

Docket
Meeting of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska
Saturday, April 26, 2025 at 9:00am
First Presbyterian Church, Axtell, 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 Land Acknowledgement Welcome Announcements Enrollment/Quorum The Presentation of the Docket and Seating of Corresponding Members Introduction of First Time Commissioners Approval of the Minutes from the 2/1/2025 Presbytery Meeting New Business to be Presented at the End of the Meeting	Logan Ellis pages 3-6

THE PRESBYTERY HEARS GOD'S WORD

Worship

- The preacher this morning will be Rev. Eddie Mariel.
- For our offering we will be matching up to \$500 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for Southern California Wildfires.

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

10:00 a.m.	Report of the Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk	Polly Deppen-Williams pages 7-8
	Council Report	Gary Smith pages 9-10
	Nominating Committee	Gary Smith
	Business and Budget	Sharon Rees page 11
	Personnel	Ivan Dean

Commission on Ministry	Joyce Dean page 12
Commission on Preparation	Jill Boyd page 13
Synod Report	Becky Dobitsch page 14
Youth Committee	Eddie Mariel
New Business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synod Matching Grant for Board of Pensions Dues • Voting on the Amendments to the Book of Order • • 	

THE PRESBYTERY IS SENT FORTH IN GOD’S NAME

Adjourn with Prayer Logan Ellis

2025 Presbytery Dates & Locations:

- **SPECIAL EVENT June 15, 2025 at 6:00pm**
 - Dinner with Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) Jihyun OH at Barret Alumni Center, Hastings College
 - Call/Text Polly at (308) 520-8216 or email polly@centralnepresby.org for the link to make a reservation
- **October 25, 2025 – First Presbyterian Church, Kearney**
Our guest preacher and presenter will be Dr. Corey Schlosser-Hall, Deputy Executive Director for Vision, Innovation, & Rebuilding at the Presbyterian Church (USA).

2026 Presbytery Dates & Locations:

- Saturday, February 7, 2026
- Saturday, April 25, 2026
- Saturday, October 24, 2026

**MINUTES
MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF CENTRAL NEBRASKA
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2025
MEETING HELD BY ZOOM**

PRESBYTERY ATTENDANCE

CHURCH	RULING ELDER COMMISSIONER
Atkinson, First	
Aurora, Presbyterian UCC	
Axtell, First	Donna Messerer
Beaver City, First	
Benkelman, First	
Broken Bow, First	
Campbell, Westminster United	
Central City, United	
Cozad First	Judy Howard
Danbury, First	
Edgar, Church of the Plains	
Ewing, Bethany	
Ewing, UMPC (USA)	
Fairfield, Community	
Fullerton, First	
Gothenburg, First	Roxanne Converse-Whiting
Grand Island, First	
Hastings, First	Brian Johnson
Hastings, Second	VeAnn Lindgren
Holdrege, First	Tyler Ehlers
Kearney, First	Gary Feind
Kenesaw, First	
Keystone	
Lexington, First	Julie Rickertsen
Lexington, Buffalo Grove	
Minden, Westminster United	Lisa Clapper
North Platte, First	Jon Beggs
O'Neill, First	
Orleans, First	
St. Paul, First	
Stuart, Community	
Superior, First	
Sutherland, First	
Valentine	
Wood River, First	

MINISTERS OF WORD & SACRAMENT	ATTENDANCE
Greg Allen–Pickett	Present
David Boyd	Present
Jill Boyd	Present
Clint Cozier	Excused
Joy Church	Present
Ivan Dean	Present
Steve Deines – Retired	Excused
Polly Deppen-Williams	Present
Rebecca Dobitsch	Present
Logan Ellis	Present
Lisa Ewald	
John Gallentine	
Kevin Geurink	Present
Kristin Hamner	
Doodle Harris	Excused
Lori Kitzing	Present
Cheryl Lamb	
Denzel Nonhof – Retired	Excused
Robert Thom – Retired	Excused
Berke Landrum	Excused
Eddie Mariel	Present
David McCarthy	Excused
Joan McCarthy - Retired	Excused
Doug McHargue	Present
Roger Nelson – Retired	Excused
William Nottage–Tacey – Retired	Excused
Charles Olsen – Retired	Excused
Sharon Rees	Present
Kirwin Stewart	Present
H. Eldin Wells – Retired	Present
Karen Woo – Retired	Excused
Gui–Jie Zhang	

COMMISSIONED PASTORS	ATTENDANCE
Stuart Davis	Present
Joyce Dean	Present
Mark Diehl	
Dave Irwin	
Emily McCreery	Present
Craig Mead	Present
Wayne Owens	
Penny Schulz (Disciples of Christ)	Present
Janet Rasmussen	Present
Janene Reynolds (UMC)	
Gary Smith	Present
Kasey Summerer	

VISITORS

Sue Medsker Audrey Richert, Annabelle Wells

STAFF

Judy Rothenberger

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS

No corresponding members were present.

THE PRESBYTERY GATHERS

The stated meeting of the Presbytery of Central Nebraska convened at 9:00a.m. on Saturday, February 1, 2025. The meeting was called to order and opened with prayer by Moderator Logan Ellis. The land acknowledgement was given by Logan Ellis.

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

The docket was presented and approved.

There were no corresponding members present.

First-time commissioners were introduced: Roxanne Converse-Whiting from Gothenburg

The Minutes of the October 26, 2024 meeting were approved.

THE PRESBYTERY HEARS GOD'S WORD

The Presbytery gathered for worship with the Rev. Polly Deppen-Williams as the guest preacher. The Rev. Polly Deppen-Williams and Emily McCreery presided at the table as the Lord's Supper was celebrated. The offering will go to the Grace Ministries Food Pantry, a ministry of First Presbyterian Church, North Platte.

STATED CLERK'S & EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER'S REPORT

Polly's report is contained in the minutes.

Synod Report

Becky Dobitsch shared a report on the Synod Meeting and Synod School.

General Assembly Commissioners Report

Doodle Harris, Sue Medsker, and Molly Kammerer recorded a video report of the General Assembly meeting in Salt Lake City during the summer of 2024.

COUNCIL REPORT

Gary gave an oral report. The only business for action was with the nominating committee.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Gary Smith presented names for nomination to committees:

- Sue Medsker, RE FPC Hastings, Commission on Preparation for Ministry - Approved
- Dan Olsen, RE FPC Axtell, Business & Budget Committee - Approved

BUSINESS & BUDGET COMMITTEE

Sharon shared that the presbytery is in good financial shape. Churches are encouraged to let the presbytery know if there are problems paying per capita. She also emphasized the grants available from the presbytery.

The Bruce Hendrickson Fund was presented by the committee for approval. The motion was approved.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Eddie gave an oral report. There was no business for action.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

Jill shared that four people are under care of the commission, two pursuing ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament and two working towards being a Commissioned Pastor.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

INSTALLATION OF VICE MODERATOR FOR 2025

Rev. Becky Dobitsch was installed as Vice Moderator for 2025.

THE PRESBYTERY IS SENT FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

The meeting was closed with prayer and adjourned at 10:23am.

Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk Report

April 26, 2025

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:

- 1/23/2025 – Presbytery Pastors’ Lunch at Good Evans
- 2/19/2025 – Lunch with a pastor and spouse
- 2/27/2025 – Presbytery Pastors’ Lunch at Good Evans
- 3/20/2025 – Coffee with a pastor
- 3/27/2025 – Presbytery Pastors’ Lunch at Good Evans

Churches Visited:

- 1/26/2025 – Worship at Fullerton Community Church
- 2/2/2025 – Worship at FPC Kearney
- 2/9/2025 – Preach at FPC Wood River
- 2/16/2025 – Preach at FPC Kearney
- 2/23/2025 – Preach at Second Presbyterian Church in Hastings & moderate congregational meeting
- 2/25/2025 – Moderate Sutherland Session Meeting
- 3/2/2025 – Worship at FPC Kearney
- 3/9/2025 – Preach at United Presbyterian Church in Benkelman & moderate congregational meeting
- 3/16/2025 – Worship at Buffalo Grove Presbyterian Church
- 3/23/2025 – Worship at FPC in Orleans
- 4/6/2025 – Worship at Aurora PCUSA UCC Church
- 4/13/2025 – Worship at Church of the Plains in Edgar
- 4/20/2025 – Worship at FPC Kearney

Presbytery Related Meetings:

- 1/29/2025 – Business & Budget Meeting by Zoom
- 2/11/2025 – COM Meeting by Zoom
- 2/19/2025 – Zoom with Sharon Rees & Joyce Dean about Synod Grant
- 2/27/2025 – Meet with Judy Rothenberger & Sharon Rees about Finances
- 3/11/2025 – COM Meeting by Zoom
- 3/18/2025 – Zoom with Sharon Rees & Joyce Dean about Synod Grant
- 3/18/2025 – Presbytery Council meeting by Zoom
- 3/26/2025 – Business & Budget Meeting by Zoom
- 3/27/2025 – Zoom with Sharon & Joyce about Synod Grant
- 4/7/2025 – Zoom with Sharon & Joyce about Synod Grant
- 4/8/2028 – Zoom Meeting Discussion on Book of Order Amendments
- 4/10/2025 – Presbytery Council Meeting by Zoom

Synod & Denomination Meetings:

- 1/22/2025 – Nebraska Ecumenical Partners Zoom
- 1/23/2025 – OPSF Board Meeting Zoom
- 2/11/2025 – OPSF Executive Committee
- 2/12/2025 – Monthly Zoom call with Elona Street-Stewart and other Synod EPs

- 2/12/2025 – AMCL Monthly Zoom meeting
- 2/26/2025 – Nebraska Ecumenical Partners
- 3/12/2025 – Monthly Zoom call with Elona Street-Stewart and other Synod Eps
- 3/12/2025 – AMCL Monthly Zoom meeting
- 4/1-3/2025 – Board of Pensions Regional Summit in Denver
- 4/10/2025 – Dinner with Ken Green from the Board of Pensions and Joyce Dean
- 4/11/2025 – Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation (OPSF) Executive Committee Meeting by Zoom
- 4/25/2025 – OPSF Meeting in Omaha

Other projects:

- Year-end reports for the PCUSA including church statistical reports
- Safe Gatherings renewals
- Synod Matching Grant for Board of Pensions dues increase

Vacation:

- June 12-16, 2025 – My Aunt’s memorial service in Findlay, Ohio
- June 20-24, 2025 – Visiting my sister-in-law in Palisade, CO
- September 12-21 – Not sure of the exact dates as of yet, but I will be attending a Retirement Seminar with the Board of Pensions in the Dallas, TX area and I will add on some days before and after for vacation.

Grace & peace,

Polly

Polly Deppen-Williams

Council Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2025

Council Attendance

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

Gary Smith opened the zoom meeting at 1:04 PM with devotion and prayer.

Council minutes from January 21, 2025 were **APPROVED** as presented.

Communications:

- There were none.

Polly shared her Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk report.

Reports of Council Committees:

Personnel – no report

Business and Budget- Sharon reported the following:

- PCN continues to do well financially.
- Sharon shared information regarding a grant being offered by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies in response to the increased cost of Board of Pensions medical coverage. This is a one-time offering to assist pastors and congregations experiencing significant hardship. PCN would need to partner with matching funds up to \$7000. This opportunity will be explored.

Nominating - Council discussed the following:

- Ivan Dean has agreed to assume chair responsibilities for Personnel. Council voted to **APPROVE**.
 - Committee members whose terms expired in 2024 will be contacted.
- Eddie Mariel has agreed to assume chair responsibilities for Youth. Council voted to **APPROVE**.
 - Committee members for class of 2027 include Sarah Mariel, Lexington; Jonathan Hamner, Grand Island; Rose Koepf, Hastings. Council voted to **APPROVE**.
- Business and Budget needs:
 - An individual who is dedicated to serving. Dan Olson has answered this request!
- COM needs:
 - An individual who is dedicated to serving.

Reports of Presbytery Committees:

COM – Joyce reported the following:

- Denzel Nonhof is now serving as Temporary Supply for First Presbyterian Church at Wood River.
- Commission needs a member, ideally female.

CPM – Polly reported in Jill’s absence the following:

- Readers for exams have been secured.
- Sara Babcock is no longer under care.
- The Commission has scheduled spring exams with the four seminary students under care.

Youth Committee – Eddie reported:

- The committee is committed to taking 20-22 students to Presbyterian Youth Triennium July 28-31, 2025 in Louisville, KY.
 - Cost per student is \$200. Committee recommends that churches pay \$100 and families pay \$100.
 - Presbytery has budgeted \$15,000 that will cover cost of transportation (Hastings College van/driver) and lodging.
 - Will need 5-7 adult sponsors.
 - April 26 is the deadline for registration.
 - Hailey Gifford, Hastings College student, is coordinating registrations.

PW – no report.

Synod – Becky reported the following:

- Information is now available for Synod School which will be held July 20-25.
- Spring meeting will be held in person April 27-29.

Presbytery will meet on Saturday, April 26 at First Presbyterian Church, Axtell.

- Docket was reviewed.
- Eddie Mariel volunteered to preach.
- Donations will be given to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for Southern California Wildfires. Presbytery will match up to \$500.
- New business will include voting on the Amendments to the Book of Order. A discussion on the Amendments will be held on Tuesday, April 8th at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. This discussion will be led by the Rev. Dr. Christian Boyd. Council voted to **APPROVE** paying \$200 to Christian.

The next Presbytery meeting will be on October 25, 2025 at First Presbyterian Church, Kearney. Corey Schlosser-Hall, Deputy Executive Director for Vision, Innovation, & Rebuilding at the Presbyterian Church (USA) will preach and present.

SPECIAL EVENT June 15, 2025:

- Dinner with Jihyun OH 6/15/2024 – 6 pm, Barret Alumni Center, Hastings College.

2026 Presbytery dates that were **APPROVED** are:

- Saturday, February 7, 2026
- Saturday, April 25, 2026
- Saturday, October 24, 2026

Meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm and closed with prayer given by Joyce.

The next stated meeting will be September 23, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. on zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Rothenberger

Business and Budget Committee

Presbytery of Central Nebraska Meeting

April 26, 2025

Current members of the Business and Budget Committee include Ann Sukraw-Lutz, Bob Scriven, Bob Butz, Craig Mead, Dan Olson, and Sharon Rees (chair) Ex-officio members include Gary Smith, Logan Ellis, and Becky Dobitsch.

The Committee met on Zoom March 26, 2025.

The Committee awarded two leadership development grants for CREDO attendees, and two technology grants to First Presbyterian Church of Grand Island and First Presbyterian Church of Valentine.

The funds in the New Covenant Trust Company have been consolidated, giving us a low risk, rainy-day fund, a general fund for most withdrawals, and the Stuckey/Next Generation fund that we hope to use for youth programming.

The Bruce Hendrickson Educational Debt/Scholarship Fund has been established, and the application is on the website. Please apply for these funds if you are a Minister of Word and Sacrament and have educational debt, or are pursuing a graduate degree. Funds up to \$5000 are available per individual.

The financial statements have been trimmed to clear accounts that are no longer being used.

In doing so, a designated fund was discovered that has not been spent. The Peacemaking Fund contains over \$11,000 and has been accruing as the portion of the Peace and Global Witness Offering set aside for Presbytery use. This offering sunsets this year and that money will stop accruing at the end of 2025. It is intended to be used for peace and global witness efforts within the Presbytery of Central Nebraska's reach. More specifically, programs that address systems of conflict and injustice in our area. If you know of any such programs worthy of the Presbytery's support, please make the Business and Budget Committee aware.

The committee will continue to monitor the monthly financial statements and take appropriate action regarding market trends.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Rees, Chair

**COM PRESBYTERY REPORT
APRIL 26, 2025**

Church moderators

- Sutherland – Polly Deppen-Williams
- Keystone – Eddie Mariel
- Benkelman – Polly Deppen-Williams
- Buffalo Grove – Eddie Mariel
- 2nd Presbyterian, Hastings – Ivan & Joyce Dean
- Axtell – Sharon Rees

Approved:

- The relationship between Denzel Nonhof as Temporary Supply at First Presbyterian Church in Wood River.
- Rev. Dr. David McCarthy be on placed on the Retired Pastor Role. Rev. McCarthy retired on March 31, 2025
- Approved Stuart Davis to officiate the Sacraments for Church of the Plains, Edgar, NE. Stuart, who is UCC, is serving the Heartland Shared Ministry as Temporary Supply
- Approved Kasey Summerer to Officiate the Sacraments for First Presbyterian Church, O’Neill and Bethany Presbyterian Church.

**Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Dean, Chair**

Commission on Preparation for Ministry
Presbytery of Central Nebraska Meeting
April 26, 2025

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

The CPM had one Zoom meeting since the last Presbytery meeting.

We currently have four individuals under care: Brian Johnson, Rosalie Koepp, Emily McCreery, and Roxanne Converse-Whiting.

Sara Babcock is no longer under our care.

We secured readers for reading spring ordination exams – Kerwin Stewart (TE), Brian Johnson (RE), and Eddie Mariel (Alternate).

We will be conducting annual assessments in July and are in the process of preparing for those.

We remain available for questions or concerns, and it continues to be a privilege to serve on the CPM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Boyd, Chair

Presbytery Report—Synod Representative

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies will be having their Spring in-person meeting April 27-29 at Mount Olivet Conference and Retreat Center.

The Synod School booklet and registration is available online at <https://www.lakesandprairies.org/synod-school> . Registration has already begun, so pick your classes and go online to register soon. If this is your first time attending Synod School, make sure to check out the First-Timers Scholarship. There are also other scholarships for those with financial needs.

MaryAnn McKibben Dana will be leading the Adult Convocation every morning, while Pepa Paniagua will lead the Youth Convocation. Evening worship will be led by Rev. Liz Theoharis.

Synod School will be held July 20-25 at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. If this is your first time, it would be helpful to arrive a day early to get familiar with the campus. There is something for everyone—all ages! Synod School is definitely the most fun you can have in Tie Dye! So, remember to bring your white all-cotton shirts, shorts, dresses, socks, etc. It is a fabulous time of worshipping, learning, and growing within a supportive, loving community of believers.

Lovingly Submitted by Becky Dobitsch