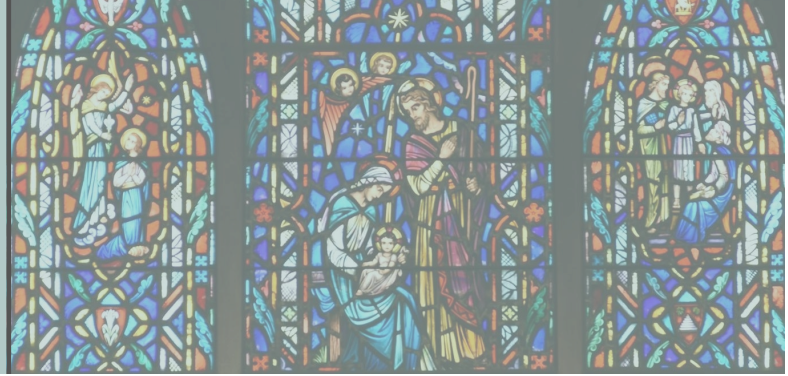


# PROVIDENCE presbytery

Spring Stated Meeting Summary  
May 17, 2026



Providence Presbytery gathered on May 17, 2026 for its spring meeting at Oakland Avenue Presbyterian Church in a day marked by worship, celebration, thoughtful reflection, and important decisions for the future of the presbytery and its congregations.

Moderator Rev. Tim Cureton opened the meeting with prayer and welcomed attendees before introducing host pastor Rev. Dr. Jeff Bryan, who greeted the body on behalf of the congregation. Executive Presbyter Steve Lindsley then shared several updates and opportunities available to churches and leaders across the presbytery, including church visitations, quarterly coffee gatherings, coaching opportunities, ministry resources, and upcoming surveys related to future presbytery meeting dates.

Stated Clerk Rev. Dr. David Bender confirmed a quorum and welcomed first-time ruling elder commissioners, along with special guests Rev. Buz Wilcoxon and Executive Presbyter Valerie Young. The presbytery approved both the meeting docket and consent agenda, including the approval of Edye Bender as moderator of the Faith Formation Team.

## **General Assembly Commissioners Commissioned**

The presbytery joyfully commissioned its delegates to the 227th General Assembly:



- Kate Robeson - Young Adult Advisory Delegate (*not pictured*)
- Sue Williams (left) - Ruling Elder Commissioner
- Rev. Dr. Joanne Sizoo - Teaching Elder Commissioner

The commissioning service served as a meaningful reminder of the presbytery's connection to the wider church.

## **Worship Together**

The business meeting paused for worship, led by several members of the presbytery community. Candidate Elizabeth "Liz" Corsig preached the sermon, with leadership also provided by Letarshia Robinson, Paul Smith, and Rob Jones.

## **Updates from Partner Ministries and Institutions**

Following worship, Executive Presbyter Valerie Young from the Synod of the South Atlantic shared updates on leadership development opportunities, grants and scholarships, gatherings for Committee on Ministry leaders, and ongoing conversations among presbyteries in transition.

Rev. Dr. Lee Zehmer also brought greetings and updates from the South Carolina Inn at Montreat, including progress on the Inn's retaining wall project and hospitality opportunities available for pastors and church staff.

One of the most reflective moments of the day came through a presentation from Rev. Dr. Buz Wilcoxon, who shared the history of Presbyterian presbyteries in South Carolina and encouraged the body to thoughtfully consider how God may be leading the state's presbyteries into the future. His

presentation highlighted the long history of growth, division, reunification, and adaptation within the Presbyterian tradition in South Carolina.

## Mission and Ministry Highlights

The Mission and Advocacy Team celebrated the strong ministry happening throughout the presbytery, encouraging smaller congregations to partner together in meaningful ways. Updates included support for border ministry efforts and the work of the Chester Worker Empowerment Center.

Representatives from the presbytery Living Waters team shared about their recent mission trip to Guatemala, where they partnered with a local school to install a sustainable water filtration system serving approximately 900 children and families.

Their presentation included reflections on health, partnership, and the impact of access to clean water.



*Ruling Elder Kathryn McGregor (left) and Susan Benfield from Unity Presbyterian Church delivered an updated to the body from the Living Waters ministry team. They presented this banner that was made by the water filtration recipients in Guatemala as a thank you to the people of Providence Presbytery for their support.*

Ruling Elder Hope Moore shared encouraging news from Bethelwoods, including preparations for summer camp, fundraising efforts, and ongoing improvements to the grounds and facilities. The team also introduced a rocking chair campaign to support the ministry.

## Closure of Blackstock Presbyterian Church



*Blackstock Presbyterian Church Ruling Elder Wilbur Douglas and his wife Barbara were present for the Service of Dissolution.*

The meeting paused for a deeply meaningful Service of Dissolution for Blackstock Presbyterian Church.

Rev. Dr. David Bender presented the final report of the administrative commission overseeing the congregation's closure, and the presbytery formally dismissed the commission with gratitude for its faithful service.

Ruling Elder Wilbur Douglas reflected on his lifelong connection to the congregation before the presbytery participated in a moving service marking the church's closure. The congregation's final dismissal was met with heartfelt applause and visible emotion throughout the room.

## Committee on Ministry Actions

The Committee on Ministry presented Elizabeth “Liz” Corsig for examination as a candidate ready to receive a call. Commissioners heard her statement of faith and participated in a thoughtful examination covering worship, theology, polity, leadership, and self-care.

The presbytery enthusiastically approved:

- Sustaining her sermon
- Her ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament
- Her call as Associate Pastor of Unity Presbyterian Church
- Her terms of call
- Her installation on August 30, 2026



The approval was met with spontaneous applause and celebration.

## Administrative Actions

The Administrative Committee introduced the Providence Presbytery Transformation Grant Initiative, designed to support innovative and creative ministry efforts among congregations. The initiative was approved unanimously.

The presbytery also approved a revised budget that increases funding support for ministry teams and affiliated institutions due to stronger-than-expected financial resources.

## **Attendance**

Attendance for the meeting included:

- 30 Ruling Elders
- 24 Teaching Elders
- 2 Educators
- 6 Ministry Team Representatives
- 1 Presbytery Staff Member
- 27 Guests

Total Attendance: 90

The meeting concluded in prayer and adjourned at 5:27 p.m.