

PMRV Stated Clerk, Commission, and Committee Reports For Stated Meeting, August 16, 2025 (at Calvin Crest)

From the Stated Clerk – submitted by Rev. Nancy Ross-Hullinger

As you will see in my Stated Clerk Report the session records/roll review has taken place for 2024. This year, clerks were paired up with another clerk in close proximity to meet and review each other's records/rolls. The review sheets have been updated and correlate easily to what is needed to be in the session minutes monthly, yearly, and what policies are required. ***A moment of praise for those clerks who worked hard to get their records in order and meet!***

In 2023 policies were added to the Book of Order (G-3.0106) that each council (in this instance session) are required to adopt and implement the following policies: **A sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy. Each council's policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every 36 months. Just an FYI in that same section: Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council. So, a Manual of Operations is also on the list of required documents.**

Also added to G-2.0804 was the provision for **a minimum of 12 weeks paid family medical leave.** That provision is for called and installed pastors, but each session should take time to reflect and implement some kind of policy for part time and temporary pastors. (Please see the *PMRV Manual of Operations* for the policy.)

When clerks reviewed the 2023 minutes/records last year I reminded them that these policies would need included in their 2024 minutes/records. When reviewing the records I found that more than half of our sessions have not adopted the policies, and some have not even discussed them. These policies do not need to be created from scratch - a sample of each policy is on the PMRV website in the Manual of Operations.

And this is where I share my frustration – as a connectional church we are responsible to each other and to follow the directives approved at General Assembly. Each of these policies is for protection and safety of our members, pastors and session members. One of my biggest concerns is the number of sessions who have not provided boundary training for their sessions. This training takes time – yes, (probably 3 hours including discussion) but it is crucial for leadership to know their boundaries. This training is available as a resource from the Synod of Lakes and Prairies – who has done the work for us. There are also a variety of other options for boundary training through your insurance carrier.

Friends and colleagues, I am sharing this information with you as a reminder that you still have 4 months left in the year to get these policies adopted and implemented. Thank you!

Administrative Team/Moderator Team – submitted by Rev. Sarah Dickinson

To: ★ Record May-July for the 8/16/25 PMRV Stated meeting

From: Admin Team (AT) – Nancy Ross-Hullinger, Gregg Miller, Rick Sleyster, Sarah Dickinson/notetaker
Moderator Team (MT): Marcia Cline, Matt Coplen, Ricky Holbert

Headlines

We support *The Good News Life* in PMRV.

We are committed to being “radically helpful” to congregations.

AT UPDATES: Rick Sleyster has been asked and has accepted joining the AT. Great news. Gregg Miller is taking a new call in Cody, WY, and we're going to miss him!

MEETING DEBRIEFS: We debrief about every Leadership Team and/or PMRV meeting that has occurred since our last meeting. We do so in a spirit of gratitude and learning.

MEETING FOLLOW UP: We make sure that we are following up on tasks from meetings so that balls don't get dropped and we keep moving forward in the best way.

BUILDING SALE TASK FORCE: This is an important ministry going on right now. We want to make sure the Task Force is supported in their work and that the presbytery understands the opportunity.

PILP: A representative from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program was in town and wished to connect with PMRV. Sarah and Rev. Dr. Sung Yoo Park met and he shared materials about 1. Presbyterians can get reasonable loans through them 2. PILP also operates as a "bank" for any presbyterian entity or individual (they have a CD like or Money Market like opportunities). The money is used for mission not profit. [Various PMRV congregations have had PILP loans. See Sarah to learn more or go directly to PILP)

SAPF: Pastor Michael from the Sudanese American Presbyterian Fellowship (SAPF) requests prayers for South Sudan and the region. Violence and drought lead to hunger and pain. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

PLANNING AHEAD/2026: Vision & Strategy Process Begins/continues: Every year we review PMRV Vision, Strategy, Themes, Mission/Ministry & Structures (Hub) and we discern next needs and God's call. We think about this each month but a process more intentionally begins in August. We will again use an Appreciative Inquiry-like process. MT and AT have been given homework and will discuss in the next meeting. We'll listen for input at the August PMRV meeting.

CHILD PROTECTION TASK GROUP: We continue to work through this large and important matter piece by piece. Trying to keep it simple and radically helpful for congregations and go at a pace that we can responsibly handle. We are grateful for the partnership and work of Shelli Dart and Nicole Geiler.

AT Extras

The Admin Team meets separately to discuss things as needed. One clarification got discussed.

The Arabic Christian Fellowship, which PMRV just finished offering funding, is now in a time of break from PMRV funding. However, they may set up a new covenant group to restart a conversation and new phase.

Calvin Crest Camp, Conference and Retreat Center – submitted by Craig Huffman, Executive Director

Since the last Presbytery Meeting, Calvin Crest has held a summer's worth of camps led by dedicated summer staff and volunteer directors that helped families, children and youth experience God through Christian Community, nature exploration, team-building, Worship and small group Bible Study all sprinkled with a healthy dose of fun and adventure (and maybe a mis-adventure here and there).

In addition to the children and youth that came through our program this summer, we hosted a wide variety of other groups including families for a reunion, Catholic summer missionaries for training, The Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska for their annual summer camp, a variety of Lutheran groups, state agencies, work groups, crafting groups and miscellaneous other groups as well.

It was a busy summer that saw many people experience the things that make Calvin Crest a special place to be—a place that brings people of different stages in life together to focus on the things that matter. This place, that you support, is an extension of your church programming.

Thank you, and we look forward to hosting you!

Commission on Ministry (COM) – submitted by David Friedli, Moderator

Action Items

1. Approved CRE reports.
2. Approved Moderators for First Presbyterian Church Omaha and Shenandoah-Essex Presbyterian Church during absence of full-time pastors.
3. Approved an innovative hybrid temporary pastoral relationship for Shenandoah-Essex Churches (being radically helpful).

New Pastors to the Presbytery

1. Brianne Christensen, First Presbyterian Church of Omaha
2. Rachele McCalla, New Horizon Presbyterian Church of Council Bluffs
3. Martha Slocombe, Bellevue First Presbyterian Church

Other business of interest

1. Continue to assist Dundee Presbyterian Church in their Associate Pastor search.
2. A church in the Presbytery is in conversation with a UCC church in the community about possible joint ministry.
3. COM and Committee on Preparation for Ministry representatives are meeting July 16 to discuss structure of a joint committee/commission that would be recommended to the Presbytery.
4. The Moderator of COM had a conversation with a person Nominating Committee had contacted, but after learning of the tasks and time required to serve, the person will decline because of their commitment to the PNC at their church.
5. A church has reached out to COM regarding Overtures 24a and 24c which concern their church leadership and members.
6. COM is developing a yearly review process for Validated Ministries and for active CREs, which is required by the Book of Order but has never been in place.
7. COM is considering a “mentorship” program using members of recently active PNCs to assist those PNCs getting started.
8. Ongoing communication with three pastors interested in membership with Presbytery of Missouri River Valley (but each with some twists that require them to fulfill some obligations first).
9. **Date for COM Open House/Luncheon**
 - Wednesday, December 3, 2025
Presbyterian Church of the Cross
11:30am - 1:30pm
10. Commission on Ministry has 10 active members. It once had as many as 18.
11. COM will not meet in July; COM moderator is leading a Calvin Crest camp and volunteering at Presbyterian Youth Triennium.
12. COM will meet in person at New Horizon Presbyterian Church in September.

Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) – submitted by Rev. Dr. Brian Long

On Saturday, July 26, the CPM met. We accepted Tim Owen as a CRE candidate.

Faith Education Leadership Development (FELD) – submitted by Rev. Suzanne Gorhau

Members: Suzanne Gorhau, Rudy Wang, Ricky Holbert, Jim Gaines, Lynda Shafer, Aaron White

Current projects:

- Starting to plan for the August Ministry Leaders' Retreat for next year.
- Continuing to plan a Church Leaders Training for February 2026.
- Planning a Zoom meeting for pastors/church leaders to plan for Advent.
- Approving scholarships for Camp Calvin Crest and Synod School.

- Continuing to declutter resources at the Presbytery Office.
- Providing New Commissioner Training for each presbytery meeting.
- Sponsoring a retreat led by Rev. Laura Rasmussen on Saturday, November 8, 10-3pm at First Presbyterian Church in Plattsburgh.

Mission and Evangelism – submitted by Rev. Matt Coplen, chair

Two action items to report:

1. The committee approved a grant request of \$1500 from New Life Presbyterian Church for the Pratt Street project – a summer program that reaches into the community with the love of Jesus through outreach, food, and fun.
2. The committee approved the request of the Nicaragua Working Group to move the designated funds (\$1000) from the 2025 budget into the Nicaragua Partnership's 95 account to be used in the partnership's ongoing work.

Special Offering – August Presbytery



A reminder (and a plea) that the special offering at the August Presbytery meeting will be used to help Calvin Crest purchase a brush cutter. In addition to the offering to be received at the Presbytery meeting, the Mission & Evangelism committee also encourages our member churches to take up an offering on a Sunday prior to that August 16th Presbytery meeting to be given to Calvin Crest for this same purpose. For those wondering what a brush cutter is, Calvin Crest is looking to purchase the Briggs/Stratton model that is pictured below. Here is a little information about it: Swisher's 24 in. self-propelled walk-

behind rough-cut mower is perfect for cutting trails through the woods and clearing fields and ditches year-round. It will clear the densest undergrowth and saplings up to 1.5 in. in diameter. This self-propelled walk-behind features an 11.5 HP (344cc) Briggs & Stratton engine and a heavy-duty fabricated cutting deck with a cutting height range of 3-4.75".

Nominating Committee – submitted by Rev. Sarah Dickinson

Nominating makes the following nominations:

- Commission on Ministry
 - Judge Pistole, TE, At Large
 - Tim Owen, RE, Shenandoah
- Nominating
 - Pat Toolles Dyer, RE, New Life
- PJC
 - Laura Rasmussen, TE, Shenandoah

Nominating is a focus area of the Leadership Team this year. Please prayerfully consider you, your pastor, and your church's involvement in presbytery. All ordained leaders make this promise:

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

Personnel Committee – submitted by Rev. Richard Meyer and Elder Pam Otto, co-chairs

In June and July we conducted our annual sit-down meetings with our three presbytery employees, Nancy, Nicole and Tina. We are so fortunate to have such a positive, committed group of employees. In August we will take the information we gleaned about their job responsibilities, job satisfaction, and job performance and recommend salary adjustments to the Stewardship of Resources Committee for the next fiscal year.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

No report

Self-Development of People – Rev. Carolyn Grice, chair

No report

Stewardship of Resources (SOR) – submitted by Rev. Dr. Michael Elliott, chair

Since the last meeting of Presbytery, this committee has:

- Monitored sale of property matters for our churches.
- Monitored monthly financial reports of the Presbytery.
- Completed a “Guide for Annual Financial Reviews for Congregations” which will be posted on the PMRV.ORG website.
- At the May meeting of Presbytery we launched “Good News Life Grants” for the purpose of helping with the operating costs of churches within our Presbytery. Grant applications were accepted until 6/30/25. 32 churches applied for grants of \$2,000 each and all 32 grant applications were approved. In total, \$64,000 was distributed to our churches.

Building Sale Task Force – submitted by Rev. Dr. Michael Elliott, chair

Members: Mike Elliott, SOR rep, chair; JD Georlett, member-at-large; Nicole Geiler, staff rep; Matt Coplen, Mission committee rep; Shari Dillehay, Personnel committee rep

Following initial meetings on 5/15/25 and 6/19/25, the task force proposed the following at a called Presbytery meeting held on 7/15/25 to approve the following “That Presbytery formalize that we are a “virtual” Presbytery employing a strictly remote workforce and holding no physical property. To this end, we recommend that Presbytery sell the Presbytery building and property.” Presbytery unanimously voted to move forward with this action.

Since then, the task force has:

- Contracted with a landscaper to improve the outside appearance of the building.
- Listed the property with Better Homes and Garden.

Ongoing work:

- The Personnel Committee is working with staff to discern what will be needed to support staff so they can work fully remotely.
- The Mission Committee is discerning how the monies generated from the property sale can be used by our Presbytery. Their discernment, when completed, will be submitted to Presbytery for approval.
- Locating a permanent place to safely and confidentially store all Presbytery records.
- Requesting all Presbytery committees and commissions to go through and properly discard all non-essential materials prior to closing the office.
- Discerning the best location for a PO Box to use for Presbytery mail

Social Justice and Peacemaking – submitted by Rev. Carolyn Grice, chair

The committee has been on a meeting hiatus for the summer months. We have been monitoring social justice events at the GA level such as the fight against gun violence. The deteriorating situation in Gaza, and racial injustice in the USA. We will resume meetings in September.

Worship and Spirituality Committee – submitted by Rev. Robert Keefer (clerk)

The Worship and Spirituality Committee has had one principal project since the Presbytery's May meeting: preparing for the August Presbytery meeting.

As part of that preparation, we did careful debriefing from the May meeting.

We also debriefed from our cohosting (with Social Justice and Peacemaking) of the event for National Day of Prayer. We plan to provide an observance again next year.

We continue to host monthly *Theology on Tap* gatherings at the Brazen Head.

Our next projects will be to prepare an event for ministers, educators, and church workers on Tuesday, September 16, and to prepare worship for the Presbytery meeting on November 6.