

**ONE HUNDRED FORTY-FIRST STATED MEETING  
MINUTES OF SALEM PRESBYTERY  
FEBRUARY 13, 2024**

The One Hundred Forty-First Stated Meeting of Salem Presbytery, held on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 via Zoom was called to order by the Presbytery Moderator, Elder Catreliia S. Hunter at 9:00 a.m.

**ENROLLMENT:**

Commissioners		Commissioned Ruling Elders	10
Elders	56	Lay Pastors	4
Ministers	94	Certified Christian Educators	2
		Executive Presbyter	1
		Presbytery Staff	1
		Presbytery Moderator	1
		Stated Clerk	1
		Corresponding Members	1
		TOTAL:	171
		(+Visitors - 13)	184

The following were present for this meeting of Presbytery:

**Ministers (94):**

Asher-Lawson, Marybeth	Harrison, Evan	Perkins, Sam
Barrett Todd, Katie	Hazelrigg, Marti	Phillips, Caroline
Bates, Timothy	Hemrick, Jennie	Phillips, Jon
Beach, Kathy	Henry, David	Pitts, Wes
Beck, Fred	Heyward, Will	Priddy, Kim
Berry, Kent	Hill, Julie	Pruitt, John
Blankinship, Joe	Horan, Amanda	Quandt, Boni
Bowers, Erin	Hoyle, Felicia Stewart	Reynolds, Jeff
Braswell, Steve	Johnson, John	Richardson, Nicole
Broman-Fulks, Ken	Jones-Johnson, Vicki	Rigel, Jess
Browne, Kellie	Jordan, Stephen	Ritsch, Fred
Burleson, Thom	Kim, Peter	Rives, Wilborn
Bussell, Matt	Kirby, Barrie	Rummage, Brian
Campbell, Kathryn	Kirby, Randal	Schlaman Larsen, Emily
Conley, Kevin	Kunkle, Lynn	Senior, John
Cowan, Newton	Lambeth, Jay	Sink, Paul
Davis, Sidney	Lansden, Phanta	Smith, David
Dew, Frank	Lee, Charlie	Smith, Jay
Dodd, Kevin	Levins, Kristen	Smith, Jeff
Duffield, Jill	Lingan, Jodi	Snipes, Steve
Ealy, David	Martin, Jon	Sockwell, Jeff
Fearing, Stephen	Martin, Susanne	Stevens, Courtney
Fitch, Rachel	McCain, Vicki	Todd, Katie Barrett
Fletcher, Pat	McCutchen, Joseph	Todd, Mason
Fruits, Dana	McFarland, Bryan	Troyer, Elizabeth
Gaska, Jonathan	Milam, Judson	Tuttle, Carrie
Glaser, Joanne	Milam, Travis	Tysinger, Arlo
Goodman, Kyle	Miranda, Rosa	Vazquez, Jorge A.
Greene, Patricia	Moss, Stephen	Wilson, Alicia
Griffin, R.C.	Mullen, Lisa Florence	Wisner, Leigh
Hall, Randy	Musser-Gritter, Lara	
Harris, Randy	Nesbit, Tom	

**Ruling Elder Commissioners (56):**

Alamance	Dail, Graham	Lexington 1st	Vander Schaaf, Kenneth
Alamance	Lovell, Pat	Logan	Woods, Lee
Asheboro 1st	Webster, Tina	Mocksville 1st	Overbey, Jeff
Baird's Creek	Miller, Mary "Jinx"	Mt. Jefferson	Hines, Donna
Bethany, Statesville	Bass, Ronny	Mt. Vernon	Hunter, Garette
Bethel	Deal, Jeff	Mount Tabor	Roberts, Carolyn
Boone 1st	Newell, Sue	New Creation	Alexander, Loretta
Burlington 1st	Fisher, Willy	New Hope	Shull, Elizabeth
Burlington 1st	Gant, Eddie	North Wilkesboro	Worley, Karen
Burlington 1st	Wooten, Nan	Parkway	Tatum, Sheila
Chapel in the Pines	Fisher, Karen	Pine Ridge	Taylor, Sally
Church of the Cross	Hepburn, Cheryl	Pleasant Grove	Jordan, Annette
Clemmons	Blizard, Mike	Reidsville 1st	Smith, Calvert
Clemmons	Geyer, Robert	Saint Andrews	Craig, James
Concord	Harris, Christine	Saint Paul, High Point	Davis, Doris T.
Elkin	Hon, Ken	Salisbury 1st	Carmichael, David
Fellowship	Wood, Robert	Salisbury 1st	Cook, Elizabeth
Greensboro 1st	Arbuckle, Margaret	Shady Side	Davis, Ken
Greensboro 1st	Chandler, Nicole	Shallowford	Brett, Tony
Greensboro 1st	Faircloth, Scott	Sparta	Wyatt, Jane
Greensboro 1st	Goley, Dan	Starmount	Huffman, Margaret
Greensboro 1st	Hatcher, Jeff	Third Creek	Pence, Trent
Griers	Morris, Bill	Thomasville 1st	Dale, Jill
Guilford Park	Hickling, William	Thyatira	Hall, David
Guilford Park	Loyd, Leslie	Trinity, Salisbury	Green, Monica
Highland	Grier, Robbie	Trinity, W-S	Parker, Susan
Highland	Sehon, Margaret	Unity	Fleming, Karen
Hills	Hill, Ann		
Jamestown	Brown, Becky		

**Commissioned Ruling Elders (10):**

Beard, James	Glaser, Tim
Blankenship, Jerry	Harley, James
Braxton, Steve	Moore, Sue
Brooks, Rachael	Peifer, Nathan
Crunk, Sidney	Terry, Fred

**Lay Pastors (CREs without current commission) (4):** Bates-Harley, LaQreshia A.  
 Boger, David  
 Collier, Richard  
 Langston, Shannon

**Certified Christian Educators (2):**

Brummitt-Yale, Joelle  
 Nance-Allbright, Charlotte

**Executive Presbyter (1):**

Tony De La Rosa

**Presbytery Moderator (1):**

Hunter, Catreliia

**Stated Clerk, Salem Presbytery (1):**

Vaughan, David

**Corresponding Members (1):**

Lesane, Warren (Presbytery of Charlotte)

**Presbytery Staff (1):**

Ratledge, Christine

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## CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER

The Moderator, Elder Catrelia S. Hunter, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and constituted the meeting with prayer.

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## MORNING WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Salem Presbytery was led in worship by CRE Tony De La Rosa with a sermon entitled "Eros and Regret" focused on the passage at Joel 2:1-2, 12-17. Worship included the commissioning of Elder Tony De La Rosa and installation as Salem's Executive Presbyter. The Lord's Supper was celebrated following the sermon.

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## QUORUM

The Stated Clerk, Elder David Vaughan, advised the Moderator that a quorum was present for conducting the business of Presbytery, and the Moderator declared a quorum present.

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## APPROVAL OF DOCKET

The docket was presented by the Moderator of Salem Presbytery, Elder Catrelia S. Hunter.

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### **ACTION:**

1. Presbytery approved the docket.
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## WELCOME AND REPORT FROM THE MODERATOR AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Moderator welcomed Salem Presbytery to the meeting and extended a special welcome to Elders attending a Presbytery meeting for the first time. Visitors and guests were also welcomed and recognized.

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A Land Acknowledgement statement was offered by Rev. Laura Musser Gritter, to recognize Indigenous Peoples who are the original stewards of the lands on which we now live.

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## REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER CRE Tony De La Rosa, Executive Presbyter

Dear Friends:

Since my arrival in Salem Presbytery last month, many of you have described my initial time as both a honeymoon and “drinking from the fire hose.” In a sense, both metaphors are true representations of my activities to date. I have had a chance to meet with many of you—both in person and via Zoom—and I am looking forward to meeting more of you and learning about your experiences, contexts, and dreams for ministry in Salem Presbytery.

Among the highlights of my time has been a ministry of physical presence, most often via my visits to churches to attend their worship services on Sunday mornings.

Here’s a list of the churches I have visited to date:

- El Buen Pastor NCD, Winston-Salem
- Fellowship, Greensboro
- First, Burlington
- First, Greensboro
- Mount Vernon, Woodleaf
- Saint James, Greensboro
- Starmount, Greensboro
- Westminster, Greensboro

Based on my experiences worshipping with these congregations, the spiritual witness of our churches in Salem is indeed strong and inspiring. I look forward to visiting other congregations for worship during the coming year.

Worship and other aspects of local church life would be nearly impossible without the active engagement of the Presbytery through its Commission on Ministry (COM). This year, the COM’s moderator, Rev. Felicia Stewart Hoyle, has done an exceptional job in pulling together the various responsibilities of Salem’s COM and organizing them into six highly functional and effective task forces. Salem owes a debt of gratitude to Felicia and her work with the COM whose members labor tirelessly in ensuring our churches remain faithful, gracious, and authentic expressions of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What a joy to be working among all of you!

In Christ,  
Tony De La Rosa

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REPORT FROM DESIGNATED PRESBYTER  
Rev. Jodi Lingan

When our daughter was young, as she would leave for school in the morning, one of the last things we would say to her was “Make good choices!” This is also a simplified explanation for what your Designated Presbyter for Transformational Ministry is responsible: empowering uninstalled churches to make good choices. I spend, however, a fair amount of time explaining that I am not visiting your church because Presbytery wants to close it. I am visiting your church because Salem Presbytery is looking to empower it (from my mouth to God’s ear).

Sometimes the painful Session decision to dissolve a church is an incredibly faithful choice. Sometimes I can make a guess at how long a church will survive. I certainly don’t know exactly when a church might dissolve, but I do know that certain congregational and Session decisions can expedite the journey.

Here are some of conversations of which I have been a part over the last twenty months serving with our uninstalled churches, which may put them on the path to closure:

- We only want a pastor where we don’t have to pay benefits
- This is our property, our church, our pastor

- I can't remember the last time we did an audit
- I (we) don't attend Presbytery meetings because... they are too far away, we don't 'do' technology (ZOOM), why should I (because you promised: BOO W-4.0404)
- We cut the benevolence (mission) budget line to pay for heating oil
- Without children and young families, we will never be a church (again)
- We don't care what the (Presbytery) policies are...we'll pay what we can pay until we can't and our pastor is fine with that
- We don't need officer training – it's the same people again because no one else will do it
- We can't hire a pastor because our building needs too much work
- We don't want to drive 5 minutes to worship with [the neighboring PCUSA church] on 5th Sundays
- All we need Presbytery to do is get us a pastor
- We can (will) not change our worship time

I share these because some of these decisions and beliefs place churches on a path where recovery may not be an option. Lack of funds or people may preclude a church from doing what they would like to do, however, those realities do not preclude God's people from considering what it means to be the Church in ways that are not property or pastor dependent. Our PCUSA beliefs and polity provide the framework to recognize that we are a people living out our faith through relationships and connection, that we are all to participate in these challenging conversations to prayerfully discern solutions together.

As we stand on the precipice of a new chapter in this Presbytery, may we make good choices to be the Church in the image of Jesus Christ!

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STATED CLERK REPORT  
David Vaughan

**FOR INFORMATION:**

**May 2024 Presbytery Meeting**

I am delighted to announce that we have accepted the kind invitation of the Concord Presbyterian Church to host our in-person meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 14, 2024. Pre- registration will be required. (We are working on the provision live-streaming of the meeting.) Please mark your calendar now.

**Session Minutes Reviews**

In addition to those noted in the November 2023 Presbytery packet, I have successfully reviewed the session minutes of Bixby PC and Shallowford PC.

**Synod of the Mid-Atlantic - End of the Year letter**

Please see the letter from the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic that is a part of today's packet.

**FOR ACTION:**

**Modification to Dismissal Policy**

One simple element in the Dismissal Policy, adopted by Salem Presbytery in April 2016, has been found to be in violation of a provision in the Book of Order - and I will be moving new language in this one section. (See the proposal in today's packet.)

Section 4, item D: In the current policy, the vote of the congregation for dismissal appears to be binding upon the Session. The request for dismissal of the congregation to another Reformed body is not

among those items that are under the purview of the congregation. (G- 1.0504).

David Vaughan  
Stated Clerk  
[statedclerk@salempresbytery.org](mailto:statedclerk@salempresbytery.org)

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**ACTION:**

2. Presbytery approved a modification of Section 4, Item D in Salem Presbytery's Dismissal Policy due to a violation of a provision in the Book of Order.
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**BOARD OF PENSIONS**  
Elder Elizabeth Little

Elder Elizabeth Little with the Board of Pensions touched briefly on the New Benefits Connect system now available. Assistance Programs are available through the Board of Pensions to serve ministers, employees, retirees and surviving spouses who have financial need. The Board of Pensions is assessing and restructuring their Benefits Plan to meet the needs of the changing church. The Board of Directors will vote on a new Benefits Plan structure in early March.

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**UNION PRESBYTERY SEMINARY**  
Ashlee Anderson, Director of Admissions

Ashlee Anderson with Union Presbytery Seminary gave an update on new things happening on their Charlotte campus. They currently have a hybrid format now available which includes online classes. They have installed a new president and have expanded their financial aid and scholarship opportunities.

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**LIVING WATERS FOR THE WORLD**  
Kendall Cox, Director of Education

Kendall Cox, Director of Education, shared with Salem Presbytery their belief that all God's children deserve clean water and their initiative to make that happen. Living Waters for the World (LWW) trains and equips volunteers who then form partnerships with communities to learn how to implement clean water systems and encourage communities to produce clean, sustainable water for themselves.

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**PEACE AND JUSTICE TASK FORCE**  
Elder Karen Worley, Moderator

Elder Karen Worley gave a reminder about the upcoming Racial Equity Training sessions taking place February 24<sup>th</sup>, May 16<sup>th</sup> and September 28<sup>th</sup>. For the eradication of poverty, the Poor People's Campaign has called for marches to take place on Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> in state capitals all across the nation to demand justice for poor people in our country. A Zoom planning session will take place soon for those involved or would like to be involved with the Earth Care initiative. Information can be found in Salem Matters. Elder Worley also spoke about grant money available from the Peace and Justice Task Force for projects related to Peace and Justice. The next book for the book club is entitled "Dear White

Christians” by Jennifer Harvey. Reverend Matt Bussell and Margaret Arbuckle gave a report on their attendance at the first Matthew 25 Summit held in Atlanta January 16th through 18th hosted by the PCUSA. The seminar was entitled “An Invitation to Innovation.”

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**CHURCH GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE**  
Rev. Liz Troyer, Moderator

Rev. Liz Troyer reported on two grants disbursed by Church Growth and Transformation totaling close to \$40,000. The first was granted to the Greensboro Youth Collective (YoCo) which is doing an innovative, collaborative ministry in the Greensboro area for youth. Springwood Presbyterian Church in Burlington was the second recipient. They are beginning a community learning and outreach program. Grant applications are available on Salem Presbytery’s website and awards will be distributed each quarter.

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**COM TASK FORCE ON EXAMINATIONS**  
Rev. Travis Milam, Moderator

The Examinations Committee has successfully examined the following for service in Salem Presbytery. The COM has received all of these to membership in Salem Presbytery, except that The Rev. Julie Hill will retain her membership in Charlotte Presbytery.

**Faith Journey**

**Rev. Dr. Sidney Davis**

It would be so easy to say that my journey of faith started when I appeared before the ministers of the Yadkin Presbytery in the office of Rev. Dr. Peterson in Winston Salem or when I was taken under the care of the Southern Virginia Presbytery on June 1, 1974 or when I was ordained on June 1, 1977, but, I believe that my journey began as my grandmother would say when I was holding Church services in her living room and backyard.

I believe that my journey begun in the Sunday School Classrooms and Worship Services at Church Street Presbyterian Church (now Trinity Presbyterian Church) and my participation in the Westminster Fellowship activities of Catawba Inter- Presbytery Agency. My journey also began when I first realized that the young people of my apartment complex needed someone to care about their well-being and someone to be a positive role model.

My journey has not always been easy, fair, or just but I have found that I could not let go of God's hands. I had to remember the lessons of the Biblical saints like Job and Paul. Paul's words have given me so much guidance as I have struggled with challenges of life and ministry, for, he said in (Philippians 4:11-13) "11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

In my faith journey God has shown me that when confronted with conflict, a good leader should always seek to find the common ground that may give all that are involved an opportunity to build trust and to work together to resolve the situation.

In my Seventy-two years of life, I have found that on this journey God have given me the opportunity to find peace, love, joy, and happiness! These gifts were given to me through the grace and mercy of God. It is in this state of spiritual awareness, I have felt the present, love, and grace of God and I can say that He has never left me alone.

**Statement of Faith**

**Rev. Dr. Sidney Davis**

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;\* the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic\*\* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."

The words of the Apostles' Creed have always been my starting point when I begin to express my Faith. It is a simple expression of the basis for a relationship with God and clear statement of His grace. The words I believe starts my leap of faith into the eternal hands of God. Jesus when speaking to Lazarus's sisters in the midst their deep grief made a statement of comfort, hope and faith: John 11: 25 -27 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" I have always noted that he asked the question of personal faith; Do You Believe? It is in making this commitment of faith that God's mercy and grace can enter the situation and change the circumstances of our human condition. We move for fear to joy knowing that in this relationship with God there is always Hope for the future.

I believe God has called us to a life of service and selected us to be ambassador of reconciliation. We are to embrace the words of 2nd Corinthians 5: 17- 21 which states; "17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: 1,1 The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin<sup>1121</sup>for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." In every way by the grace and mercy of God we have been changed into new spiritual existence and thus giving us the responsibility to speak the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Our ministry is called to go forward, to commit to a covenant with each other and God. Jesus Himself gave us this calling when He spoke these words: (Matthew 28:19-20) "19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

### **Faith Journey**

**Rev. Patricia Greene**

As far back as I can remember, I have been drawn to church. I grew up in a family that attended church Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, and Wednesday nights, and many other occasions when the church doors were open. The first church I remember attending was a small Baptist Church in the mountains of North Carolina, and my grandparents and parents were involved in leadership in various ways. While I did not see women serving in ordained positions, I was keenly aware of the holy ranks of women who served as teachers, music directors, hospitality providers, and encouragers. From a young age, I felt at home in the church, welcomed and loved, and I wanted to participate in that sacred space with people I cherished. As the years passed, and I found myself living in a different geographical area, I began to see women serving in ordained positions. Even though I was not always consciously aware of it, my mind and heart began to open further to new possibilities for myself. While in college, I quickly gained appreciation for the scholarly world of religion and theology. However, despite my love for religious academia, I continued to feel drawn to the church, and my intersecting love for God, people, and church took me to seminary. It was there that I discovered a passion for preaching and worship that I never knew I possessed, and my gifts for pastoral care continued to develop. It was also there, in that Presbyterian school, that an appreciation of the PCUSA began to be kindled in me...an appreciation that has steadily evolved and has led me to this place today.

Since my time in seminary I have served two different churches as Pastoral Resident (PCUSA) and Associate Pastor/Minister to Families (Baptist). Both of these positions helped hone my ministry skills and awakened a confidence and competency in church leadership that was striking for me to see and feel. God was working through these opportunities and congregations to help me further discern my call.



In my last months of church work, I was recognizing within myself a restlessness and readiness for change. From my time in that small Baptist church in the mountains, I have had a particular affinity for senior adults, and I have discovered through the years that I have significant gifts when it comes to listening, companioning, and loving well. The groundwork was being laid for a move to hospice chaplaincy, and it is in this field that I have found a new home. Death and dying are sacred times, and I am grateful for the chance to walk with people as they near the end of their lives. There is great mystery in that time, and to be able to be a part of that holy journey for a person and family is beautiful work indeed. Reminding people that they are beloved, helping them find meaning and significance in their lives, listening to their stories and providing space for grief in all its forms, these are but a few of the aspects of my job that I cherish and consider part of my ministry calling.

During these past few years, I have felt drawn back into the Presbyterian world to which my seminary first really introduced me. I will always be grateful for my Baptist heritage and ordination, but I feel God has been leading me for years toward this denominational turning point, and I am now ready to embrace it.

God has spoken through mentors, friends, family, and acquaintances to call out my gifts and to point me forward on this journey of love. God has used music, scripture, and other sacred writings to speak into my life, bringing clarity and hope.

Most central to my calling is my desire always to lean into love and to love people well...to seek the beauty in each person, remembering that the image of God is within us all...and to shine some light into this world and into people's lives.

#### **Statement of Faith**

**Rev. Patricia Greene**

I believe in the One eternal God, Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Having existed from before time, God will continue to exist forever. God is utterly transcendent and immanent - outside of time and space, yet intimately present with creation. God desires relationship with the creation God personally crafted.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's son, born of a woman. Fully divine and fully human, Jesus walked the earth with fellow humans as one of us but without sin, setting a profound example for humanity. In his life, death, and resurrection, he demonstrated power over sin and death and provided a salvific way by which creation could receive forgiveness and thereby more fully experience relationship with, and be reconciled to, God.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, permanently given to creation upon Jesus' ascension. As the indwelling presence of God that comforts and directs creation, the Holy Spirit is a mark of God's constant love and care for, and presence with, humanity. The Holy Spirit continually summons humans toward fuller relationship with God. I believe that together, God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit form the Holy Trinity and work to beckon creation toward the divinely willed Good. A perfect example of life in relationship, the Trinity models for humanity the significance and necessity of community.

I believe the divinely inspired Holy Scriptures provide the primary source of knowledge about God and the Christian faith. The Scriptures are the living Word of God, in, through, and by which God (often in the form of the Holy Spirit) has guided and inspired people throughout history and continues to do so today.

I believe humanity was fashioned in the image of God to have relationship with God, and, as part of creation, humanity was originally declared "good." At the core, humans carry the image of God and are deeply beloved by God. Yet all humans are marred by sin and continually do things aberrant from the divinely willed Good, rebelling against God and following a path of estrangement from the Divine. Still loved by God despite sin, humans are recipients of God's grace and mercy and are constantly being called by the Spirit back to original Goodness.

I believe the Church is the visible body of Christian believers existing of both pastor(s) and laity. The pastor(s) strives to guide and empower the laity such that it achieves a deeper relationship with God. The pastor's greatest responsibility and privilege is to allow the love of God and the pastor's love for God to radiate such that it embraces people in actions and words, reminding them of their belovedness. The laity

is called to minister alongside the pastor - loving God and sharing the love of God with the church and the world. Together the pastor and the laity worship God. Responding to God's command for bold love and service, the Church seeks ways to embody and work toward ever-greater compassion and justice.

I believe the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion are external signs of the internal reality of Divine grace. They require the work of the Holy Spirit in and through them and are purposed to nurture and sustain faith, marking us as God's own and drawing us ever closer to God and to one another.

I believe one day Jesus will return in all Divine glory. A new heaven and new earth will be formed, and eventually, because of God's grace, love, and mercy, we will spend eternity in the presence of God. This belief provides the underpinning for Christian hope.

### **Faith Journey**

**Rev. Julie M. Hill**

The youngest of three girls, I was born and raised in Wilmington, NC. Bedtime Bible stories and prayers, Sunday school, and singing in the children's choir at church are among my earliest memories and formed the foundation of the faith I later claimed as my own. I was raised in the United Methodist Church where I grew in faith and experienced the joy of being part of a supportive and encouraging church community. After my father died when I was seven, the emotional and tangible support we received from family, friends, and our church made it possible for my mother, who had never worked outside the home, to provide a stable environment for us. I learned the importance, indeed the necessity, of community. My elementary school days were marked by racial unrest in Wilmington, with curfews imposed and National Guard tanks patrolling the streets. This experience, along with seeing the struggles my mother faced as a single woman in the 1960's and 1970's, sealed within me a deep passion for issues of justice and equality.

It was at a summer church youth conference where I experienced the richness of personal devotional disciplines and the fellowship of other young devoted Christians, that I first felt God's call, though I did not understand it to be a call to ordained ministry. I pondered going into ministry when I graduated from Duke but did not have a clear sense of call and could not imagine me, a woman, as a pastor. For the next 20 years I collected catalogues and brochures from various seminaries and divinity schools.

I joined a Presbyterian Church in the mid 1980's, where the message of God's grace seeped into my soul and I had a role model of a woman in pastoral ministry. I threw myself into the life and ministry of that church and found my thirst for more only increased. It was in teaching a 5th grade Sunday school class entitled, "God Calls God's People," focusing on the call stories of Jacob, Joseph, Moses and others, and at the same time being asked to read the call of Jeremiah in worship, that I came to realize that God has always worked through flawed and unprepared people and that I must take the yearning I felt and God's call on my life seriously. Though life caused delays in pursuing my call, I entered the first class at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Charlotte in February 2002.

In a basic sense, my underlying faith has not changed since childhood. God is love. We are called into community and to nurture and support one another. Justice is an issue of faith. Yet I have grown- in understanding of my total dependence upon God's unfathomable grace, in appreciation for the mystery and freedom of God which is always beyond my ability to define or limit, and in hope, that goes beyond the immediate, to trust in the larger purposes of God that cannot be thwarted. In a world that often seems to be falling apart, I trust that God's kingdom will come. In the meantime, I am called to follow in the way of Jesus, assured that "nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

### **Statement of Faith**

**Rev. Julie M. Hill**

I trust in the living,  
loving Triune  
God, Father, Son  
and Holy Spirit,  
to whom I belong in life and in death.

I trust in God the Father, who has created and is still creating-

whose love and provision for all of God's creation  
are beyond my imagining and are the constants in life.

I trust in God the Son, Jesus Christ, fully  
human and fully God, whose life of  
love reveals the heart of God,

whose life of love demonstrates what it means to be fully human.

Through his life, death and resurrection, Jesus  
reconciles us to God and invites us to new  
life in him,

both now and for all eternity.

Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior.

I trust in God the Holy Spirit, who is loose in  
the world, working in ways beyond my  
understanding

as the life-giving force of God in  
Christ with us; breaking  
into the brokenness of  
our world

to give birth to a new creation.

The Spirit claims us in the waters of  
baptism, strengthens and  
nurtures us

with the bread of life and the  
cup of salvation, and calls us into  
service in Christ's name.

In Holy Scripture is found the story of God and God's activity in the world.

By the illumination of the Holy Spirit,

God speaks to us through these ancient words.

I believe we read Scripture in light of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

The church is the body of Christ,

gathered by God for the sake of the world.

The church's mission is shaped by the witness of Jesus' life.

Here disciples are formed and sent-

sent into the world to participate in Christ's  
work on earth- to love and serve  
others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

I am not my own; I belong to God.

In gratitude to God and empowered

by the Holy Spirit, I seek to

joyfully serve Christ in my  
daily life,

even as I wait for the fullness of God's kingdom.

## **Faith Journey**

**CRE Shannon Langston**

I was born into, baptized, raised and confirmed in a Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Arizona. As a teen I went to youth group, helped in the younger kid's Sunday school classes, I went to church camp, and on mission trips. I always felt a pull towards the church and a greater understanding, constantly wanting to learn more. I ended up leaving the church my junior year of high school over differences with another youth, and because the pastor was of no help.

In 2003, while my father in law was going through some health struggles, I met his pastor, her name is Pat, from their small Presbyterian church in Peoria, AZ. During that time I had become close friends with her, and AJ (my husband) and I started attending there more regularly, and basically didn't leave until we moved to North Carolina in 2021. She is what inspired me to go into Christian education, and eventually part of the reason I went into pastoral leadership. She is still one of my best friends and biggest supporters today.

Over the course of the 18 or so years we were there I held many hats. I started off as a Sunday school teacher, then my final title for the last 10 years I was there, Director of Christian Education, in which I oversaw the entire program for birth through adults. I also started volunteering for vacation Bible school, then stepped up to being the director for from 2004-2019. In 2014 I started serving on committees at the presbytery level, and enjoyed it immensely, and was the moderator of one of the committees from 2017-2020.

In 2015 I started taking classes at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in their Certificate in Ministry program as a way to expand my understanding of the church, God, the Bible, Jesus and beyond. About 2 years into it I was talking to the Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of the Grand Canyon about my classes. He asked if I was interested in becoming a CRE and he explained what it is. He said he thought I would be good at it, he had heard me do sermons at our youth group services several times and knows my compassion and passion for ministry. He urged me to pray on and talk to AJ about it. I found out that Austin PTS doesn't offer all of the courses I would need and though I had already taken 4 classes, only one would count toward the CRE program. So I transferred to University of Dubuque's Theological Seminary and was accepted into their Congregational Leadership Program, where they accepted the one class I took that did count as a transfer.

From the date I started at Austin, to the date I ended at Dubuque, it took me 8 and a half years to finish. That's also a total of 11 classes. Why did it take that long though? I took 1 class per semester, and none in the summers at first as I had young kids home from school, plus both my kids have some varying forms of mild mental special needs (now 17 and 18 years old), that required some undivided attention. Then there's me, I had struggled with some life threatening health issues in 2020-2021. So between my kids and I, I had to put things on hold sometimes. But, I never gave up! So after moving to North Carolina, getting everyone else settled into their job, and school, and all of us into a new house, I went back full force in August of 2022 and finished my last 3 classes, graduating in August 2023.

It took a bit of a journey to get here, but here I am, right where I belong!

## **Statement of Faith**

**CRE Shannon Langston**

I believe in the Bible, the inspired Words of God given to humanity. The Bible was written and collected by humanity to lead us into a relationship with God and have God's guidance throughout our lives. I believe the Bible is still relevant today, as we will always need God's guidance. I believe we need to adjust our understanding of the Bible with the changing world around us, in doing so I believe we make the Word of God more valuable, approachable, accepting and inclusive to all.

I believe in having a personal relationship with Scripture. To read, meditate on and discern what each passage is saying to me, and how to come to a better understanding of God's relationship within myself and with humanity through that text. Each time I come to Scripture and ask the Holy Spirit to guide to me, I learn something new and feel reinvigorated. Scripture inspires me to make better decisions for myself, my family, my church, the world around me and bring that knowledge into my ministry and mission.

I believe in God, who is the creator of all. I believe God continues to inspire all who come to God to be better and do better for God and for all of humanity. I believe God pulls us closer to God so we can have a personal relationship with God. All of us are created equally in God's perfect image, to be God's children,

to love God and follow God.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the true Son of God. Who leads us so we may learn to love, understand and forgive, not only for ourselves, but all of our neighbors, whether believers of Christ or not. We come to Jesus seeking salvation, grace and understanding each time we speak to him. We are to celebrate his life, his teachings, his death, resurrection and ascension, so we may find salvation through him, and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ to all. Christ is who we are to strive to be most like, but knowing we are flawed and fallible, he died on the cross for our sins, so we may be forgiven and try over again, for as many times as we need so we may come into a righteous relationship with God.

I believe in the Holy Spirit is in us all, filling us with love and allowing us to breathe the Word of God and love of Christ to all. I believe God gives us the power of the Holy Spirit when we are baptized, just as the Holy Spirit appeared to Christ at his baptism. I see the power of the Holy Spirit in the world around me through the shared love and care for our neighbors around the world. I feel the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit renewing my own faith within me and strive to share the power of that faith with others, showing them that same comfort. Through the Holy Spirit we are surrounded by the strength of God, Jesus and our fellow believers throughout all time, past, present and future.

I believe the Sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are true gifts of Christ Jesus given to us to devote our lives to him, remember him and serve him with our whole heart, soul and being. When we are first baptized we are committing ourselves to the belief in God's Son, Jesus Christ, and promising to follow him. We are cleansing away our old lives to live in a new covenant with Jesus. When we take communion we are remembering that covenant with Jesus, remembering our own promises made in that covenant, and remembering Jesus' sacrifice for us.

I believe I was created by God for a purpose. I believe it is up to me listen for and look for signs of God's will for me, and to follow God's path. I believe Jesus walks beside me, holding my hand, inspiring me to be better and do better in my life. To teach me to be a better teacher, to lead me to be a better leader, and to share his gift of preaching to others, to share the gift of the Word of God, and Christ's gift of salvation with all. I feel the presence of Christ in my life to pull me back to the grace of God each time I loose my place. I have a deep faith in God and Christ, which fuels my personal relationship with God. Peace is in all of us because the love of God, peace of Christ and breath of the Spirit exists in us and for us.

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COMMISSION ON MINISTRY  
Rev. Felicia Stewart Hoyle, Moderator

## COMMISSION ACTION REPORTED FOR THE INFORMATION OF PRESBYTERY

### A. SECURING A STATED SUPPLY

1. Concurred with the Session of **First Presbyterian Church**, Greensboro, North Carolina, in securing a Stated Supply contract with the **Reverend Caroline Phillips** for a period of twelve months beginning November 29, 2023.
2. Concurred with the Session of **First Presbyterian Church**, Burlington, North Carolina, in securing a Stated Supply contract with the **Reverend Caroline Rhoads Tuttle** for a period of six months beginning January 1, 2024.

### B. STATED SUPPLY RENEWAL

1. Concurred with the Session of **Baird's Creek Presbyterian Church**, Vilas, North Carolina, in renewing the Stated Supply contract with the **Reverend Keith Freeman** for a period of one year beginning January 1, 2024.

2. Concurred with the Session of **Mt. Tabor Presbyterian Church**, Cleveland, North Carolina, in renewing the Stated Supply contract with the **Reverend Timothy Porter** for a period of one year beginning January 1, 2024.
3. Concurred with the Session of **St. Paul Presbyterian Church**, Greensboro, North Carolina, in renewing the Stated Supply contract with the **Reverend Jay Lambeth** for a period of one year beginning November 1, 2023.
4. Concurred with the Session of **Grace Presbyterian Church**, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in renewing the Stated Supply contract with the **Reverend Pamela Mitchell** for a period of one year beginning July 5, 2023.
5. Concurred with the Session of **Faith Presbyterian Church**, Greensboro, North Carolina, in renewing the Stated Supply contract with the **Reverend Fred Beck** for a period of 3 months beginning October 1, 2023.
6. Concurred with the Session of **Pine Hall Presbyterian Church**, Pine Hall, North Carolina, in renewing the Stated Supply contract with the **Reverend John Senior** for a period of 1 year beginning January 1, 2024.

**C. SECURING A CONTRACT WITH AN INTERIM PASTOR/TRANSITIONAL MINISTER**

1. Concurred with the Session of **Bethel Presbyterian Church**, McLeansville, North Carolina, in securing the contract with the **Reverend Jeff Sockwell** as Transitional Pastor for a period of six months beginning January 1, 2024.
2. Concurred with the Session of **Sparta Presbyterian Church**, Sparta, North Carolina, in securing the contract with the **Reverend Julie Hill** as Transitional Pastor for a period of one year beginning January 1, 2024.

**D. SECURING A PARISH ASSOCIATE AGREEMENT**

Concurred with the Session of **Rumple Memorial Presbyterian Church**, Blowing Rock, North Carolina, in securing a Parish Associate Agreement with the **Reverend David Henry** for a period of one year beginning October 16, 2023.

**E. MINISTER LABORING WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF SALEM PRESBYTERY**

That the **Reverend Julie Hill**, a member of Charlotte Presbytery, was given permission to labor within the bounds of Salem Presbytery as the Transitional Pastor of **Sparta Presbyterian Church**, Sparta, North Carolina beginning January 1, 2024. The Terms are:

Effective Salary	\$36,000
Housing	\$0
Board of Pensions	\$14,040
Automobile Expense	Reimbursed at current IRS mileage rate
Continuing Education	\$1,125
Other	\$7,154

**F. RENEWING A CONTRACT WITH AN INTERIM PASTOR/TRANSITIONAL MINISTER**

1. Concurred with the Session of **First Presbyterian Church**, Burlington, North Carolina, in renewing the Interim/Transitional contract with the **Reverend Stewart Rawson** for a period of six months beginning January 1, 2024. (Contract ended February 4, 2024)
2. Concurred with the Session of **Bethany Presbyterian Church**, Graham, North Carolina, in renewing the Interim/Transitional contract with the **Reverend Jon Phillips** for a period of one year beginning January 1, 2024.

3. Concurred with the Session of **New Hope Presbyterian Church**, Lexington, North Carolina, in renewing the Interim/Transitional contract with the **Reverend Mason Todd** for a period of six months beginning September 8, 2023.

#### **G. SABBATICAL PLAN APPROVAL**

That the sabbatical plan for **Rev. Kathy Beach** was approved (April 24, 2024 through July 27, 2024).

### **II. COMMISSION ACTIONS TAKEN ON BEHALF OF PRESBYTERY**

#### **A. MODERATOR OF SESSION**

1. That the **Rev. Wes Pitts** was appointed Moderator of Session for **Speedwell Presbyterian Church**, Reidsville, North Carolina.
2. That the **Rev. Timothy Bates** was appointed Moderator of Session for **Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church**, Mooresville, North Carolina.
3. That the **Rev. Neil Dunnavant** was appointed Moderator of Session for **Forest Hills Presbyterian Church**, High Point, North Carolina.
4. That the **Rev. Caroline Rhodes Tuttle** was appointed Moderator of Session for **First Presbyterian Church, Burlington, North Carolina**.

#### **B. PULPIT SUPPLY LIST**

Added the following individual to the pulpit supply list: **Rev. Margaret Almeida**.

#### **C. COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS/LAY PASTORS (RENEWAL)**

Concurred with the Session of **Unity Presbyterian Church**, Woodleaf, North Carolina, in renewing the contract of **Sue Moore** to serve as their Commissioned Ruling Elder–Lay Pastor for a period of one year beginning January 1, 2024.

#### **D. VALIDATED MINISTRY APPROVED**

That the validation of the ministry of the **Reverend Patricia Greene** as a hospice chaplain was approved for 2024.

#### **E. MINISTER TRANSFERRING TO SALEM PRESBYTERY**

That the **Reverend Sidney Davis** a member of Charleston-Atlantic Presbytery, was received by Salem Presbytery on January 25, 2024.

That, following the successful process of transferring ordination to the PC(USA), the **Rev. Patricia Greene** was received by Salem Presbytery on January 25, 2024. Rev. Greene was originally ordained in the Baptist tradition and has formally relinquished her affiliation with the Baptist church.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ACTION OF PRESBYTERY**

#### **A. ELDER TO CELEBRATE SACRAMENTS**

That ruling elders Hugh Montgomery, Dan Moore, Bob Gentry, Jenny Banfield, and David Althouse be allowed to serve communion at Speedwell Presbyterian Church, Reidsville, North Carolina for one year beginning December 15, 2023.

## B. RECOGNITION OF COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER RETIREMENT

That Salem Presbytery recognize the retirement of Commissioned Ruling Elder Jim Beard.

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### **ACTION:**

3. Salem Presbytery approved that Hugh Montgomery, Dan Moore, Bob Gentry, Jenny Banfield, and David Althouse allowed to serve communion at Speedwell Presbyterian Church, Reidsville, North Carolina for one year beginning December 15, 2023.
  4. Salem Presbytery approved granting the status of Retired to the Commissioned Ruling Elder Jim Beard and participated in a Liturgy of Retirement.
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### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL Rev. Jennie Hemrick, Moderator

The Executive Council met on December 14, 2023 and January 18, 2024.

The Executive Council received regular reports from Designated Presbyter Jodi Lingan and Stated Clerk David Vaughan. The Executive Council welcomed new Executive Presbyter Tony De La Rosa at the January meeting, and heard of his work in his initial half-month.

### **FOR INFORMATION:**

*On behalf of Presbytery, the Executive Council took the following actions:*

- Elected the following to service in Salem Presbytery:
  - \* Rev. Randy Harris to the COM Task Force on the Care of Pastors and Retirees, Members-at-Large/Validated Oversight and Certified Christian Educator Oversight, Class of 2026;
  - \* Rev. Andrew Taylor-Troutman to the Executive Council, Class of 2026;
  - \* Elected the following to the Committee on Representation: Rev. Jay Lambeth, Rev. Sandy Kern, Rev. Sam Perkins - all to the class of 2026;
- Extended the term of Elder David Vaughan as Stated Clerk, through August 31, 2024 (current term ends 2/28/2024);
- Approved Ruling Elders (who have been trained) to serve the Lord's Supper:
  - \* Approved Elder Shannon Langston (a CRE candidate, certified ready to receive as commission) to serve the Lord's Supper at Bethesda/Statesville for one year beginning December 15, 2023;
  - \* Approved Elder Wade Balsley (to be trained by Rev. Wes Pitts) to serve the Lord's Supper at Speedwell for one year beginning December 15, 2023;
  - \* Approved Elder Nathan Peifer (a candidate under care of Salem Presbytery, certified by CPM as ready to receive a call) to celebrate the Sacraments and moderate the Session at Shallowford for six months, beginning January 1, 2024;
  - \* Approved the following elders (having been trained by Rev. Olen Bruner) to serve the Lord's Supper at Allen Temple for one year beginning December 15, 2024: Elders Christopher Davis, Gretchen Dunlap, Robert Gaither, Leonard Hall, and James Miles;

*Business of the Executive Council:*

- Approved minutes of previous meetings, including the meetings of Presbytery in



- September and November 2023;
- At the recommendation of the Budget/Finance Committee, approved a payment in excess of the 2023 budget of \$25,000 as per capita payment to the Office of the General Assembly; this will allow Salem to pay nearly 73% of our OGA per capita assessment; the source of funding is proceeds from the sale of properties;
  - For 2024, elected the Rev. Jennie Hemrick as Moderator and the Rev. Lara Musser-Gritter as Vice Moderator of the Executive Council;
  - Authorized the Presbytery moderator, Dr. Hunter, to sign the deed transferring ownership of the property of the Stoneville PC which is officially sold;
  - Approved the docket for the February 2024 meeting of Presbytery;
  - Received notice that the Lloyd PC Session is requesting dismissal from the PC(USA); heard that the Stated Clerk was assembling an Administrative Commission to work alongside the Lloyd Session.
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BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Deacon Ronda Tatum

Salem Presbytery received a thorough report from the Deacon Ronda Tatum on behalf of the Executive Council's Budget and Finance Committee regarding the Presbytery's financial sustainability.

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STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE  
Rev. Kyle Goodman and Rev. Kim Priddy, Co-Moderators

Rev. Kim Priddy and Rev. Kyle Goodman confirmed that 42 pledges have been turned in so far this year. They reported that 50-60 churches do not turn in their pledges. It was conveyed that eight churches have increased their giving but donations are still down \$25,000 in pledges from 2023.

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COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION  
Rev. Sam Perkins, Moderator

**For Information:**

*"Will you share in government and discipline, serving in councils of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?"*

Our vows of ordination include a commitment to serve the wider church. If you are an elder in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., you answered the above question in the **affirmative**. And for those who are *teaching elders* – you signed your name to it in the Book of Ministerial Obligations. Let us not forget that we are "one Body with many parts... As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love." We really need all the parts working together; our health and our growth are at risk.

A description of many of our Presbytery committees may be found at the back of the packet for today's meeting - as is a nominating form. TEACHING ELDERS, please help us by referring names of *ruling elders* in your congregations who would be well-equipped for particular committee, commission or council work. ALL ELDERS, please contact Sam Perkins, Tony De La Rosa, or David Vaughan to let them know where your interests lie with regards to service to the larger church.

**For Action:**

The Committee on Representation nominates the following for service on Presbytery committees:

Budget and Finance:  
Class of 2026: Elder Myra Belo (St. Paul, High Point)

Church Growth and Transformation:  
Class of 2026: Elder Corey Earp (Taylorsville)

Commission on Ministry: Transitions in Ministry (for installed positions)  
Class of 2024: Rev. Scott Lawson (Starmount)  
Class of 2026: Rev. Lisa Mullen (John Calvin)

Commission on Ministry: Examinations  
Class of 2026: Rev. Jon Phillips (Bethany, Graham)

Commission on Ministry: Policy, Compensation, Mediation, and Church Officer Development  
Class of 2025: Elder Billy Coleman (Reidsville First)

Executive Council:  
Class of 2025: Rev. Arlo Tysinger (Elkin)

Synod Committee on Representation  
Class of 2026: Rev. Sidney Davis (Retired)

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**ACTION:**

5. Salem Presbytery approved the slate of nominees for service on the committees as they are listed with the exception of Elder Corey Earp who had not accepted a position on the Church Growth and Transformation Task Force.

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INSTALLATION OF NEW PRESBYTERY MODERATOR

CRE Steve Braxton (Trinity, Elon) was installed as the 2024-2026 Presbytery Moderator. Tribute was paid to Elder Catreliia Hunter (Mount Vernon) for her two years of service as Salem Presbytery's moderator.

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**ACTION:**

6. Salem Presbytery installed CRE Steve Braxton as Moderator for Salem Presbytery.

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ADJOURNMENT AND BENEDICTION

The Moderator announced the date of the next Presbytery meeting, May 14, 2024 at Concord Presbyterian Church in Statesville. The Moderator adjourned the meeting with the benediction.

Recorded by:  
Christine Ratledge, Administrative Assistant

David Vaughan, Stated Clerk



## Appendix A

### Ministers Absent from the February 2024 Presbytery Meeting (excluding HR, unless she/he is currently serving a congregation)

Austin, Taylor	Godbey, Sarah	Robertson, Wayne
Barrow-Ziglar, Kaye	Hankins, Stephanie	Robison, Lee
Bates, Bill	Hanlin, Maria	Roseman, Dana
Brim, Marty	Harper, Kate	Sandlin, Mark
Browder, Bill	Higgins, Cindy	Sarvis, Michael
Bumgarner, Jeffrey	Joyce, Boyd	Schooley, Kit
Caldwell, Lynne	Kim, Ki Seok	Simmons, Allison
Cannada, Jeremy	Kim, Seulki (John)	Spangler, Laura
Choplin, Patty	LaDew, Richard	Stiles, Steven
Conner, Deborah	Lawson, Scott	Sutphin, J. Grant
Coppage, Jeffrey	Layman, Debbie*	Taylor-Troutman, Andrew
Crainshaw, Jill	McClain, Chris	Thompson, Ernie*
Crews, Evelyn	McLaughlin, Alberta	Tickle, Blake
Davee Lomax, Amanda	Mitchell, Pamela	Trapp Jr., Danny
Durham, Larry	Musser Gritter, Joshua	Weed, Mae
Eads, Will	Oliver, (Gregory) Jones	White, Curtis
Freeman, Keith	Otterbacher, Glenn*	Wood, Virginia
Freese, Scott	Peters, Toddie	Wray, Tom
Fulp, William	Porter, Timothy	Zacarias, Rigoberto
Gaither, Otto	Puryear, Sam	
Gipe, Will	Rivers Meza, Francis	

\* Notes an excused absence