

**Docket**  
**Meeting of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska**  
**Saturday, October 26, 2024 at 9:00am**  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
**North Platte, Nebraska**

*As approved by the Presbytery at the December 5, 2000, meeting, the meetings of Presbytery shall be set in the worshipful context of thanksgiving. We ask that cell phones be turned either to off or vibrate during the meeting and that people receive their calls outside of the meeting.*

**THE PRESBYTERY GATHERS**

8:30 a.m.	Fellowship and preparation for the meeting.	
9:00 a.m.	The Call to Order	Gary Smith
	Land Acknowledgement	
	Welcome	Emily McCreery
	Announcements	
	Enrollment/Quorum	
	The Presentation of the Docket and Seating of Corresponding Members	
	Introduction of First Time Commissioners	
	Approval of the Minutes	pages 5-10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3/10/2024 Commissioning Service</li><li>• 4/27/2024 Presbytery Meeting</li></ul>	
	New Business to be Presented at the End of the Meeting	

**THE PRESBYTERY HEARS GOD'S WORD**

**Worship**

- Our preacher this morning is Polly Deppen-Williams
- Our offering will go to Grace Ministries (Food Pantry for FPC North Platte)
- Commissioning of Emily McCreery as a Commissioned Pastor for FPC North Platte
- Prayer of Thanksgiving for Those Ending Presbytery Service

**WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

10:00 a.m.	Report of the Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk	Polly Deppen-Williams pages 11-15
	Synod Report	Becky Dobitsch pages 16-17
	General Assembly Commissioners Report	
	Commission on Preparation	Jill Boyd page 18

Council Report	Jill Boyd pages 19-20
Nominating Committee	Jill Boyd
Business and Budget	Don Anthony pages 21-23
Personnel	Eddie Mariel page 24
Commission on Ministry	Joyce Dean page 25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report from Administrative Commission to close Community Presbyterian Church, Lebanon, NE</li> <li>• Litany of Praise</li> </ul>	
New Business	
Installation of New Moderator & Vice Moderator	

#### **THE PRESBYTERY IS SENT FORTH IN GOD'S NAME**

Adjourn with Prayer	Logan Ellis
Discussion on Creating a Hopeful Future	Sharon Rees

12:00 p.m.      Lunch

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#### **2025 Presbytery Dates & locations:**

- February 1, 2025 – Zoom
- April 26, 2025
- October 25, 2025

**LITANY OF PRAISE**  
**Community Presbyterian Church, Lebanon, Nebraska**

L – Eternal God, whom the highest heaven cannot contain,

P – **hear our prayer.**

L – for the Church universal, of which the congregation of Community Presbyterian Church has been a symbol,

P – **we praise you, O God.**

L – For all the saints who, in times past and present, have formed a congregation of your people and met to offer their prayers and praise to you,

P – **we praise you, O God.**

L – For those who; have been made your children by adoption and grace, who were cleansed of sin, buried with Christ in the waters of baptism, and raised to new and eternal life,

P – **we praise you, O God.**

L – For your presence whenever your Word was proclaimed and your sacramental gifts of bread and wine received,

P – **we praise you, O God.**

L – For your blessing upon each of your children, welcomed and nurtured,

P – **we praise you, O God.**

L – For all who came to ask your blessing in marriage, seeking to love with your love,

P – **we praise you, O God.**

L – For faithful stewards who have lived for others, serving you by loving neighbors,

P – **we praise you, O God.**

L – for the knowledge that your church and your ministry will continue today, tomorrow, and forever,

P – **we praise you, O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

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**MODERATOR/VICE-MODERATOR INSTALLATION**

There are different gifts, but it is the same Spirit who gives them. There are different ways of serving God, but it is the same Lord who is served. God works through different people in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves his purpose through them all. Though we have different gifts, together we are a ministry of reconciliation led by the risen Christ. We work and pray to make Christ's church useful in the world, and we call men and women of faith, so that, in the end, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Whoever among you wants to be great must become the servant of all, and if he wants to be first among you, she must be the slave of all people! Just as the Christ came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life to set others free.

Logan & Becky, God has called you by the voice of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska to serve as moderator and vice-moderator of the presbytery. You know who we are and what we believe, and you understand the work for which you have been chosen.

### **To the moderator and vice-moderator**

Will you be a faithful moderator or vice-moderator and, in that ministry, will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

**I will**

Do you welcome the work for which you have been chosen, and will you serve the people with energy, intelligence imagination, and love, relying on God's mercy and rejoicing in his promises through Jesus Christ our Lord?

**I do and I will**

### **To the presbytery assembly**

Do we the members of this presbytery, accept Sharon & Jill, chosen by God through the voice of this presbytery, to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?

**We do**

Do we agree to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is head of the church?

**We do**

Let us pray . . . Almighty God: in every age you have chosen servants to lead your loyal people. We thank you for Logan & Becky whom you have called to serve this presbytery. Give them special gifts to do their special work; and fill them with your Holy Spirit, so they may have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus. Almighty and everlasting God hear our prayers for this presbytery. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **Commissioning of Janet Rasmussen**

**March 10, 2024**

**4:00pm**

Administrative Commission of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska to Commission Janet Rasmussen as Commissioned Pastor/Commissioned Ruling Elder of First Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, Nebraska

### **Members Present:**

- Rev. Jill Boyd, First Presbyterian Church, Cozad
- Rev. Polly Deppen-Williams, Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Central Nebraska
- Shelbea Gouldie, Ruling Elder, First Presbyterian Church, St. Paul
- Rev. Kevin Guerink, First Presbyterian Church, Grand Island
- Gary Smith, Ruling Elder, Presbytery Moderator, Valentine Presbyterian Church, Valentine
- Ann Sukraw-Lutz, Ruling Elder, First Presbyterian Church, Grand Island

The Administrative Commission was called to order with prayer by Gary Smith.

A motion was made to commission Janet Rasmussen as the Commissioned Pastor for First Presbytery Church of St. Paul, Nebraska. The motion was seconded and passed.

A motion was made to dissolve the Administrative Commission at the end of the commissioning service. The motion was seconded and passed.

The meeting was closed with prayer.

Minutes submitted by Rev. Polly Deppen-Williams

**MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF CENTRAL NEBRASKA**  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024**  
**VALENTINE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, VALENTINE, NE**

**PRESBYTERY ATTENDANCE**

<b>Church</b>	<b>Ruling Elder Commissioner</b>
Atkinson, First	
Aurora, Presbyterian UCC	
Axtell, First	
Beaver City, First	
Benkelman, First	
Broken Bow, First	
Campbell, Westminster United	
Central City, United	
Cozad First	
Danbury, First	
Edgar, Church of the Plains	
Ewing, Bethany	
Ewing, UMPC (USA)	
Fairfield, Community	
Fullerton, First	
Gothenburg, First	Carol Skinner
Grand Island, First	
Hastings, First	Brian Johnson
Hastings, Second	
Holdrege, First	
Kearney, First	Julie Tye
Kenesaw, First	
Keystone	Mary Lou Crofutt
Lebanon, Community	
Lexington, First	Kristin Steinberger
Lexington, Buffalo Grove	
Minden, Westminster United	
North Platte, First	John Beggs
O'Neill, First	
Orleans, First	
St. Paul, First	
Stuart, Community	
Superior, First	
Sutherland, First	
Valentine	Robert Kilmer
Wood River, First	

<b>Ministers of Word &amp; Sacrament</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Greg Allen–Pickett	Excused
David Boyd	Excused
Jill Boyd	Excused
Clint Cozier	Excused
Joy Church	Excused
Ivan Dean	Excused
Steve Deines – Retired	Excused
Polly Deppen-Williams	Present
Rebecca Dobitsch	Present
Logan Ellis	Present
Lisa Ewald	
John Gallentine	
Kevin Geurink	Excused
Kristin Hamner	Excused
Doodle Harris	Present
Lori Kitzing	
Cheryl Lamb	
Robert Thom – Retired	Excused
Berke Landrum	
Eddie Mariel	Present
David McCarthy	Excused
Joan McCarthy - Retired	Excused
Doug McHargue	
Frank Medsker – Retired	Excused
Roger Nelson – Retired	Excused
William Nottage–Tacey – Retired	Excused
Charles Olsen – Retired	Excused
Sharon Rees	Present
Kirwin Stewart	Excused
H. Eldin Wells – Retired	Present
Karen Woo – Retired	Excused
Gui–Jie Zhang	

<b>Commissioned Pastors</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Joyce Dean	Excused
Mark Diehl	
Dave Irwin	
Brad Jepsen	
Emily McCreery (ELCA PMA)	Present
Craig Mead	Present
Wayne Owens	Present
Gary Smith	Present
Penny Schulz (Disciples of Christ)	
Janet Rasmussen	Present
Janene Reynolds (UMC)	

## **VISITORS**

Laurie Johnson  
Theresa Mead  
David Peterson  
Ruth Smith  
Annabelle Wells

## **STAFF**

Judy Rothenberger

## **CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**

Phillip Blackburn, Arkansas Presbytery  
Kyle Nolan, Presbyterian Foundation, Lake Michigan Presbytery

## **COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Don Anthony, Business & Budget  
Becky Dobitsch, MWS Synod Commissioner  
Logan Ellis, Presbytery Vice-Moderator  
Brian Johnson, RE Synod Commissioner  
Eddie Mariel, Personnel  
Sue Medsker, Presbyterian Women  
Gary Smith, Presbytery Moderator

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## **THE PRESBYTERY GATHERS**

The stated meeting of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska convened at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, April 27, 2024. The meeting was called to order and opened with prayer by Moderator Gary Smith. Land acknowledgement was given by Gary Smith.

Stated Clerk Polly Deppen-Williams established that there was a quorum present.

The docket was presented and approved.

Corresponding members were seated: Phillip Blackburn, Arkansas Presbytery; Kyle Nolan, Lake Michigan Presbytery.

There were no first-time commissioners.

The Minutes of the February 2, 2024, meeting were approved.

## **THE PRESBYTERY HEARS GOD'S WORD**

The Presbytery gathered for worship with the Rev. Phillip Blackburn as the guest preacher. Gary Smith and Doodle Harris presided at the table. The offering will go the Native American Church Property Fund.

## **STATED CLERK'S & EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER'S REPORT**

Polly Deppen-Williams gave the report on her position as Executive.

## **PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION**

Kyle Nolan, Ministry Relations Officer for the Upper Midwest for the Presbyterian Foundation, spoke to the Presbytery. He shared resources that the Foundation offers such as Online Giving, Stewardship Navigator,



Church Financial Leadership Academy, Stewardship Kaleidoscope. He also shared how the Foundation can help with investment needs for churches.

#### **REPORT FROM HASTINGS COLLEGE**

Doodle Harris, Chaplain for Hastings College, shared news from Hastings College. Hastings College received a Lilly Grant for Compelling Preaching. They are offering a program for high school students who have an interest in leadership and preaching, as well as a preaching conference for experienced pastors in June focusing on digital media and pop culture. A brochure is available outlining the programs offered.

#### **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REPORT**

Polly Deppen-Williams gave the COM report.

Church moderators remain as follows:

- Church of the Plains – Doodle Harris
- St. Paul – Kevin Geurink
- Sutherland – Polly Deppen-Williams
- Keystone – Eddie Mariel
- Benkelman – Polly Deppen-Williams
- Buffalo Grove – Eddie Mariel
- O'Neill & Bethany - Wayne Owens

Liaisons to churches were approved:

- Kit Alff
  - Buffalo Grove
  - Cozad
  - Gothenburg
  - Lexington
  - Minden
- David Boyd
  - Broken Bow
  - Keystone
  - North Platte
  - Sutherland
  - Kearney
  - Holdrege
- Joyce Dean
  - Beaver City
  - Benkelman
  - Danbury
  - Orleans
- Lisa Ewald
  - Central City
  - Fullerton
  - Grand Island
  - Aurora
- Kevin Geurink
  - Campbell
  - Edgar
  - Fairfield
  - Superior
  - St. Paul
- Carol Skinner
  - Atkinson
  - Stuart
  - O'Neill
  - Ewing Bethany
  - Bethany PCUSA/UMC
  - Valentine
- Kirwin Stewart
  - Hastings
  - Hastings 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Kenesaw
  - Wood River
  - Axtell

Commission the commission for Janet Rasmussen to be commissioned as Commissioned Pastor for First Presbyterian Church, St. Paul. The commission includes Moderator Gary Smith, CP Valentine, Rev Polly Deppen-Williams, Executive Presbyter, Rev. Jill Boyd, Cozad, Rev. Kevin Geurink, Grand Island, Elder Ann Sukraw-Lutz, Grand Island, Elder Shelbea Gouldie, St. Paul. Vote to approve this commission was unanimous. The Commission Service will be Sunday, March 10, 2024 at 4:30 pm at First Presbyterian Church, St. Paul.

Approved a Temporary Supply Covenant between Kasey Summerer and First Presbyterian, O'Neill and Bethany Presbyterian, Ewing.

Approved Rev. Joan McCarthy, as requested, be to move to retired status beginning March 28, 2024.

Approved Rev. Karen Woo, as requested, be to move to retired status beginning April 4, 2024.

#### **SYNOD REPORT**

Becky Dobitsch reported that the Synod meeting will begin Sunday, April 28 in Farmington, MN. Synod School will be July 21-26 at Storm Lake, IA.

#### **COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT**

Sara Babcock is an Inquirer who graduated from Louisville Seminary in 2023 and is currently working in their admissions department.

The CPM also approved volunteer readers of this spring's ordination exams. Those volunteers include Logan Ellis (Teaching Elder), Bob Scriven (Ruling Elder), and Brian Johnson (Alternate) and the appropriate documentation was submitted to GA.

#### **COUNCIL REPORT**

The report is contained in the Presbytery docket materials.

#### **BUSINESS AND BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT**

Don Anthony, Chair, presented the report. Our investments total \$1,070,286.

#### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT**

Eddie Mariel, Chair, presented the Personnel Committee report. There is no business to report.

#### **NOMINATING**

Eddie Mariel presented the Nominating Committee report sharing that Council functions as the Nominating Committee. There is no business to report.

#### **YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT**

Doodle Harris presented the Youth Committee report. The committee is working on programming for the youth in our churches. She also shared that Triennium will be next year in Louisville, KY.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

#### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Moderator Gary Smith led the prayers of the people and gave a benediction.

#### **THE PRESBYTERY IS SENT FORTH IN GOD'S NAME**

The Presbytery adjourned at 11:08am.

The Presbytery Meeting moved to the Fellowship Hall for a presentation by Phillip Blackburn on Vitality in Rural Churches.

The next meeting of Presbytery will be at First Presbyterian Church in North Platte, Nebraska, on Saturday, October 26, 2024.

## **Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk Report October 26, 2024**

**Since our last meeting, I wanted to share some of what I have been doing as your Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk:**

### **Meetings with Pastors & Others:**

- 5/13/2024 Meeting with COM and CPM Chairs with candidate
- 5/15/2024 Meeting with COM and CPM Chairs with candidate
- 5/20/2024 Zoom with Ken Green re: Board of Pensions changes
- 5/30/2024 Presbytery Pastors' Lunch @Cunningham's on the Lake
- 6/5/2024 Lunch with a pastor
- 7/18/2024 Breakfast with a pastor
- 8/16/2024 Memorial Service for Frank & Carol Medsker at FPC Hastings
- 9/18/2024 Lunch with a pastor
- 9/26/2024 Presbytery Pastors' Lunch @Good Evans

### **Churches Visited:**

- 5/14/2024 Moderate Sutherland Session Meeting
- 5/21/2024 Meet with FPC Kearney Session
- 6/2/2024 Preach at FPC Lexington
- 6/16/2024 Worship at FPC Superior
- 6/25/2024 Meet with FPC Kearney Deacons
- 7/14/2024 Preach at FPC Kearney
- 7/21/2024 Worship at Campbell
- 7/28/2024 Worship at FPC Hastings
- 8/4/2024 Worship at Central City
- 8/16/2024 FPC Beaver City 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner
- 8/20/2024 Moderate Sutherland Session
- 8/25/2024 Preach at 2<sup>nd</sup> PC Hastings
- 9/1/2024 Preach at FPC Axtell
- 9/8/2024 Worship at FPC Kearney
- 9/15/2024 Worship at FPC Broken Bow
- 9/22/2024 Preach at WUPC Minden
- 10/6/2024 Worship at FPC Grand Island

### **Presbytery Related Meetings:**

- 5/14/2024 Commission on Ministry
- 5/22/2024 Nebraska Ecumenical Partners Zoom
- 6/11/2024 Commission on Ministry
- 7/9/2024 Commission on Ministry
- 8/1/2024 Business & Budget Committee
- 8/28/2024 Meet with Jill Boyd re: CPM materials
- 9/4/2024 Personnel Committee
- 9/10/2024 Council Meeting
- 9/12/2024 Call with Corey Schlosser-Hall re: Coming to April Presbytery Meeting
- 10/1/2024 Zoom call with representative from Safe Gatherings
- 10/8/2024 Commission on Ministry

**Synod & Denomination Meetings:**

- 4/28- 5/1/2024 Synod meeting & EP gathering in Farmington, MN
- 5/5-5/7/2024 Synod Clerks gathering at Lakeshore Center in Iowa
- 5/8/2024 AMCL Zoom Call
- 6/12/2024 AMCL Zoom Call
- 6/28-7/5/2024 General Assembly in Salt Lake City, UT
- 7/22/2024 Zoom OPSF Camp Plans
- 7/26/2024 Zoom OPSF Executive Committee
- 8/10-15/2024 OPSF Camp at YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, CO
- 8/14/2024 Synod Call with Elona Street-Stewart and other EPs
- 8/22/2024 Zoom follow up about OPSF Camp
- 8/28/2024 OPSF Board Meeting
- 8/28/2024 Nebraska Ecumenical Partners
- 9/10/2024 Synod Communications Committee
- 9/11/2024 Synod Call with Elona Street-Stewart and other EPs
- 9/11/2024 AMCL Zoom Call
- 9/25/2024 Nebraska Ecumenical Partners
- 9/26/2024 Zoom Call with OPSF about the Pastoral Leadership Revitalization (PLR) program
- 10/9/2024 Synod Call with Elona Street-Stewart and other Eps
- 10/9/2024 AMCL Zoom Annual Meeting
- 10/10/2024 OPSF Executive Committee Meeting in Omaha

**Other projects:**

- 5/4/2024 Preaching Webinar #4
- 6/8/2024 Final Preaching Webinar

**Upcoming Vacation:**

I will be gone from Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup> to Monday, November 25<sup>th</sup>. Matt and I are going with my Mom to Prague in the Czech Republic to celebrate her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. (My Mom moved to Kearney in May from Indiana.)

Grace & peace,

*Polly*

Polly Deppen-Williams

## STATED CLERK'S REPORT

### October 26, 2024

The Stated Clerk determines that the number of Teaching Elders/Ministers of Word and Sacrament having membership in good standing and temporary members in the Presbytery of Central Nebraska totals 32; of these a total of 26 currently reside within the bounds of the Presbytery. The number of Ruling Elder commissioners and Ruling Elder members entitled to attend and vote at any meeting is 45\*.

Therefore, it is the opinion of the Stated Clerk that NO REMEDIAL ACTION is needed to redress any imbalance in voting as required.

The following is the current roster of those members of the permanent judicial commission whose terms have expired within the past six years (D-5.0206b):

Class of 2027	Class of 2025	Class of 2023	Class of 2021	Class of 2019
Jon Beggs	Ivan Dean	Bill Nottage-Tacey	Dave Irwin	Joan McCarthy
Kirwin Stewart	Mac Martin	Carol Skinner		

### The following is the listing of the membership of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska as of October 1, 2024:

#### 101 – Pastor or Co-pastor

Greg Allen-Pickett	Joy Church	Eddie Mariel
David Boyd	Ivan Dean	Kirwin Stewart
Jill Boyd	Becky Dobitsch	
Clint Cozier	Kevin Geurink	

#### 107 – Ruling Elder Commissioned to a Church (CRE/CP)

Joyce Dean	Emily McCreery	Keith Theobald
Mark Diehl	Craig Mead	Wayne Owens
Dave Irwin	Penny Schulz	
Brad Jepsen	Gary Smith	

#### 108 – Temporary Relationship

Berke Landrum  
Doug McHargue  
Sharon Rees

#### 151 – Member of Another Denomination (Temporary Membership) - Pastor

Lori Kitzing (ELCA)

#### 153 – Member of Another Denomination (Temporary Membership) – Associate Pastor

Damen Heitmann (UCC)

#### 299 – Honorably Retired

Bruce Bradley**	Roger Nelson	Robert Thom**
Steve Deines	William Nottage-Tacey	H. Eldin Wells
Joan McCarthy	Charles Olsen	Karen Woo**

#### 304 – Executive & Stated Clerk of a Synod or Presbytery

Polly Deppen-Williams

501 – Pastor Serving Another Denomination  
David McCarthy\*\*

565 – Ecumenical/Non-denominational Agency  
Logan Ellis

641 – Educational Institute – Pastor/Chaplain  
Lynda (Doodle) Harris

701- Chaplain Serving Other Institutions  
Lisa Ewald

791 – Presbytery Validated Ministry  
Kristin Hamner\*\*

797 – Member at Large  
John Gallentine\*\*  
Cheryl Lamb\*\*

Gui-Jie Zhang

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**Churches in the Presbytery of Central Nebraska:**

- |                                                                  |                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Atkinson, First                                               | 18. Hastings, First            |
| 2. Aurora, PUCC                                                  | 19. Hastings, Second           |
| 3. Axtell, First                                                 | 20. Holdrege, First            |
| 4. Beaver City, First                                            | 21. Kearney, First             |
| 5. Benkelman, First                                              | 22. Kenesaw, First             |
| 6. Broken Bow, First                                             | 23. Keystone                   |
| 7. Campbell, Westminster United                                  | 24. Lexington, First           |
| 8. Central City, United                                          | 25. Lexington, Buffalo Grove   |
| 9. Cozad, First                                                  | 26. Minden, Westminster United |
| 10. Danbury, First                                               | 27. North Platte, First        |
| 11. Edgar, Church of the Plains<br>(Heartland Shared Ministries) | 28. O'Neill, First             |
| 12. Ewing, Bethany                                               | 29. Orleans, First             |
| 13. Ewing, UMC-PCUSA                                             | 30. St. Paul, First            |
| 14. Fairfield, Community                                         | 31. Stuart, Community          |
| 15. Fullerton, Fullerton Community<br>UMC/PCUSA                  | 32. Superior, First            |
| 16. Gothenburg, First                                            | 33. Sutherland, First          |
| 17. Grand Island, First                                          | 34. Valentine                  |
|                                                                  | 35. Wood River                 |

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**Additional Information:**

- The presbytery has obtained insurance and worker's compensation coverage from The Insurance Board.
- 2023 Statistical Reports were completed and sent to the General Assembly.

- A report of pastoral compensation is in process and will be presented at the January 2024 Presbytery meeting.
  - The Presbytery Minutes were reviewed by the Synod of Lakes & Prairies in May 2024. The following silences were noted:
    - The Lord's Supper was celebrated at Presbytery meetings, but not recorded.
    - Commissioned Pastor commissions reviews were not mentioned.
    - Session Minutes were not reviewed in 2023.
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\*Taken from the Presbytery Manual Standing Rules:

2.20 In addition to Ruling Elder commissioners from sessions, Presbytery shall enroll for the term of service the Executive Presbyter, Stated Clerk, Moderator of Presbytery, Vice Moderator of Presbytery, the Moderators of the Commission on Ministry, Commission on Preparation for Ministry, Youth Committee, Council and Council's Committees, and the Ruling Elder Commissioner to Synod, whether or not the elder serves as a commissioner for his/her session.

\*\*Does not reside within the bounds of the Presbytery.

## Synod Representative Report: October 2024

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies held its spring meeting at Mt. Olivet Conference & Retreat Center in Farmington, MN on April 28-30, 2024. Polly Deppen-Williams, Doodle Harris, Brian Johnson, and I attended the meeting.

We participated in Boundary Training using videos that were created by the Synod. They have made this available for churches to use to train Session members via the Book of Order requirement. ( <https://www.lakesandprairies.org/resources/boundary-training> )

There were presentations from Kyle Nolan of the Presbyterian Foundation, Jim Hinton of New Covenant Trust, John Wilkinson of PMA, Ken Green of the Board of Pensions, Erin Anderson of Clearwater Forest, Emily Meyer of Ministry Lab, and Crystal Boyd of Hennepin History Museum. Doodle Harris of Hastings College also gave a report about the college; but highlighted their Aspire Program and the Compelling Preaching Conference in June.

The Synod also approved three overtures to General Assembly and concurred with another overture. One of those overtures to GA was regarding the changes that were made by the Board of Pensions regarding medical coverage.

*“The Synod of Lakes and Prairies of the PC(USA) overtures the General Assembly to work with the Board of Pensions to ensure adjustments are made to medical dues plans for Pastors and Spouse or Families eliminating the undue burden on small congregations and ensuring the affordability of medical coverage for pastoral leaders needing family coverage in 2026 and beyond.”*

We spent one afternoon doing the work of strategic planning for the Synod as we looked at potential focus areas for the coming years. We heard the various committee reports which highlighted all the wonderful and unique ministries and projects of/within our Synod. We also learned that the Synod continues to be in good health regarding finances and staffing. As a result, the Per Capita for the Synod will remain the same at \$5.50.

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The Synod of Lakes & Prairies held Synod School at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa on July 21-26, 2024. This was a wonderful time of celebration, worship, learning, fellowship, and learning to tie-dye! This was the 70<sup>th</sup> year for Synod School and there was much to celebrate. I will share a report at the meeting regarding Synod School in person at our Presbytery Meeting.

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The Synod held its fall meeting via zoom on October 6-7. Brian Johnson and I attended the meeting. We heard committee reports from the standing committees. There were several things to pass along to the Presbytery and the churches. The Transforming Communities/Vital Leaders Committee is looking to develop cohort groups that would meet for support. Please contact the



Synod office if you are interested in being part of a cohort or to find out more information. We were also asked to pass along a reminder that there are scholarships available through the Self-Development of People. Check with the Synod if you think you have a project that might qualify. The Synod is also planning a 'Synod Sunday' for February. You can choose your own Sunday within the month of February. The goal of Synod Sunday is to spread the good news of what is happening in our Synod. There will be a bulletin insert and short video for churches and presbyteries to use. Other important dates for your calendar include Synod School held July 20-25 in Storm Lake, IA and Triennium held July 28-31 in Louisville, KY.

It was also reported that the GA overture regarding the changes made by the Board of Pensions was passed with few changes. It passed with 92% approval! Relatedly, the Synod is working to find funds to help presbyteries and congregations deal with this dramatic increase of the medical coverage costs. We need to simply let them know where and what support is needed.

The Synod continues to be in good financial health. Even though Per Capita giving is down, the Synod has done well with its investments and the staff is mindful of expenses. The proposed budget was passed and the Synod's Per Capita will again remain at \$5.50.

We concluded our time together with worship and celebrating the Lord's Supper.

The next Synod meeting will be in person April 27-29, 2025.

Commission on Preparation for Ministry  
Presbytery of Central Nebraska Meeting  
October 26, 2024

Current members of the CPM include Joy Church, Mary Lou Clark, Becky Dobitsch, Logan Ellis, Julia Thomsen, and Jill Boyd (chair).

The CPM met at the presbytery office on June 16<sup>th</sup>, July 26<sup>th</sup>, and August 28<sup>th</sup>. On August 16<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, we brought four new people under care:

**Roxanne Converse-Whiting** is a member of FPC Gothenburg. She has entered the process to become a Commissioned Pastor.

**Brian Johnson** is member of FPC Hastings. He has entered the process to become a Commissioned Pastor.

**Rosalie Koepp** is a member of FPC Hastings. She is enrolled as an Inquirer and pursuing an MDiv through Louisville Seminary's online program.

**Emily McCreery** is the pastor at FPC North Platte. She is enrolled as an Inquirer and pursuing an MDiv through University of Dubuque Theological Seminary's online program.

**Sara Babcock** continues to be an Inquirer.

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, the CPM went through all existing files of previous individuals who have been under care. We eliminated duplicates, corrected items that were misfiled, and assured that they were as complete as possible.

We remain available to those who are under care and consider it a privilege to serve on the CPM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jill Boyd, Chair

# Council Meeting Minutes

September 10, 2024

## Council Attendance

Council Chair	Jill Boyd	Present
Moderator	Gary Smith	Absent
Vice Moderator	Logan Ellis	Present
COM Chair	Joyce Dean	Present
CPM Chair	Jill Boyd	Present
NOM Chair	Council	
Personnel Chair	Eddie Mariel	Present
Business & Budget Chair	Don Anthony	Present
PYC Chair	Vacant	
PW Chair	Sue Medsker	Present
Synod Commissioner	Becky Dobitsch	Present
Member-at-Large	Bob Scriven	Present
Member-at-Large	Jon Beggs	Present
Member-at-Large	Brian Johnson	Present
Executive Presbyter	Polly Deppen-Williams	Present

Jill Boyd opened the zoom meeting at 1:07 PM with devotion and prayer.

Council minutes from April 9, 2024 were **APPROVED** as presented.

Communications:

- There were none.

Polly shared her Executive Presbyter & State Clerk report. She also shared a letter written by the ELCA Bishop requesting signatures from all Mid-council leaders. The letter will be used as a press release on September 24, 2024. After discussion, the Council was **UNANIMOUS** in support of Polly signing the document.

Reports of Council Committees:

Personnel – Eddie reported that the committee met. They recommended that Judy’s hourly rate be increased 2.5% & that Polly receive a \$2400.00 increase in salary to cover insurance costs. Council voted **UNANIMOUSLY** to support both increases in 2025.

Business and Budget- Don reported the following:

- Committee recommends that Per Capita remain at \$35.00 for 2025; increase to \$35.50 in 2026. Council voted **UNANIMOUSLY** to support this action.
- Committee approved a \$2500.00 grant to Westminster United Church, Minden for the purpose of installing a stair lift for basement access.
- Discussed the Bruce Henrickson Educational Debt/Scholarship Fund.
- Discussed the Emergency Fund component of the Henrickson gift. Monies in this Fund will be available for Council use. The Council voted **UNANIMOUSLY** to support this action.
- Don thanked the Council for their support over the 7 years that he has served on Business & Budget.

Nominating. Council discussed the following:

- CPM needs:
  - Becky agreed to move to the Class of 2025. *Will need Presbytery approval.*
  - Jill will visit with a potential new member.
  - Logan agreed to serve another 3-year term. Council **APPROVED**.
- COM needs:
  - Joyce agreed to serve 1 more term. *Will need Presbytery approval.*

- Business & Budget needs:
  - Will need 2 people to serve
  - Sharon Rees has agreed to chair. *Will need Presbytery approval.*

#### Reports of Presbytery Committees:

COM – Joyce reported the following:

- Minimum salary letters have gone out.

CPM – Jill reported the following:

- 4 new people are now under care:
  - Roxanne Converse-Whiting – entered the process to become a Commissioned Pastor
  - Brian Johnson – entered the process to become a Commissioned Pastor
  - Rosalie Koepp – has enrolled as an Inquirer to pursue MDiv through Louisville Seminary
  - Emily McCreery – has enrolled as an Inquirer to pursue MDiv through Dubuque Seminary
- Sara Babcock remains under care as an Inquirer.

Youth Committee – Polly reported the following:

- Triennium will be held in Louisville, Kentucky July 28-31, 2025. Doodle is beginning work on travel plans, etc.

PW – Sue reported the following:

- Churchwide gathering was held in St. Louis. Representatives from First Presbyterian Church, Lexington attended. The theme was “Always do things in Love”.

Synod – Becky reported the following:

- Synod met in person in April & proposed 3 Overtures that were presented at GA.
- Synod School was attended by more than 600 people. She had a great time & will share more information at the October Presbytery meeting.

The next Presbytery meeting will be October 26, 2024 in North Platte.

- Docket
  - Those who served as GA Commissioners will report.
  - COM will be voting to commission Emily McCreery as a Commissioned Pastor.
  - Offering will go to Grace Ministries food pantry. Council **APPROVED**.
  - The preacher will be Polly Deppen-Williams.
  - Prayers of the People will be moved to the Worship Service.
  - Council unanimously voted to **APPROVE** the Docket.

#### New business:

- 2025 Presbytery dates and locations:
  - February 1, 2025 – Zoom
  - April 26, 2025 –need host.
  - October 25, 2025 -need host.
- An invitation to join Hastings College for a dinner with the new PC(USA) stated clerk Jihyun Oh on Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM in the Barret Alumni Center was received. More details to follow.
- Corey Schlosser-Hall was requested as a guest speaker for a future Presbytery meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:25 pm and closed with prayer given by Logan.

#### Next Stated Meetings:

- Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 1:00 pm by zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Judy Rothenberger

Presbytery

8/31/2024

**Summary**

<b>Income</b>	<b>UMS</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>Budget YTD</b>
	Per capita	\$35,092	\$47,583
	Synod Staff Support	\$61,434	\$76,277
	Other Income	\$6,667	\$6,667
	<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$107,413</b>	<b>\$130,567</b>
<b>Expense</b>	Operations (incl. Per capita)	\$50,071	\$52,757
	Committees		
	Council	\$4,185	\$2,767
	COM	-\$941	\$2,600
	Business & Budget	\$0	\$133
	PM & C	\$59	\$633
	Nominating	\$0	\$0
	Permanent Judicial	\$0	\$0
	CPM	-\$2,043	\$1,867
	Youth	\$655	\$1,667
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,915</b>	<b>\$9,733</b>
	Mission Projects	\$6,117	\$19,700
	Personnel	\$88,908	\$96,035
	Other operating exp	\$779	\$1,667
<b>Pass-throughs</b>	Pass through Receipts	\$31,974	
	Pass through distributions	\$31,974	
<b>Fund Income</b>	Investment Income (net)	\$77,847	\$15,000
<b>Total Income minus Expense (all)</b>		<b>\$37,470</b>	<b>-\$34,326</b>

Statement of Financial Position						8/31/2024	
Presbytery of Central Nebraska							
				12/31/2022	12/31/2023	8/31/2024	YTD Unallocated
<b>Assets</b>							
Operating Funds:	1001p	Checking Acct- F&M 115088		\$ 2,803	\$ 2,859	\$ 2,658	
	1025p	Petty Cash-Office		100	100	0	
	1010p	Money Mkt-F&M 903205		19,047	22,980	27,674	
	1140p	Workers Comp Churches - A/R		(103)	0	0	
		<b>Total Operating Funds</b>		<b>\$ 21,848</b>	<b>\$ 25,939</b>	<b>\$ 30,332</b>	
Investments and Reserves	1011p	NewCovTrst: Mission & Ministry		\$ 134,889	\$ 159,579	\$ 172,150	
	1012p	NewCovTrst: Leadership Devel		152,671	180,615	194,844	
	1015p	NewCovTrust: Stuckey/Next Gen		390,812	462,345	498,768	
	1016p	Pres Found - Crawford Fund		0	0	0	
	1017p	NewCovTrust CD (Debt Reduction)		0	65,677	67,225	
	1018p	NewCovTrstCo: Reserves		238,035	227,922	192,547	
		<b>Total Investments and Reserves</b>		<b>\$ 916,406</b>	<b>\$ 1,096,139</b>	<b>\$ 1,125,534</b>	
Non-Financial Assets:	1636p	Office Equipment		48,378	48,378	48,378	
	1736p	Accum Depr-Equipment		(42,423)	(48,378)	(48,378)	
	1810p	Prepaid Rent		0	0	0	
		<b>Total Non-Financial Assets</b>		<b>\$ 5,955</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	
		<b>Total Assets:</b>		<b>\$ 944,209</b>	<b>\$ 1,122,078</b>	<b>\$ 1,155,866</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>							
Operating Payables:	1201p	Due From (To) Synod		\$ 208	\$ 208	\$ 208	
	1201bp	Synod Bill Payments Payable		45,192	8,869	5,466	
	1201pc	Synod Per Capita Payable		1,536	1,536	1,498	
	1201pr	Synod Payroll Payable		9,410	9,602	9,555	
	2011p	PPP Loan Payable		0	0	0	
	2015p	APA Meeting Payables		618	0	0	
	2020p	GA Per Capita Payable		5	0	0	
	2610p	Debt Reduction Grants		0	0	0	
		<b>Total Operating Payables</b>		<b>\$ 56,969</b>	<b>\$ 20,215</b>	<b>\$ 16,728</b>	
Pass-through Payables:	2050p	GA Mission Payable		(9,774)	282	197	
	2055p	UMS Synod Payable		1,115	445	386	
	2100p	Disaster Relief Payable		2,267	42	42	
	2121p	One Great Hour Offering Payabl		0	0	0	
	2126p	Christmas Joy Offering Payable		(0)	0	0	
	2131p	Pentecost Offering Payable		90	0	0	
	2136p	Peace Offering Payable to PMA		662	819	0	
	2150p	Theological Ed Fund Payable		0	0	0	
	2110p	Hunger Relief Payable		66	51	53	
	2151p	GA Designated Offering Payable		(273)	0	150	
	2620p	Camp Receipts Collected		15	0	0	
	2060p	Nebraskans in Motion		395	395	395	
	2520p	Emergency Fund		1,500	1,500	1,500	
		<b>Total Pass-through Payables</b>		<b>\$ (3,937)</b>	<b>\$ 3,534</b>	<b>\$ 2,722</b>	
		<b>Total Liabilities:</b>		<b>\$ 53,032</b>	<b>\$ 23,749</b>	<b>\$ 19,450</b>	

Statement of Financial Position						8/31/2024	
Presbytery of Central Nebraska							
				12/31/2022	12/31/2023	8/31/2024	YTD Unallocated
<b>Net Assets</b>							
Designated Accounts:	2510p	Peacemaking Fund		9,306	9,977	10,594	\$36,422.75
	2540p	Mission & Ministry Fund		262,305	262,305	262,305	
	2542p	Stuckey/Next Gen Fund		469,793	386,125	457,659	
	2544p	Leadership Development Fund		113,171	113,171	113,171	
	2550p	Johnson Scholarship Fund		2,695	3,568	3,849	
	2565p	Mission Development Fund		8,644	8,644	8,644	
	2570p	Youth Triennium Fund		0	0	0	
	3610p	Debt Reduction Fund		0	0	65,677	\$1,547.63
		<b>Total Designated Accounts</b>		<b>\$ 865,914</b>	<b>\$ 783,790</b>	<b>\$ 921,900</b>	
Reserves:	3000p	Prior Surpluses or Deficits		\$ 197,212	\$ 54,194	\$ 126,354	-\$889.35
		Year-to-date Surpluses or (Deficits)				37,470	
	3010p	Designated Reserve		50,692	50,692	50,692	
		<b>Total Reserves</b>		<b>\$ 247,904</b>	<b>\$ 104,886</b>	<b>\$ 214,516</b>	
		<b>Total Net Assets</b>		<b>\$ 1,113,818</b>	<b>\$ 888,676</b>	<b>\$ 1,136,416</b>	
<b>Asset Composition</b>							
		Assets Covering Liabilities		\$ 53,032	\$ 23,749	\$ 19,450	
		Assets Supporting Dedicated Accounts		865,914	783,790	921,900	
		Non-Financial Assets		5,955	0	0	
		Year-to-Date Unallocated Income Net of Expense			0	37,470	
		Undesignated Operating Assets (excluding YTD)		19,307	0	177,046	
		<b>Total Assets:</b>		<b>\$ 944,209</b>	<b>\$ 1,122,078</b>	<b>\$ 1,155,866</b>	

\* Other previously reported payables net of other previously reported receivables or prepayments.

## **Personnel Committee Report for Stated Presbytery Meeting on Saturday, October 26, 2024**

The Personnel Committee met via Zoom on Wednesday, September 4th.

Devotions were offered by Rev. Mariel. Rev. Deppen-Williams then updated the committee regarding her and her husband's plans to handle their medical insurance for 2025.

Per Rev. Deppen-Williams request, taking all circumstances and planning into account, ***the Personnel Committee recommends a \$2,400 baseline increase to Rev. Deppen-Williams minimum effective salary for 2025.***

This will actually result in an overall DECREASE in the Personnel Committee's budget for 2025 because Rev. Deppen-Williams will opt out of the B.O.P. insurance coverage and use the \$2,400 increase to cover insurance costs on her husband's policy. Further, this means that Rev. Deppen-Williams has opted to not take a cost of living increase for 2025 as the baseline increase is in lieu of it.

***The Personnel Committee further recommends a 2.5% hourly wage increase for 2025 for the Presbytery Administrator, Judy Rothenberger.***

While likely not a complete representation of the likely cost of living increase, Judy likes her job, likes her co-worker and really appreciates the flexibility of not having set office hours. She can get all her work done AND be an excellent grandma!

There being no further business, joys and concerns were offered and the meeting was adjourned with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Edgar C. Mariel



**COM PRESBYTERY REPORT  
OCTOBER 26, 2024**

**Church moderators**

- Church of the Plains – Doodle Harris
- Sutherland – Polly Deppen-Williams
- Keystone – Eddie Mariel
- Benkelman – Polly Deppen-Williams
- Buffalo Grove – Eddie Mariel
- O'Neill & Bethany - Wayne Owens
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Presbyterian, Hastings – Ivan & Joyce Dean
- Axtell – Sharon Rees

**Approved:**

- Emily McCreery be Commissioned to First Presbyterian Church, North Platte. The Commissioning service will be during the October 26 Presbytery Meeting.
- Received Rev. Denzel Nonhof as a member of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska. Rev. Nonhof is retired and comes to Central Nebraska from the Presbytery of South Dakota. Welcome Rev. Nonhof
- Validated the ministry of Rev. Logan Ellis. Rev. Ellis is serving First Lutheran, Kearney, ELCA. He is working with Christian Education and Pastoral Care in a non-ordained position.

**Recommend**

- The remuneration for Pulpit Supply be raised to \$100 per service plus mileage at the IRS rate.
- The Effective Salary for 2025 be \$52,078.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Joyce Dean, Chair**