

**Minutes of the 911th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Baltimore
May 14, 2026 at 10AM
First Presbytery of Westminster and zoom**

Moderator, Sue Lowcock Harris, called the meeting of the Presbytery of Baltimore to order at 10:00 AM. She opened the meeting with prayer. A quorum was present.

She called on Stated Clerk Mary Gaut who moved the adoption of the Docket as presented in the meeting papers. It was seconded and **APPROVED** by common consent.

GREETINGS FROM THE HOST CHURCH

The Moderator called on Rev. Matthew Glasgow, pastor of First Westminster welcomed the presbytery.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS AND VISITORS

General Presbyter, Jackie Taylor, welcomed first time ruling elders, the new pastor at First of Howard, gretchen Sausville, and guests. She moved Rev. Dr. Carrie Mitchell from the Board of Pensions (Coastlands Presbytery) and Rev. Dr. Flo Barbee-Watkins, Executive and Stated Clerk of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic (Charlotte Presbytery) be seated as corresponding members. The motion was seconded and **APPROVED** by common consent.

GREETINGS FROM THE SYNOD OF THE MID-ATLANTIC

Rev. Dr. Flo Barbee Watkins brought greetings from the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, affirming that the Synod was eager to partner with presbyteries in innovative ways.

REMEMBRANCE OF NATIVE AMERICANS

Ruling Elder Chrystie Adams invited the presbytery to remember the Native Americans on whose land we reside in accord with our standing rule to begin each meeting with such a remembrance. She shared which Tribes had lived on the lands encompassed by each ministry group: Mountain Maryland – Shawandasse Tula (Shawnee) and Massawomeck Tribes; West Side Story, In the Loop, North Baltimore, Susquehanna Parish, Bay Area Disciples – Susquehannock and Piscataway Tribes.

WORSHIP

The Presbytery then moved into Morning. The theme was “Unity Rooted in Justice, Justice Rooted in Grace,” referencing Isaiah 1:17 and Ephesians 4:1-3. In his reflection Rev. Matthew Glasgow reminded those gathered that “doing right” can be hard work and we need each other and the unity of the Spirit to live into the mandates of justice and

During the time of worship TE Karen Brown, RE Bill Curtis, RE Kristofer Stinson and TE Mary Speers, were commissioned to service as the commissioners to the 227th General Assembly, having been elected in November, 2025.

STATED CLERK’S REPORT AND CONSENT MOTION

Following devotions, the Moderator called upon the Stated Clerk who presented the consent motion:

THE APPROVAL of the minutes of the 910th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Baltimore, March 12, 2026, as posted on the website.
(www.baltimorepresbytery.org).

AMEND the Child Protection Policy to remove the names of specific training courses. *(the policy retains the requirement of Insurance Board required training courses but removes the specific titles since they are subject to regular changes)*

On recommendation from the Commission on Ministry, DISMISS the Administrative Commission for Ashland Presbyterian Church

The consent motion was seconded and **APPROVED** by common consent.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER

The Moderator called on General Presbyter Jackie Taylor who shared insights from the book *Defiant Hope, Active Love*. The book encourages church leaders to let go of nostalgia for old ecclesiological norms and embrace something new, inclusive, and authentic, especially when reaching out to the next generation.

PRESBYTERY COMMUNICATIONS PRESENTATION

A video presentation, prepared by Presbytery Communications Director Frank Perrelli, offered guidance on the new plan developed to enhance effective email communications. The new system will color-code the types of emails sent from the presbytery offices: Urgent alerts, Midweek Message, Training & Events, Clerks of Session communications, The Tidings E-newsletter and Celebrations and Milestones. The goal is that members of presbytery will be able to discern and engage the emails that deserve their attention more effectively.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION AND NOMINATIONS:

On recognition by the Moderator Rev. McKenna Wallen chair of the committee moved, on behalf of the committee that Presbytery elect current vice-moderator, RE Rob Smith, as Presbytery Moderator for 2026-27. The motion did not require a second and there were no nominations from the floor. The motion was APPROVED.

Rev. Wallen then moved, on behalf of the committee, that TE Cat Goodrich be elected vice-moderator for 2026-27. The motion did not require a second and there were no nominations from the floor. The motion was APPROVED

REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF PENSIONS

Regional Representative from BOP, Rev. Carrie Mitchell, was recognized to present new information regarding dues packages and assistance programs including:

- The ways the dues packages subsidize lower income participants
- New subsidies being offered in 2027
- The extension of the Transitional package through 2029
- A new pilot assistance program to offset childcare costs.

REPORT FROM THE 257TH SYNOD ASSEMBLY

RE Bobby Hall, synod commissioner reported on the March assembly with the theme "Dismantling Barriers, Cultivating Opportunities." He reported that it was an inspiring event. He

is on the finance team and reminded the presbytery that synod has numerous grants that are described on the website. He was particularly moved by a presentation by Rev. David Black, pastor of First Presbyterian in Chicago who was injured by ICE leading a peaceful protest, reminding RE Hall of the events of “Bloody Sunday” 61 years ago, acknowledging that the fight for justice, voting rights and free speech is not over. He was also impressed with the presentation on Matthew 15 made by Dr. Frances Taylor Gench.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

The moderator called on Rev. Mark Phillips, chair, who moved on behalf of the commission that RE Ann Carlson (Kenwood PC) be examined on her sense of call and commissioned to officiate at the Lord’s Table at Kenwood Presbyterian through May 2029 when invited by the session.

Following the examination, during which she shared some of what she learned in the Pathways course she took as part of the preparation for commissioning, Elder Carlson left the room. The motion was restated and APPROVED. She was warmly welcomed back into the sanctuary, and Rev. Phillips offered a prayer of blessing.

Rev. Phillips then moved, on behalf of the commission with the concurrence of the COM, that Candidate Kathy Smith be examined on her statement of faith (Appendix B) and her sense of call to transitional pastor at Hunting Ridge and be approved for ordination. Rev. Phillips recounted how she had fulfilled all requirements for ordination and asked the first question about her statement of faith references to the image of Christ in the first chapters of Colossians and Ephesians and in the Gospel of Mark.

Following additional questions, Candidate Smith left the sanctuary with her husband, Vice-Moderator Rob Smith. The motion was restated and APPROVED. After the Smith’s returned to the meeting room, to warm congratulatory applause, RE James Parks from Hunting Ridge offered a prayer of blessing.

DISMANTLING RACISM TEAM

The Moderator turned the meeting over to Vice-Moderator Rob Smith who called on co-chair of the Dismantling Racism Team, Rev. Cat Goodrich. She gave an update on the progress toward creating the legal entity and nominating the administrative board for the Reparative Justice Fund. She explained that if the work can be completed soon enough there could be a called meeting of presbytery this summer to approve the corporate structure and board members.

She then moved, on behalf of the team, that Mt. Parn Presbyterian be added to the list of Black Churches to receive priority funding from the RJF. The motion was seconded. There was no discussion and the motion was APPROVED.

There was no new business. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and APPROVED by common consent. Vice-Moderator Smith closed the meeting with prayer at 12:25PM at which time those who were attending in-person enjoyed lunch and conversation in the fellowship hall..

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Gaut, Stated Clerk

APPENDIX A

Attendance Detail

Category	Present	Excused	Absent
Teaching Elders Serving Churches	33	3	8
Specialized Teaching Elders. (non-resident TEs are permanently excused)	3	1	7
New Worshiping Community Leaders	1 Havenwood	-	-
Honorably Retired Teaching Elders	11	-	-
CREs & Commissioned Pastors	3	1	5
Ruling Elder Commissioners (Including officers and Commission members)	34	0	52
Former Ruling Elder Moderators	4	-	-
Former Ruling Elder Stated Clerks	1	-	-
Certified Educators	0	-	-
Subtotal voting members	89	5	72
Corresponding Members	2	-	-
Youth Advisory Delegates (Non-voting)	0		
Guests and Presbytery Staff (Non-voting)	8	-	-
Candidates and Inquirers (Non-voting)	2	-	-
Subtotal non-voting attendees	12		
TOTAL PRESENT	101		

TEACHING ELDERS SERVING CHURCHES:

PRESENT: Jennifer McCullough, Ken Page (Ark & Dove), Michele Wallen (Ashland); Dorothy Boulton (Catonsville); Andy Gathman (Chestnut Grove), Janna VanderWoude (Christ Memorial), Catherine Goodrich (Faith); Jose Lopez (Fallston), Mark Phillips (First and Franklin), Andrew Kort & Mihee Kim-Kort, (First Annapolis); Melissa Lopez (First Bel Air); Alison Peters (First Cumberland), gretchen Sausville (First of Howard Co.) Matthew Glasgow (First Westminster), Eric Myers (Frederick), Harold Bennett (Grove), Susan Bouche (Harundale), Jennifer DiFrancesco (Havenwood and Slate); Karen Brown (Hope), Ronnie Hankins (Knox), Kate Morrison (Light Street); McKenna Wallen (Maryland), Amy Carlson (Mt Hebron), Elizabeth McLean (Prince of Peace); Mark Hannah (Roland Park); Andy Nagel (Second); Mark Sandell (St. Andrew), Dan Melton (St. Andrew's), Hyiwot Teshome (St John United), Rob Carter, Joel Strom (Towson); J C Austin (Woods)

ABSENT AND EXCUSED:), Andrew Connors (Brown), Ken Kovacs (Catonsville), J Jeff Young (Christ Our King);

ABSENT: Sungjin Kim (Bridge); Jeremy Sanderson (Central); Jessie Lowry (Christ Our Anchor); Keith Paige (Cherry Hill); Tanya Wade (Grace), Ray Meute (Highland), Jeong Hoon Han (Korean United); Phyllis Felton (Madison Ave.),

NEW WORSHIPING COMMUNITY LEADERS:

PRESENT: *Jennifer DiFrancesco (Slate. Listed under Havenwood),*

ABSENT:

RESIDENT SPECIALIZED CLERGY

PRESENT: Edwin Lacy, Jackie Taylor,

Excused: Shannon Weston,

Absent: Brandon Brewer, Sarah Diehl; Kate Foster, Laurie Hogge, Richard Jones, Stephen Mann; Jenine Zabriskie

AT LARGE CLERGY PRESENT:

NONRESIDENT SPECIALIZED CLERGY:

PRESENT: Tanya Denley

ABSENT AND EXCUSED: John Boulware, Rob Hoch, Stacy Martin,

HONORABLY RETIRED

PRESENT: Christa Burns, John Carlson, Mary Gaut, (Stated Clerk); Gene Gordon, Morton Harris, Sue Lowcock Harris (Moderator), Claire Pula, John Schmidt, Mary Speers, Tim Stern, Carlos Wilton

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS: Rev. Dr. Flo Barbee Watkins (Charlotte Presbytery), Rev. Dr. Carrie Mitchel (Coastlands Presbytery)

RULING ELDER OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF PRESBYTERY'S STEERING CABINET AND COMMISSIONS

PRESENT: Chrystie Adams (COR, Brown), Robert Smith (vice-moderator, Central), Robert Stepling (COR, Springfield), Luann Rau (COM, Fallston), Charese Jordan-Moore (COR, Knox),

RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS FROM CONGREGATIONS:

ASHLAND, JoAnn Ruther; CATONSVILLE, Vickie Lord; CENTRAL, Debbie Dininric; CHESTNUT GROVE, Debbie Schmidt; FAITH, Bobby Hall, FIRST AND FRANKLIN, Kristopher Stinson; FIRST OF CUMBERLAND, James Stickler; FIRST OF HOWARD CO., Debbie Richmond, Nan Miller; FRANKLINVILLE, Edward Stuebing; GOVANS, Lea Gilmore; GRANITE, Cheryl Spezzano; HAMILTON, Janice Howard; HAVENWOOD, Judy Binkley; HIGHLAND, Lynn Carlson; HUNTING RIDGE, Suzanne Jewell; KENWOOD, Ann Carlson; KNOX, Charese Jordon Moore; LIGHT STREET, Carol Kefford; MARYLAND. Carol Mason; MT. HEBRON, John Kendrick; PRINCE OF PEACE, Carolyn Kuffel; St. JOHN UNITED, Susan Moody; ST.

ANDREW'S, Anne Bryant; SECOND, Scott Silverwood; SPRINGFIELD, Sharon Pappas; TRINITY, Audrey Bennett; WESTMINSTER, Ellie Shirley; WOODS MEMORIAL, Pat Johnson

CONGREGATIONS WITHOUT ELDER REPRESENTATION Churches listed in ORANGE had elders present but listed in a different voting category:

ARK & DOVE, BABCOCK, BARRELVILLE, BETHEL, BRIDGE, BROWN, , CHERRY HILL, CHRIST OUR ANCHOR, CHRIST MEMORIAL, CHRIST OUR KING, CHURCHVILLE, DICKEY MEMORIAL, EMMITSBURG, FALLSTON, FIRST OF ANNAPOLIS; FIRST OF BEL AIR, FREDERICK, FROSTBURG, GOOD SHEPHERD, GRACE, HANCOCK, HARUNDALE, HAVRE DE GRACE, GROVE, HAGERSTOWN, HOPE, HUGHES MEMORIAL, KOREAN UNITED, , LOCHEARN, MADISON AVE, MT. PARAN, PERRY HALL, ROLAND PARK, ST. ANDREW, TOWSON,

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS

PRESENT: Troy Bailey (Presbytery), Anita Bishop-Johnson (Mt. Paran), Ed Terry (Hamilton),

EXCUSED: Stanley Howes (First Frostburg-Huntingdon Presbytery)

ABSENT: Jennifer Pearson (Babcock), John Brewington (Lochearn), Paul Martin (Havre de Grace), Donna Lea (Mt Paran), Cleoda Walker (Knox)

CANDIDATES AND INQUIRERS: Kathy Welsh Smith (Central), Heather Russell von Marko (First Westminster)

YOUTH ADVISORY DELEGATES: None

CERTIFIED LAY EMPLOYEES WITH VOTE: None

FORMER RULING ELDER MODERATORS: Adrienne Knight (Knox), Guy Moody (St. John United) James Parks (Hunting Ridge), Audrey Trapp (Faith) *(Jim Schroll excused)*

FORMER RULING ELDER STATED CLERKS: Catherine Blacka (First Howard)

OTHER PRESBYTERY STAFF (without vote): Susan Krehbiel, Frank Perrelli, Felicia Scott,

GUESTS: Jiyeon Bae, Bill Curtis (Faith), Rodderick Demmings, Jr. (Govans), Emily Park (Second), Elizabeth Jones (Westminster)

Note on Attendance Detail: The number of TEs with vote includes all active pastors and resident specialized ministers plus retired ministers who attended a presbytery meeting at least once in the past year. The number of REs with vote includes elder commissioners from churches, former and current RE moderators and clerks, and RE members of COM, CPM, Thriving, SLD, Reconciliation, Steering Cabinet, Administration & Personnel. (See Manual section 2). Each year a calculation is run to be sure there is a balance of ruling and teaching elders on the roll. The number of absent RE commissioners is calculated by subtracting ALL eligible voting elder commissions from the number present.

APPENDIX B

Statement of Faith

Kathy Welsh Smith

God is the creator and Sustainer of all life; the One who holds all things together and is making all things new (Col. 1:17; Rev. 21:5). God is holy and other and yet present in creation and with us as Parent. God is present with us in the person and work of Jesus and in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. God provides the outline and direction of my life and is present to me in Scripture, the work and worship of the church, other people, and in nature.

Jesus is God with us, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). He is our teacher and model for how to live, demonstrated perhaps most strongly in his presence with the “least of these” (Matthew 25:40). In Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, we find rescue, redemption, and a call into a way of life and being in the world as we are formed in his image. I am drawn over and over to the picture of Jesus in Scripture, especially as recorded in the Gospel of Mark, and to the picture of Christ in Colossians 1 and Ephesians 1.

The Holy Spirit is our comforter and advocate (John 14:26); the one who makes God, God’s word, and the work of Christ come alive in us. The Spirit empowers and equips us in our calling and transformation. The Spirit is at work in us individually and in the church, leading us toward unity and service. I call on and believe I hear from the Holy Spirit in prayer, especially for wisdom and direction; in interactions with others, both in what to say and what I hear from them; and for inspiration for teaching and preaching.

God is present above, in, and amongst us in each part of the Trinity, drawing all things to Godself. We were created in God’s image, an image that has become marred. God is at work drawing us back into this image - individually and in all of creation. It is our call as the church to participate in this reconciling work (Colossians 1:21-23). The culminating chapter of the gospel is not merely “we all die and go to heaven”, but, rather, that of God bringing all things together in Christ (Eph. 1:9-10) in a restored heaven and earth. This is only possible in God; yet God has God has invited us to partner – as very junior partners indeed! – in this plan.

The church is called to be the community through which the Triune God is worshiped and through which God acts in the world. The church is “gifted” (literally, “graced”) by the Spirit to speak and act in God’s image and name toward each other and in the world. All of this is to be done with love as our primary motivation and means (1 Cor. 12:1-13:8). The church is the way in which worldly powers and systems are to be reformed and confronted (a major theme of Ephesians; see 6:10-20 in particular). Each congregation is a microcosm, a small part of this: just as we as individuals make up different parts of the body of Christ, so too our congregations. As the church acts from our unity and diversity, in the neighborhoods where God has placed us, we participate in God’s work of reconciliation. This begins in the worship, formation, and community we engage in within the church and flows outward in acts of mission, service, and justice.

In worship we are formed by and through word and sacrament. God's Word is proclaimed from the pulpit, in readings, in Bible studies, and in Christian Education. We lift up prayers and music to praise and to call on God for help, forgiveness, and restoration. In the diversity of worship elements and the diversity of those gathered and leading, we not only proclaim but also display the image of God.

All of worship should bring us into connection with God and others. The sacraments are particular signs of God's grace shown to us (Belhar 10. 3, 1 Cor. 10:17; W-1.02). In receiving and participating in them, we are reminded that God's gifts toward and presence with us have always preceded anything we do "for" God. In baptism, that is seen in our usual practice of baptizing infants. Baptism symbolizes the beginning of our faith journey. It is individual, serving as a sign of God's desire and purpose for each of us to trust in and follow God and God's purpose for our lives. Baptism is also corporate, as families bring children to the congregation and the congregation commits to nurture them in faith. While we are baptized only once, we remember our baptismal vows each time we participate in the Lord's Supper.

In the Lord's Supper, we remember God's commitment to our redemption and renewal. As we regularly reenact Jesus' words and actions on our behalf, we experience once again God's presence with us and commitment to us. We are reminded again of the sins of the world that led to Jesus' death and are ever present in us and our world today. As we come together to the table, we are being honest and transparent with each other that all of us are sinners in need of forgiveness. We are nourished with bread and cup as a reminder of God's sustaining presence, working in and through us for the sake of the world today.

Both sacraments have an important communal component. By doing them in corporate worship, we are reminded of our commitment to each other: to care for each other in body and spirit, to equip each other in faith development, to engage in honest and accountable relationships. They thus become signs not only of God's work on our behalf, but of our commitment to each other as the church, called to image God in the world.