DIGEST

ONE HUNDRETH FORTY-FOURTH STATED MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY OF EASTERN VIRGINIA

January 24, 2026
King's Grant Presbyterian Church (KGPC)
Virginia Beach, Virginia

Moderator: The Reverend Dr. **Christina Marie B. Carrasco**
Vice Moderator: The Reverend Dr. **Garrett Bradley Bugg**
Stated Clerk: RE **Q. John Tamm (**1st VAB)
Journal Clerk: Mr. **Raymond Rodrigues**

WORSHIP

- The Reverend Dr. Christina M. B. Carrasco preached a sermon titled, "Put Your Oxygen Mask on First," based on Luke 22:14-23
- Dr. Carrasco and Reverend **Kailey Noel Stephens** led the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
- The offering was for PEVA's Hunger Grant.
- Special music was provided by Dr. **Tonya Holland**, the KGPC Praise Team, and Bell Choir .

MODERATOR

- The Reverend Dr. Christina Marie Carrasco, was the Moderator

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT RE **Roxie O. Holder** (New Horizons)
The Presbytery acknowledged that it was gathered on the traditional territory of the Chesepian or Chesapeake tribe, part of the Algonquin language group that resided on the East Coast of North America. The principal villages were in what is now the Cape Henry neighborhood of Virginia Beach, and Sewells' Point in Norfolk, VA. The Chesapeake tribe were a part of the larger Powhatan Confederacy.

STATED CLERK
The report was published to the Presbytery in the packet.

Reports on Administrative Commissions are a section of the stated clerk's report. An Administrative Commission (Commission) for the Stone House Presbyterian Church, Toano was approved by the Presbytery on July 22, 2025, with the purpose of reviewing the church's finances for the Session and the church's Finance Committee, and to assure compliance with the *Book of Order*.

The Administrative Commission has completed its work.

***MOTION:** The Presbytery dismissed with gratitude the Administrative Commission to Stone House Church, Toano.

PRESBYTERY COUNCIL (PC)
The Ruling Elder **Joyce Melvin-Jones** (Carver Memorial), moderator.
The Presbytery approved the following:
MOTION: The Presbytery approved the submission of the following overture to the 226th General Assembly:

On Directing a Denominational Study of Collaborative Presbytery-Based Models of Ministry and Supporting Technology

The Presbytery of Eastern Virginia overtures the 226th General Assembly (2026) to direct a denominational study on collaborative, presbytery-based models of ordained ministry, and to bring recommendations to the 227th General Assembly (2028).
MOTION: The Presbytery approved the published 2026 Budget with expenses of $795,918, including a 3.0% increase for personnel. Budgeted income from church pledges, gifts and other sources totals $590,100 and use of approximately $100,000 of unrestricted investment income, as necessary. The goal for church pledges and gifts is $508,000 in line with actual pledges in 2025.
MOTION: The Presbytery established an Administrative Commission (AC) for Stone House Presbyterian Church, Toano, (SHPC) to assist the SHPC congregation over the next 12-18 months. The Administrative Commission will be comprised of three to five persons.
MOTION: The Presbytery established an Administrative Commission (AC) for Christ Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach, to assist the Christ Church congregation over the next 12-18 months.

The Administrative Commission will be comprised of three to five persons

NARRATIVE REPORT

MOTION: The Presbytery received the actions taken by the Presbytery Council as reported and that they are to be printed in the minutes of this meeting.

1. On November 11, 2025, received and approved a proposal to partially fund the Board of Pension dues of ministers in small churches, based on criteria established by the Commission on Ministry and with the concurrence of the Board of Trustees.
2. On November 11, 2025, adjusted the annual training requirements for the Sexual Abuse Policy to a training interval of 36 months.
3. On November 11, 2025, appointed **Elisabeth Writtenberry**, King's Grant Church, Virginia Beach, as the Young Adult Advisory Delegate to the 226th General Assembly.
4. On December 9, 2025, approved a presentation by the Congregational Vitality Team of a 25-minute elder training video module for the January stated meeting, including coordination with the video presenter.
5. On January 13, 2026, approved the submission to the Presbytery, of an overture to the General Assembly titled, "On Directing a Denominational Study of Collaborative Presbytery-Based Models of Ministry and Supporting Technology."
6. On January 13, 2026, approved the submission to the Presbytery of a motion for an administrative commission at Christ Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach.
7. On January 13, 2026, approved the submission to the Presbytery of a motion for an administrative commission at Stone House Presbyterian Church, Toano.

SESSIONAL RECORDS REVIEW COMMITTEE

RE **Jill Keifer**, Chair, (Royster Memorial)

MOTION: The report of the Sessional Records Committee was received and printed in the minutes of this meeting.

The following church records were/had:
Exceptions: Wythe 9, 22, 28, 34b; Norfolk Second - 28b; Christ - 28b, 29b
No records from: Stone House, Franklin, Kings Grant, First PC Norfolk
No exceptions: Naomi Makemie, Suffolk, Bethany, Denbigh, Third Norfolk

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY (COM)

Report to Presbytery

Reverend **Charles M. Tucker**, moderator.

MOTION: The ACTIONS taken by the COM were received by the Presbytery and printed in the minutes of this meeting.

Actions taken by the COM:

1. On November 4, 2025, the Reverend **Kimberly Knowles Priddy** from Salem Presbytery, Clemmons, NC, as the pastor of Great Bridge Presbyterian Church, Chesapeake.
2. On November 4, 2025, approved the request to form an installation commission to install the Rev. **Kailey Noel Stephens** at King's Grant Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach.
3. On November 4, 2025, approved Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church's (Virginia Beach) Leadership Connection listing for a Designated Pastor.
4. On November 4, 2025, approved Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church's (Virginia Beach) proposed Designated Pastor compensation package.
5. On November 4, 2025, received the report of the Stone House Church, Toano, Administrative Commission.
6. On November 4, 2025. approved a policy that commissioned pastors will be commissioned to serve the entire Presbytery as defined in the Book of Order, G-2. 1001.
7. On December 2, 2025, approved the Covenant Pastor Agreement between Calvin Presbyterian Church, Norfolk and the Rev. Dr. **Larry O. Toney** effective 3/1/2026.
8. On December 2, 2025, approved the Interim/Transitional Pastor Covenant extension between St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Suffolk and the Rev. Dr. **Helen Louise "Lou" Ventura**, effective 1/6/2026 through 1/5/2027.
9. On December 2, 2025, approved the Commission to Ordain Candidate **Andrea Alvord Wood** as a minister of the Word and Sacrament, on December 21, 2025, at First Presbyterian Church, Norfolk.
10. On December 2, 2025, received from the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina the Rev. **Caroline B. Evans** as a minister member of the Presbytery and approved her to be the Pastor at Bayside Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach.
11. On December 2, 2025, approved the terms of call between Rev. Caroline B. Evans and the congregation of Bayside Presbyterian Church.
12. On December 2, 2025, approved the Rev. Dr. **Donna DeSarro-Raynal** as the Interim Pastor at Grace Covenant

Presbyterian Church of Princess Anne, Virginia Beach.
13. On December 2, 2025, approved the agreement between Rev. Dr. Donna DeSarro-Raynal and the session of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church.
14. On December 2, 2025, approved that the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia establish a Small Church Leadership Fund to be used to provide grants for the healthcare minimum required Board of Pension dues for small congregations seeking pastoral leadership.
15. On December 2, 2025, approved the 2026 Vice Moderator's slate for the Commission on Ministry:
Moderator-the Rev. **Clark DeSarro-Raynal**
Vice Moderator Examinations-the Rev. Dr. **Wilbur Douglass, III**
Vice Moderator Liaisons-the Rev. Dr. **Helen Louise "Lou" Ventura**
Vice Moderator Commissioned Pastors-Elder **Robin Cowherd**
Vice Moderator Wellness-the Rev. Dr. **Lyndsey McCall-Gilliam**
Vice Moderator MARS-the Rev. Dr. **Christian R. Shearer**
16. On January 6, 2026, approved Commissioned Pastor **Sidnia "Sid" Etherington** as the moderator of the Session for Third Presbyterian Church for the year 2026.
17. On January 6, 2026, approved the request for honorable retirement from the Rev. **Michelle D. "Mike" Burcher**, effective April 15, 2026.
18. On January 6, 2026, approved the request of the session of Denbigh United Presbyterian Church, Newport News, to lease real property of the church, to the Agape School of the Virginia Peninsula, Inc., in accordance with the Book of Order, G-4.0206b.
19. On January 6, 2026, approved the covenant pastor agreement between the session of Bethany Church, Zuni, and the Reverend **Peter T. Atkinson** from 01/01/2026 to 12/31/2026 inclusive.
20. On January 6, 2026, sustained the examination of Ruling Elder **Stuart Nesbit**, (First Church, Virginia Beach) to become a commissioned pastor, commissioned to the Presbytery at large.

Pastoral Relations
-Ordained: the Reverend **Andrea Jacqueline Alvord Wood** on December 21, 2025, at First Presbyterian Church, Norfolk, VA.
-Deceased: **None**
-Received: On November 4, 2025, the Reverend **Kimberly Knowles Priddy** from Salem Presbytery, Clemmons, NC, as the pastor of Great Bridge Presbyterian Church, Chesapeake.
On December 2, 2025, the Reverend **Caroline B. "Carrie" Evans**, from Coastal Carolina Presbytery, Elizabethtown, NC, as the pastor of Bayside Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach.
-Dismissed: **None**
-Installed: On November 23, 2025, the Reverend **Kailey Noel Stephens**, as the associate pastor of King's Grant Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach.
-Dissolutions: On October 5, 2025, the Reverend **T. Clinton Mitchell**, and the congregation of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church of Princess Anne, Virginia Beach.
-Honorably Retired: **None**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES/STEWARDSHIP TEAM (SMT)
Ruling Elder **Lorri Richardson**, (Community Portsmouth), moderator.
***MOTION:** The Presbytery received the report of the Presbytery Board of Trustees, and the report was printed in the minutes of this meeting.
ACTIONS:
Actions for the November 13, 2025, meeting:
- Trustees approved that PEVA's new CPA Aaron Leshner be granted remote access and web log in rights to PEVA's ACS Financials to view and run reports needed for financial reviews only.

Actions for the December 11, 2025, meeting:
- Trustees approved that the payoff amount of $165,309.07 from Zion Community Church for the Squires Memorial property of 770 Ingleside Rd, Norfolk VA be deposited in PEVA's New Covenant Money Market account for future use.

Actions for the January 8, 2026, meeting:
- Trustees accepted the resignation as President of the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia, Inc., with regret, from President, RE **Lorri Richardson** (Community Portsmouth) due to health concerns.
- Trustees approved the lease between the congregation of Denbigh United Presbyterian Church, Newport News and the Agape School of the Virginia Peninsula, Hampton, VA.

• Trustees approved a Church Capital Needs Grant Pilot Program. The PEVA Capital Needs Grant Program provides assistance to member churches for small to mid-sized capital projects. There are two grant cycles per year with written applications due March 31st and September 30th. Applications will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees, which expects to make decisions within 90 days of each deadline. In addition to preparing the written application, churches should expect to meet with the Board in-person, to have their COM Liaison provide input and a site visit. Requests of any size will be considered. The intentions are that this new grant program will replace the Small Church Grant.

• A board meeting of John Knox Homes, Inc., will be held concurrently with the next Board of Trustees meeting on February 12, 2026, at 2:00 pm. At that time the distribution of funds from John Knox Homes, Inc., will be discussed and acted on.

COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (CPM)

The Reverend **Michelle D. "Mike" Burcher,** moderator.

***MOTION:** The narrative report of the CPM was received by the Presbytery and printed in the minutes of this meeting.

Narrative Report

We currently have six candidates under care. Two candidates are actively seeking a call.

COMPASSION PEACE & JUSTICE MINISTRIES (CPJ)

Elder **Gerry Ellis** (Denbigh United), Moderator

PEACEMAKING MINISTRY TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS TO PRESBYTERY:

MOTION: The Narrative Report of the Peacemaking Ministry Team was received by the Presbytery and printed in the minutes of this meeting.

ACTIONS TAKEN:

Actions for the November 15, 2025, meeting:

After a financial overview and discussion, the following actions were taken:

Approved that the Journal entry that was discussed in January of 2025 be approved to action in the amount of $698.96 from line 20-00-2410 to 10-13-5040 to offset the over budgeted MLK expenses.

Approved that the Racial Justice Team would cover the $296.03 for the overage in line 10-13-5410.

Approved to disburse funds in the amount of $500 dollars from the 2025 budgeted line 10-13-5002 Presbyterian for Earth Care to PCUSA Project E865715 - Tree Fund / Restore Creation.

After discussion of planning for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. service at the November meeting the following actions were taken:

Approved that the 2026 MLK service take place at 3 PM on Sunday January 18, 2026, at Wycliffe Presbyterian Church followed by fellowship and light refreshments.

Approved that an honorarium be paid in January 2026 for the four speakers in the amount of $150.00 each plus reimbursement for mileage.

There was a motion made, seconded and approved that an honorarium be paid in January 2026 to the Musician/Choir Director in the amount of $500.

Approved that that funds in the amount of $400 be paid in January 2026 to Wycliffe PC to help offset expense for the Light Refreshments during the fellowship time after the MLK service.

Actions for the January 10, 2026, meeting:

Final planning for the PEVA Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative service has been approved, including the bulletin and worship elements such as the Prayer of Confession and the Litany of Commitment.

Approved an outing to the Hampton University Museum on Thursday, February 26th at 10 A.M. to tour the museum, followed by lunch at the nearby university cafeteria.

The group discussed a video titled "A Framework for Courageous Conversations" and explored ways to engage people in conversations about racism and advocacy. Leigh raised concerns about reaching individuals who are resistant to discussing these issues, noting that current approaches often target those who are already interested. PEVA acknowledged the challenge and suggested focusing on common ground and humanitarian aid as potential entry points for dialogue. The discussion

highlighted the ongoing struggle to effectively engage diverse perspectives in conversations about racial justice.

NARRATIVE REPORT:
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. service: The theme for the service will be "Mentoring the Dream!" Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech and empowering a new generation of positive social change makers. Musician/Choir Director will be Dr. Matthew N. Russell. The worship leader will be the Rev. Leigh Beasley Gillis, other leaders and liturgists are to be determined. The Rev. Dr. Garret Bugg and Rev. Dr. Lyndsey McCall-Gillman will be asked to give the welcome as the host church, and the Rev. Dr. **Melissa S. Long** will be asked to give greetings from the presbytery.

Advocacy: CPJ members were reminded of a Day for All People 2026 and encouraged to participate and invite others. It is hosted by the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (VICPP) In partnership with Virginia Interfaith Power and Light Wed. Jan. 21, 7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. at the Centenary United Methodist Church 411 E Grace St., Richmond, VA 23219.

Hilton PC & St. Andrew's Episcopal Present "Sugarcane" Film Screening – Jan 25 at 12 PM | Indigenous Awareness: Hilton PC is joining St. Andrew's Episcopal in Newport News in the showing of the film "Sugarcane" at St. Andrew's Episcopal in NN on Main Street Jan 25, 12:00 PM EST. Sugarcane is a award-winning debut feature documentary from Julian Brave, NoiseCat and Emily Kassie. It is a groundbreaking investigation into an Indian residential school, shedding light on years of forced separation, assimilation and abuse that Indigenous children experienced at the hands of Church and government.

February is Black History Month: If your church is doing something to highlight the month, please let the Presbytery office know so we can share the opportunity with others. CPJ would like to share that the Presbyterian Historical Society does an excellent job highlighting African American Presbyterian history, especially during Black History Month. Their archives often feature stories of early Black congregations, influential pastors, and the role of Presbyterian churches in civil rights movements. Presbyterian Historical Society | Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) https://pcusa.org/historical-society/exhibits/presbyterians-and-civil-rights-movement#1

Celebrate Black History in Virginia with special events, guided tours, live musical and dramatic performances, lectures and films. Discover more about Black history attractions, Black history in Virginia, famous Virginians, and the Civil Rights History of Virginia. https://www.virginia.org/events/history-heritage/black-history-events-and-tours/.

Hampton University Museum Gathering: To encourage local engagement and awareness of Black history in Hampton Road, CPJ will host a gathering on Thursday, February 26th at 10 AM to tour the museum, followed by lunch at the nearby university cafeteria. Please let (gerry.ellis@verizon.net) or Jessica Fitzgerald (jessica@pcusa-peva.org)know you are interested by February 23, 2026.

PEVA Advocacy & Network Congregational Contacts:
To encourage local advocacy, CPJ will host a gathering at the PEVA office to view the next scheduled Presbyterian Advocacy Hour on February 28, 2026, from 12:00–2:00 PM.
Topic: Homelessness. Please bring a brown bag for lunch and stay afterward for discussion.
Contact Gerry Ellis (gerry.ellis@verizon.net) or Jessica Fitzgerald (jessica@pcusa-peva.org) to RSVP by February 23, 2026.

HUNGER MINISTRY TEAM
Ruling Elder **Jessica A. Fitzgerald**, (Third), Hunger Action Advocate
Ruling Elder **Kelvin Jackson**, (1st United) Co-moderator
Ruling Elder **Gail Schwartzer**, (Wycliffe), Co-moderator
***MOTION:** The report of the Hunger Ministry Team was printed in the minutes of this meeting and following actions approved:
HUNGER GRANTS: Approved a Church Community Hunger Grant in the amount of $500 for Community Portsmouth PC.

At the stated meeting on November 15, 2025, a Church Community was approved

for Green Acres PC (Client Choice food pantry for the local community) in the amount of $1,000. Green Acres PC currently provides food to about 120 families each month. They are partnering with the Food Bank of Southeastern VA to sustain the number of people they are serving each week.

Approved by email in the month of December a Church Community Hunger Grant in the amount of $2,500 for Francis Makemie PC (Catherine Moore Project/ low-income seniors on the Eastern Shore) Francis Makmie PC will using the funds awarded to assist 45 seniors.

NARRATIVE REPORT

FOOD CLOSET, PANTRY, OUTREACH, CREATION CARE & GOOD NEWS AROUND PEVA: MATTHEW 25 IN ACTION:

Holiday Outreach Ministry Highlights: Over 35 PEVA churches organized Thanksgiving and Christmas outreach ministry program, such as holiday food baskets, hot meals, or bagged lunches, angel trees to support neighbors and families in their communities, often working alongside partner agencies and organizations. These efforts frequently included fundraising, food drives, and distributing holiday baskets filled with meals or gifts. What a wonderful way to put Matthew 25 into action living out our mission and sharing Christ's love with others! If you would like to share your story of mission and ministry, please contact the PEVA office. PEVA is always looking for good news to share.

Kings Grant Presbyterian Church - Kings Grant Presbyterian Church (KGPC) partners with the Judeo-Christian Outreach Center (JCOC) each year through financial donations and by providing quarterly meals at the JCOC facility. On December 12, KGPC volunteers helped serve meals to 160 people in need through the JCOC program.

KGPC also supports People in Need (PIN), a nonprofit that serves the homeless community in Virginia Beach through weekly volunteers who sort donations and assist with services and through clothing and blanket drives. They also support the Winter Shelter program by providing meals and financial support through an "Intentional Christmas Card" initiative. Through participation in the Beach Bag Program, KGPC helps provide nonperishable food items to children who are food insecure. These grocery bags are distributed on Fridays through Virginia Beach Schools to ensure children have food over the weekend. The bags are packed by students with disabilities at a local high school to provide valuable work experience.

KGPC partners with the Department of Social Services to assist families in need by providing gift cards to local grocery stores, extending the support they receive from the department. KGPC also partners with School Social Workers from VBCPS to provide emergency assistance, including rent, utility, and hotel assistance. to families in need with the aim of preventing homelessness and eviction.

Meals on Wheels of Virginia Beach, the city's longest-serving homebound meal and safety-check service, began in 1974 at Thalia Trinity Presbyterian Church and moved its offices to KGPC during COVID. With the help of KGPC volunteers and others, hundreds of meals are delivered across the city each week. KGPC continues to be a strong supporter of this vital community service.

A dedicated team of KGPC volunteers also serves with the Kairos Prison Ministry, building transformational relationships within the prison community. The congregation supports this ministry by baking thousands of chocolate chip cookies and writing inspirational notes for the men they visit.

Each summer, KGPC supports the Migrant Farm Worker and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Ministry by donating food, clothing, cleaning supplies, and diapers. KGPC also holds an annual "Share Stuff to Share Love" yard sale which provides items to those in need in the community and raises funds for local and international missions.

KGPC also sponsors 116 children through Compassion International and has hosted the Compassion Journey, to raise awareness about global hunger and how we can support communities facing extreme poverty and the churches who serve them.

Calvin Presbyterian Church – Azalea Baptist Church, Burrows Memorial Baptist Church, Calvin Presbyterian Church, and Third Presbyterian Church have joined together to host a community food pantry that operates two days each week. This shared ministry is dedicated to serving

individuals and families in need within their communities. Those seeking assistance can obtain a referral from any of the participating churches. Together, these congregations are providing the food items that fill the shelves, the bags, and—most importantly—the hearts of those they serve. Through this partnership, the churches are living out their shared mission of compassion, generosity, and faith in action.

Wythe Presbyterian Church – Had an amazing gift giveaway day Sat. Dec 6th, 2025, from 10 am-2 pm. They gave away so many items for families in need, many gently used and some brand-new toys, dolls, stuffed animals galore, clothing, shoes, baby items and Christmas decorations, and they provided gift wrapping for items also. The youth put together 50 grab-n-go bags and decorated them with a message of hope for the Night's Welcome breakfast at First Presbyterian Church's (Hampton). First Presbyterian Church's (Hampton) hosted the winter shelter. Nov. 5th-14th 2025.

First Presbyterian Church, Norfolk – December 21 – January 4, 2026, FPC served as a Winter Shelter for the community. They provided overnight housing, dinner and breakfast to men and women. Many faithful volunteers with a heart for the city pitched in help. The church offered some training beforehand for those volunteers.

Williamsburg Presbyterian Church – partnered with the Community of Faith Mission to provide safe, warm shelter for unhoused neighbors January 4–11, 2026

Great Bridge Presbyterian Church – GBPC hosted warm shelter for those in need partnering with Chesapeake Area Shelter Team (CAST) December 30, 2025 - January 7, 2026. Faithfull volunteers at GBPC assisted during that week providing bus intake, dinner, breakfast and a bagged lunch, overnight team for monitoring, and clean up. PW Socks and Mitten Tree collected new socks mitten, gloves scarves and hats throughout the month of December. These items were donated to the local schools in their area.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

MOTION: The Presbytery approved the establishment of a Small Church Leadership Fund drawn from available funds, to be used to cover the full Board of Pensions dues for small congregations seeking pastoral leadership.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

49 ministers of the Word and Sacrament
53 Ruling Elder
102 Total voting members
33 Visitors
134 Total Registered
•The offering was for the PEVA Hunger Grants in the amount of $963.00

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday April 28, 2026, at 10:00 am, at **Second Presbyterian Church**, Norfolk.