023
  - b. Rev. Dr. Richard Coble, September 24, 2023
6. Approved adding the following to the Pulpit Supply list:
  - a. Rev. Dr. Anne McKee
7. Renewed the Parish Associate Covenant between Rev. Dr. Gradye Parsons and Westminster Presbyterian Church.
8. Approved the Ministry Discernment Form for Baker's Creek/Pine Grove Presbyterian Churches.
9. Appointed session moderators:
  - a. Rev. Sarah Morgan for LaFollette Presbyterian Church
10. Appointed COM liaisons:
  - a. Rev. Wyn Bryant for Erin Presbyterian Church



- b. Rev. Dr. Bill Carl for Eusebia Presbyterian Church
- c. Rev. Dr. Anne McKee for Pine Grove/Baker's Creek

The November meeting of the COM has been changed to Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup> due to the Presbytery meeting on our regular meeting day.

## 9.10 Coordinating Committee of Vision and Mission

Moderator: Laura Becker, [pastor@northminsterchatt.org](mailto:pastor@northminsterchatt.org)

CCVM had a called meeting on Sept 7, 2023 to act on a few time-sensitive issues on behalf of the presbytery. The following actions were taken:

1. Granted the Congregation of Renaissance Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga authority to seek to have their church property rezoned to make the way clear for Senior Affordable Housing to be built on the property. Note: the authority granted by this action is limited to seeking rezoning only, it does not include the authority to sell or lease or construct any housing on the property.
2. Received a report from the mediation team regarding a former John Knox staffer. The presbytery mediation team was formed to address a former employee asking \$77,000 for alleged "unpaid overtime" and punitive damages. After a day of mediation, a settlement was reached for \$10,000, with funds to come from non-donor funds. Presbytery's attorney is paid by our insurance company. Presbytery will pay 1/2 of mediation fees.  
This concludes 2 years of legal proceedings.  
Mediation team approved by Presbytery was: Bri Payne, Josh McGill, Carl McDonald, and James McTyre.  
The Mediation Team members were in a position to make a decision for the financial safety of the John Knox Center ministry and the Presbytery of East Tennessee. Unfortunately, while we could prove the allegations were completely baseless and unfounded, our attorney reminded us that with a jury trial it would only take one juror who was biased to turn the tables. Considering the greater potential financial risk of a jury trial, choosing to lay this issue to rest in a way that did not use operating dollars, fund monies or donor funds was the most financially responsible option."
3. Determined that the worship service to install Wendy Neff as new General Presbyter would take place at the scheduled November Presbytery meeting.
4. Upon receiving word that James McTyre would be starting a new call outside of the presbytery in January, appointed a search committee for Stated Clerk with instructions to bring a nominee to the presbytery for election in November. Members of the search committee: Wendy Neff, Bruce Wilson, Carl McDonald, Jaclyn Beeler, Wyn Bryant.

### **For Action:**

**Motion:** That the Presbytery of East TN approve the following change, to the manual of Presbytery: Replace current paragraph 17.2 with proposed new paragraph 17.2

*(Proposed New Paragraph) 17.2 Investigating Committees*

The responsibilities of an Investigating Committee will conform to the Rules of Discipline and the Presbytery's

Sexual Misconduct Policy. An Investigating Committee may be appointed at any time by the Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Moderator of the Presbytery, the Moderator of the Committee on Ministry, and the General Presbyter. The Stated Clerk shall report the appointment of the committee to the next meeting of the Presbytery.

*(Proposed New Paragraph) 17.2 Investigating Committee*

When an allegation is received, the Stated Clerk shall report to the council only that an offense has been alleged without naming the accused or the nature of the alleged offense and refer the statement of allegation promptly to an investigating committee to conduct an inquiry according to D-7.05 of the Book of Order. The Stated Clerk, in consultation with the General Presbyter and the Moderator of the Committee on Ministry, unless one of these is the accused, shall appoint an investigating committee.

*Rationale:* The phrase "at any time" in the current paragraph is not consistent with Book of Order directives. An investigating committee cannot be appointed without receiving an accusation of misconduct. This new phrasing eliminates confusion and follows the Church Discipline section of the BOO.

**For Information:**

CCVM determined that the November 2023 presbytery meeting will be in-person only for commissioners. The meeting will be livestreamed for those who wish to observe the meeting, but voting members must be in-person. Childcare will be provided.

CCVM received a report from the Stated Clerk Search Committee, which will be presented to presbytery.

2024 Presbytery Meeting Dates:

Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> – Zoom Only

Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> – (Waiting for Confirmation)

Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup> – John Knox Center

Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup> – (Waiting for Confirmation)

## 9.11 Personnel Committee

Chair: Bruce Wilson, [bruce@bewilson.net](mailto:bruce@bewilson.net)

**For Information:**

The PET Personnel Committee worked through email. Based on the Finance Committee decision to defer budgets to the February Presbytery meeting, the Personnel Committee is deferring its recommendations on pay adjustments for Presbytery staff.

## 9.12 Stated Clerk Search Committee

Chair: Bruce Wilson, [bruce@bewilson.net](mailto:bruce@bewilson.net)

**Motion: The Presbytery of East Tennessee elect Teaching Elder Laura Becker for a four-year term as Stated Clerk, beginning on November 15, 2023.**

## For Information:

On August 22, 2023 James McTyre informed Personnel Committee Moderator Bruce Wilson and General Presbyter Wendy Neff that he has accepted a called position elsewhere, beginning January 1, 2024. Given that acceptance, Rev. McTyre submitted his resignation from the PET Stated Clerk position, effective as soon as a new Stated Clerk could be elected and no later than the close of business on December 31, 2023.

At the September 5, 2023 [Called meeting](#) of the PET Coordinating Committee for Vision and Mission (CCVM), a Stated Clerk Search Committee was elected, consisting of Wendy Neff (General Presbyter), Carl McDonald (PET Moderator), Bruce Wilson (representing the Personnel Committee), Wyn Bryant (Committee on Ministry), and Jaclyn Beeler (at-large Ruling Elder and PET Administrator).

The Presbytery advertised the Stated Clerk position through multiple venues, starting on September 15 with a closing date of October 4. Applications from two highly-qualified individuals were received.

To facilitate discussion within the committee and minimize unconscious bias, the committee developed an evaluation rubric for the selection process, based on the advertised requirements and the [posted job description](#).

The committee conducted Zoom interviews of the applicants. Based on the evaluation rubric, the interviews, and prayerful consideration of the candidate's credentials, the committee nominated Rev. Laura Becker for position of Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

## 10 Unfinished Business

## 11 New Business

11.1 Celebration and Thank you to the Rev. Dr. James McTyre

## 12 Installation of 2024 Moderator and Vice Moderator

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### INSTALLATION OF Presbytery Moderator and Vice-Moderator

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#### SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE

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

Gal. 3:27–28

**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.

Eph. 4:1–6

**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.**

### **CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP**

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

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

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

Il Sun (PK), you have been called by the Presbytery of East Tennessee to serve as our moderator for the coming year.

Doris, you have been called by the Presbytery of East Tennessee to serve as our vice-moderator for the coming year.

Il Sun (PK) and Gloria, 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 East Tennessee, confirm the call of God to our siblings Il Sun and Doris as moderator and vice-moderator in the service of Jesus Christ?

**We do.**

Will you support and encourage them in this ministry?

**We will.**

#### **INSTALLATION PRAYER**

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 Il Sun and Doris 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.

#### **CHARGE**

Il Sun and Doris, you are installed to service as moderator and vice-moderator in the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

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

#### **BLESSING**

May the God of peace  
make you holy in every way,  
and keep your whole being, spirit, soul, and body,  
free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

## 13 Adjournment and Closing Prayer

# 14 Appendices

## A COVENANT BETWEEN THE PRESBYTERY OF EAST TENNESSEE, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) AND SUNSET GAP COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this covenant is to define the nature and scope, of the relationship mutually agreed to by Sunset Gap Community Center and the Presbytery of East Tennessee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

### II. HISTORY OF THE RELATIONSHIP

Sunset Gap Community Center was founded by the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church USA in 1900. In 1924, it became a school for children in the mountainous area of Sevier and Cocke Counties under the direction of Miss Sarah Cochran. The dormitory served as a health clinic for the people of the area. In 1965, the school closed due to the state's consolidation efforts. The facility was then transformed into a Community Center, with such services as Pre-School, a Thrift Shop, Food Pantry, Boy/Girl Scouting, Work Camps, DVBS, Retreats, Special Tutoring, etc. The Rev. Robert Davis served as director until September 30, 1992. In 1968, the Board of National Missions turned the operation of the facility over to the Synod of the South, and in 1992 the Synod ceased its funding. In 1993, the Center was incorporated as a non-profit organization to continue its program as a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

### III. PARTIES TO THIS COVENANT

The parties of this covenant. Sunset Gap Community Center of Cosby, Tennessee (operating under its governing board, the Board of Directors) and the Presbytery of East Tennessee, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) (operating as a governing body) are separate entities. They are independent, neither being controlled by the other. They are, however, interdependent in that they must work together to accomplish their common purposes.

### IV. COMMITMENT BY THE SUNSET GAP COMMUNITY CENTER, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Sunset Gap Community Center affirms its commitment to

- CONDUCT and maintain a Center for individual, family and community improvement in keeping with the stated purposes of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);
- EXTEND the Gospel of Christ in all its fullness and service and in all its implications so that all shall know the dignity and worth which is theirs as people of God;
- PROVIDE a program that will contribute to the physical, social, educational, and spiritual growth of all persons needing its service without regard to race, creed, gender, national origin, financial, or social position;
- MAINTAIN teaching, training and service components which will advance human and community development;
- INFORM the sponsoring governing body (ies), other supporting agencies and interested individuals of the social and economic conditions existing in Eastern Tennessee and the factors essential to its well-being;
- REFER to its Presbyterian heritage in all of its literature;
- DEMONSTRATE active concern for social justice and human mercy among the entire community, fostering a keen spirit of volunteerism;
- MAINTAIN Christian governance and leadership by maintaining the practice that a large majority of directors and administrators and staff be Christians;
- INSURE by every effort that the President of Sunset Gap Community Center, or his/her successor office, be a Presbyterian.

### V. COMMITMENT BY THE PRESBYTERY OF EAST TENNESSEE:

Presbytery of East Tennessee affirms its commitment to:

- UNDERGIRD the Center spiritually by praying for its directors, administrators, staff, clients and friends;
- PROVIDE financial support to its ministry through the on-going budget of the Presbytery;
- ENCOURAGE individuals and congregations within the bounds of the Presbytery to provide financial support to the Center,
- ENCOURAGE churches within the Presbytery to consider holding some of their conferences, retreats, meetings, and training events in the Center's facilities as the Center's schedule may permit;

- RECEIVE, annually, a report from the Center with such details as may prove useful for the purpose of promotion and support.

vi. MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- A. The Board of Directors of Sunset Gap Community Center realizing the importance of its relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Board of Directors of Sunset Gap Community Center, Inc. further commits itself to:
- MAINTAIN a sub-committee on Church Relations, through its Executive Committee. The sub-committee would have as its primary responsibility the continuing review and development of the Center's relationship with the Church;
  - ENSURE that at least one member of each of the three classes of directors of the Center would be Presbyterian from within the Presbytery of East Tennessee elected by the Presbytery.
- B. Disposition of Property. If Sunset Gap Community Center should ever cease to operate as an institution carrying out its stated purpose, the Board of Directors, in accordance with the Charter of the Center, will determine the disposition of property.
- C. Accountability and Communication. Both parties agree to provide regular and formal channels of communication to ensure accountability and to address issues of mutual concern and interest.
- The Center will provide Presbytery with a report of its ministry program and activities of the Center in its Annual report to Presbytery;
  - The Presbytery will provide the Center with copies of its Minutes of Presbytery meetings;
  - The Presbytery, through its related Division, and the Center, through its sub-committee on Church Relations of its Board of Directors will review the covenant every 5 years;
  - The text of this covenant shall be entered into the Minutes of Presbytery, and references made to it in appropriate publications of the Presbytery which highlights its institutions and agencies;
  - This covenant between the Presbytery of East Tennessee Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Sunset Gap Community Center shall be made available to members of the administration, Board, staff and to other constituencies as deemed appropriate;
  - The President of the Center shall be responsible for seeing that all provisions of this covenant regarding the Center's responsibilities are presented to the Board of Directors;
  - The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of East Tennessee, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be responsible for seeing that all provisions of this covenant regarding Presbytery's responsibilities are fulfilled;
  - The Center shall inform the Presbytery of its formal or informal covenant relationships with other governing bodies or church bodies. It is understood, however, that no provision of such covenants will be in conflict with the provisions of this covenant.
- D. Review and Amendment of the Covenant:
- A comprehensive review of the Covenant shall be conducted every five years by a team composed of the appropriate division of Presbytery and the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the Center. It is expected that the President of the Center will be present for such review.
  - This Covenant may be amended by action of the Board of Directors of Sunset Gap Community Center and the Presbytery of East Tennessee, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

vii. FORMAL APPROVAL

This Covenant shall be effective upon formal approval by the Board of Directors of Sunset Gap Community Center, Inc. and by the Presbytery of East Tennessee, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

This Covenant recognizes the possibility that Sunset Gap Community Center may develop other covenant relationships with other governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or with other church bodies with which our denomination is in correspondence.

Signed:

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Chairman of Board of Directors  
Sunset Gap Community Center, Inc

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Moderator, Presbytery of East Tennessee, PC (USA)

## 15 Roll