

**116TH Stated Meeting
of
Foothills Presbytery**

February 16, 2021

**Virtual Meeting
Via Zoom**

Supplement

Report of the Stated Clerk & Presbytery Leader Supplement February 10, 2021

Reports:

- The 2019 Minutes of Presbytery were read and approved by our Synod Stated Clerk, the Reverend Joyce Lieberman, and have been filed.
- Having been nominated and elected, I was honored to start my service with the Presbyterian Communities Board of Trustees (Class of 2021) in the fall of 2020. The Board serves as the oversight and governance for five communities in SC (Easley, Clinton, Florence, Summerville, and Columbia). The Board meets once a quarter in Columbia. Until further notice, we are meeting via Zoom meeting.
- In thanksgiving for serving across the state of South Carolina in a variety of Presbyterian- related institutions and ministries, an invitation to share a brief written report (pages 10 & 11) to Presbytery. Tom Malone (Camping Ministries of the Carolinas), Jim Caprell and Stephen Price (South Carolina Inn at Montreat), Joel Ledbetter, (Presbyterian Communities of South Carolina).
- Deep gratitude and appreciation for Past-Moderator Sidney Mize (Central Anderson) for graciously filling the Moderator vacancy, attending Coordinating Council meetings, moderating our November Presbytery meeting, and launching our meeting today.

Recommends:

- That the guests of the Coordinating Council be granted the privilege of the floor (see below)

The Coordinating Council has invited the following guests to speak to the 116th Stated Meeting of Foothills Presbytery to give updates, and so the Stated Clerk & Presbytery Leader welcomes:

- The Reverend Joyce Lieberman, Synod of the South Atlantic Executive and Stated Clerk
- Mr. Olanda Carr, Senior Ministry Relations Officer (East Region) Presbyterian Foundation.
- Mrs. Elizabeth Little, Church Consultant with the PC(USA) Board of Pension.
- The Reverend Kevin Cartee, Executive Director of Camping Ministries of the Carolinas.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie G. Foster



I hope all are healthy and well this new year. Even as COVID-19 vaccines become more widely available and we look forward to future opportunities to gather in person, we encourage all to stay safe. If you have questions, my colleagues in Philadelphia and I are happy to assist.

Blessings,

Elizabeth Little
Church Consultant
M: 252-723-8653
elittle@pensions.org

Member/Employer Services
800-773-7752
Mon-Fri 8:30-7:00pm EST

Statement on Racial Justice

The Board of Pensions stands in support of racial equality, and against deeply ingrained prejudices against Black Americans and other people of color simply because of the color of their skin. With full support of all at the Board, we share this statement with you. Follow the link to [read the full text of the statement](#). Translations in [Korean](#) and [Spanish](#) are available as well. For more resources regarding racial justice, please visit [PC\(USA\)'s website](#).

COVID-19 Vaccine Coverage & Other Resources

Vaccines for COVID-19 that are approved by the FDA are covered by the Medical Plan at no cost to members. And all three medical options (PPO, EPO, and HDHP) will pay 100 percent of the cost for coronavirus testing when ordered by your physician. For more resources from the Board of Pensions regarding COVID-19, please [visit our website](#).

BoardLink

Beginning with the March 1 invoice, the Board of Pensions will no longer send paper invoices in the mail to employers and individuals. Invoices will be available through [BoardLink](#) only. This change helps the Board reduce the need for onsite staff while continuing to provide timely and efficient service during these very challenging times. BoardLink is the Board's convenient online billing system for employers and individuals to view and pay Board invoices, set up monthly email reminders to view invoices, and review payment status and history. [Detailed steps for registration](#) are available on [pensions.org](#). If assistance is needed, please contact Employer Services, at 800-773-7752, option 2.

Express Scripts

[Express Scripts](#) is the new administrator for the prescription drug program for those with medical coverage through the Board of Pensions in 2021. For more information, please go to the [Board of Pensions website](#). We know transitions in Rx can be frustrating, so please call us to help you navigate the changes: 800-773-7752 (PRESPLAN).

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Offers Counseling Support

[Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#), administered by [Cigna Behavioral Health](#), offers Medical Plan members and anyone living in their household access to six private counseling sessions with a licensed clinician in Cigna's EAP network. These sessions can be virtual on your phone, tablet, or home computer, or face-to-face. Members eligible for EAP may call 866-640-2772. Retirees and church staff who are not eligible for EAP may call a separate Cigna support line, at 866-912-1687.

Martin Pruitt Biographical and Sense of Call Statement

I was born, baptized, and raised in First Presbyterian of Anderson, South Carolina. I was born into a supportive family of two educator parents and an older brother ten years my senior. I was raised equally by my immediate family and by my maternal grandparents, who filled me with love and taught me curiosity, compassion, and self-reliance. Throughout my childhood I spent school years in Church programming, Scouting and sports. I spent summers in further Church programming and as much time as possible at Camp Buc. As I grew, these pillars of my life remained steady. Even into high school, my time during the school year was split evenly by my involvement with the Church, the Boy Scouts, and the football team. My greatest joys were serving on the Presbyteries Youth Council and spending as many weeks as possible during the summer at Camp Buc. The time and compassion poured into me by First Presbyterian and Foothills Presbytery led me to attend Presbyterian College where I graduated in 2013 with degrees in Religion and Christian Education as well as a minor in Christian Youth Work. During my time at Presbyterian, I devoted myself to a wide variety of extracurricular programs including choirs, environmental programs, my fraternity, and religious life programs. During my time at PC, I also served in college internships for both First Presbyterian of Clinton, South Carolina and Reid Memorial Presbyterian of Augusta, Georgia. Following my graduation from PC, I moved to Charlotte to work at Sharon Presbyterian as their Youth Director as well as to attend Union Presbyterian Seminary's Charlotte Campus. I served Sharon Presbyterian in a variety of capacities for nearly seven years during which time I also met my wife Anna whom I married in 2018. I graduated from Union in 2018 with a Masters of Divinity and again in 2019 with a Masters of Christian Education. In the past few years, my wife and I have bought a house in Charlotte where we live with our three cats and I have begun serving a new Church, Covenant Presbyterian as High School Youth Director and Director of College Ministries. My wife spends most of her time working on her program to become a Physician's Assistant and I spend most of my time working for the Church, playing rugby and woodworking.

I have always felt the call to serve the Church. From times when I was little, loved, supported, and educated in the Church, it has been where I felt most at home. As I matured and my faith developed, I felt a great desire to serve within the Church and a passion for service alongside the Church. I made the decision as a youth that serving the Church was how I wanted to spend my life. It was not until college however when I decided that I should go other directions into business and technology that I felt God call me into ministry and service. It was at that time that I felt that serving the Church was no longer something that merely I desired but something that God was calling me to do. I know that in my upbringing within the Church and the experiences of faith that I experienced in service that the groundwork for my call was being laid. In my training as a Christian Educator, I have found a talent for teaching the faith to youth in helping them to see God's love for them and the truth that is offered within The Bible and our Reformed Christian Theology. In my service with the PCUSA, my call has further manifested, in serving a denomination that constantly seeks to reach out to those who have been alienated from Christianity and seeks to serve those that society has dismissed, I have felt God's pull. I have always known God to be constantly alive and at work in my life, showing God's love in my creation, and redemption, constantly sustaining me. Others have felt God has hurt them or pushed them away due to actions by misguided individuals or churches that have claimed that God does not love them. This is where I feel the pull of my call most strongly, to spread the good news that God is love for all that seek to know God and proclaim God as their savior.

Martin Pruitt Faith Statement

I believe in one God whom I know in three distinct persons, alive and active in my life and in the world. I believe in God, the Father, Creator, Redeemer and sustainer, who created the Earth and shaped humanity in God's likeness. I believe that God is greater than all things and that God is nearby us, walking with us in intimate relationship. In God's providential grace, God is with us in all times, good and difficult and that it is through faith in God alone that we are saved. God is all things and above all things, God is love.

I believe in the one Son of God, Jesus Christ who is both fully human and fully God. God came to earth so that we may better know God and see God in the actions God takes. God came to the world to teach and help us to know and believe that we are created in God's image as beloved children of God. In Christ's time on Earth through his life and teachings recorded in The Bible we have an example of how we ought to live in communion with God. Christ sacrificed himself in death on the cross so that we may live and have eternal life with him in heaven. In Christ's death on the cross, we are given new life, our sins are atoned for and that we are reconciled with God. I believe that Christ alone defeated death in the resurrection and that in his overcoming of death and hell that we are raised in a new life, sharing in Christ's righteousness and promised our own resurrection.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, that is alive and active in this world, moving through us as the breath of life. I believe that through the Holy Spirit we are given the gift of a living faith and our faith is given the spark to act. Whenever we see the community of Christ act, whenever we feel scripture to be alive, we know that the Holy Spirit is the one acting through us and around us to bring God's Kingdom to this place. I believe that it is through the Holy Spirit that we can see Christ as our Lord and Savior.

I believe in the Good News that as a believer in Christ, I am predestined to spend eternity with God. My salvation does not depend on my actions or upon my own faith but rather on God's perfect gift of faith to me, embodied in his son.

I believe that the Church was created and called by God, brought together in faith as one body to worship. In the Church's actions, the proclamation of the Gospel and in worship, the Holy Spirit's work can be seen. In the work of the Church, faith can grow, and change for the betterment of God's kingdom can be worked towards in the world.

I believe in the celebration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, these gifts from God that provide our faith with the nourishment needed to grow our trust in God. In these sacraments we see God's grace embodied, a sign of God's love for us that is invisible but sealed upon our lives by our faith.

I believe that The Bible is the word of God and teaches us how to believe in God and how to act. The Bible is a revelation of God's self, provided to humanity so that we may better know God and what God has done in the life of Jesus Christ. I believe that we learn through scripture God's laws and commands, God's mercy, justice, and love. I believe that if anyone proclaims scripture as harm or alienation to God's children then they are misinterpreting the scriptures.

I believe that from our birth and baptism, we are claimed by God. In God's claim we are challenged by God to walk steadily beside God and to work towards God's purposes with our every action. I believe that the power and love of Christ can and has changed the world.

**Nominations Committee Report
February 2021**

Committee on Preparation

Elder Carolyn Brice, Easley

Class of 2021 (1)

Committee on Shared Ministry (22-24)

Jennifer Poag, Central

Class of 2021 (1)

Antiracism Committee (9)

Elder Ed Yokley, North Anderson

Examinations (12)

At-large positions:

Rev. Dan Sansbury, Limestone

Rev. Steve Vance, HR

Class of 2021 (1)

Class of 2023 (1)

SC Inn Board

Elder Thad McCord, First Greer

Class of 2023

Finance and Stewardship Report January 19, 2021

Reports:

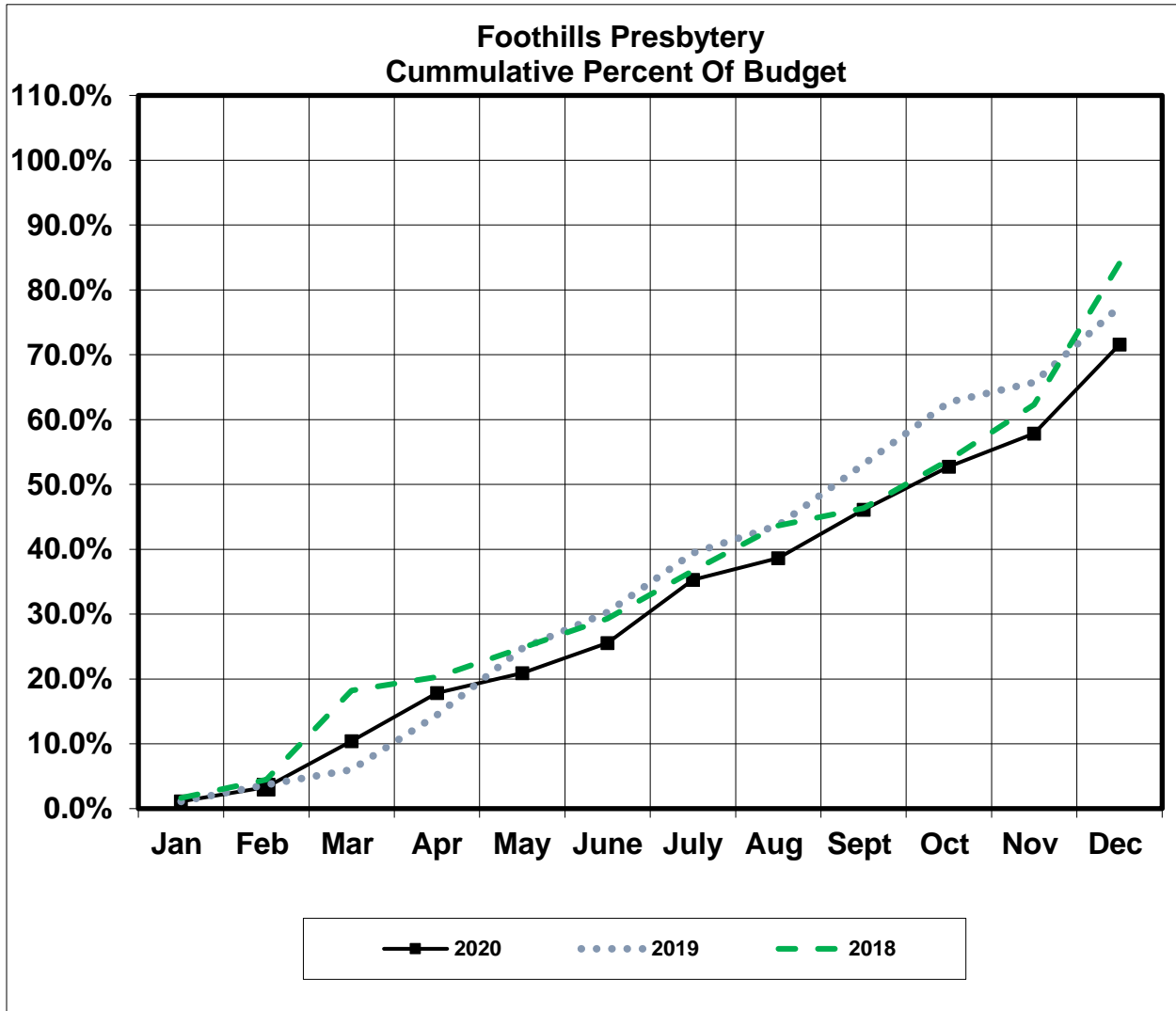
- **Annual Commitment:** The shortfall in our budget for 2020 was less than 2019. A shortfall/deficit budget was predicted and produced a minimal effect on net balance as expenses fell below budget.
- **Investment Committee Update:** Our overall return was over 9% for 2020 with our long-term investments returning over 21%. All cash positions are in FDIC or SIPC secured, US Treasury, or Treasury equivalent holdings.
- **Finance Policy for Presbytery Operations Manual:** We continue development of an in-house Financial Operations Policy (part II) to add to the current Investment Policy. It will be included in our Presbytery Manual of Operations.
- **Staying Connected Grants:**
 - a. **Round #1:** In Fall 2020, our Presbytery awarded technology grants to ten of our congregations. Grants were issued from a portion of proceeds from our investment funds (Future Church Fund) = \$25,000.
 - b. **Round #2:** The committee approved round two of Staying Connected Grants = \$25,000 from the Future Church Funds.
 - i. Round two is focused on Missional Projects.
 - ii. A subcommittee of F & S was tasked to meet to discuss the next steps.
 - iii. Information about round two of grants, including application, is in the February Presbytery packet.

Recommends:

- Approval of the 2021 Foothills Presbytery budget of \$612,665.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dennis Latham
Chair, Finance and Stewardship

Foothills Presbytery 3 Year Comparison of Giving



	2018 Budget		2019 Budget		2020 Budget	
	Cumulative	Percent	Cumulative	Percent	Cumulative	Percent
January	\$ 8,440	1.6%	\$ 5,872	1.1%	\$ 6,488	1.1%
February	\$ 22,936	4.5%	\$ 19,795	3.7%	\$ 19,233	3.3%
March	\$ 93,614	18.2%	\$ 32,149	6.0%	\$ 60,767	10.4%
April	\$ 104,344	20.3%	\$ 77,163	14.4%	\$ 103,962	17.9%
May	\$ 127,299	24.8%	\$ 132,018	24.7%	\$ 121,865	20.9%
June	\$ 150,519	29.3%	\$ 161,842	30.3%	\$ 148,890	25.6%
July	\$ 188,466	36.7%	\$ 210,542	39.4%	\$ 205,433	35.3%
August	\$ 224,086	43.6%	\$ 233,353	43.7%	\$ 225,046	38.6%
September	\$ 238,064	46.4%	\$ 283,790	53.1%	\$ 268,514	46.1%
October	\$ 276,067	53.8%	\$ 334,846	62.7%	\$ 307,138	52.7%
November	\$ 320,058	62.3%	\$ 351,220	65.8%	\$ 337,058	57.9%
December	\$ 431,983	84.1%	\$ 413,510	77.4%	\$ 416,890	71.6%

Foothills Presbytery 2021 Proposed Budget

			<u>TOTAL BUDGET 2021</u>		<u>TOTAL BUDGET 2020</u>		<u>TOTAL BUDGET 2019</u>
ADMINISTRATION							
	Committee on Ministry		\$ 4,000		\$ 4,000		\$ 4,000
	Committee on Preparation		3,500		3,500		3,500
	CPM Seminary Scholarships		12,000		6,000		12,000
	Racial / Ethnic Cabinet		1,000		1,000		1,000
	Antiracism Ministry Team		1,000		-		-
	Staff Salaries, Housing and Benefits		436,060		414,636		373,162
	Building and Grounds		26,525		25,900		26,900
	Operating Reserve		25,000		25,000		25,000
	Office Supplies and Equipment		51,430		50,180		42,430
	TOTAL ADMINISTRATION		560,515		530,216		487,992
COMMITTEE ON SHARED MINISTRY							
	Shared Ministry		26,650		26,650		26,650
	Presbytery Youth Council		17,500		17,500		11,500
	TOTAL COMMITTEE ON SHARED MINISTRY		44,150		44,150		38,150
BENEVOLENCE							
	SC Inn at Montreat		8,000		8,000		8,000
	TOTAL FOOTHILLS UNIFIED BUDGET		\$ 612,665		\$ 582,366		\$ 534,142
PER CAPITA COST							
	<i>Total membership</i>	<i>13,523</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>13,770</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>14,042</i>	<i>38</i>



FOOTHILLS PRESBYTERY

Staying Connected Missional Grant *in response to COVID-19 pandemic*

COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of finding new ways of doing ministry. As our congregations continue to respond to both the challenges and opportunities of the pandemic, Foothills Presbytery is excited to now offer the second of two rounds of grant funding. In December of 2020, we awarded 10 Foothills churches with Technology Grants. Applications are now being accepted for our second round -- Missional Grants.

ROUND 2: Missional Grant of up to \$2,500 (awarded April 2021)

Up to 10 grants will be awarded to Foothills churches. The goal of these grants is to assist our churches in faithfully responding to the COVID-19 climate as they join in God's work in their respective communities. Each grant recipient will also be paired with a presbytery "Mission Mentor" to assist and support their project. *(Please note: Recipients of Round 1 grants are not eligible for Round 2.)*

▲ **Before applying please read... "Where is Our Beach?": A Missional Question**

This short anecdote from Tyger River Presbyterian Church is included below to help you imagine what a Missional Project may look like for your Congregation.

To apply for a Staying Connected Missional Grant, please submit the application below by March 22. Please have your Session's approval before submitting your application.

Foothills Presbytery Staying Connected Missional Grant Application

Please complete the below information and submit to Foothills Presbytery office at lwhite@foothillspresbytery.org. Please put "Missional Grant" in the subject line. The Staying Connected Grants Committee will prayerfully review your application, and if needed, may request additional information. You can expect to receive a response by April 10.

Contact Information:

Church Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Date submitted: _____ Date of Session approval to apply for assistance: _____

Before applying please read... "Where is Our Beach?": A Missional Question

This short anecdote from Tyger River Presbyterian Church is included below to help you imagine what a Missional Project may look like for your Congregation.

Project Proposal Information:

1. Briefly describe your missional project. Where is God moving in your community, and how will you join in God's work?

2. What financial resources is your Session committing to this?

3. What other types of resources are being committed?

4. What is the amount your Session requests?

“Where is Our Beach?” A Missional Question

Hudson Neely, Tyger River Presbyterian Church

In the summer of 2019, my family got to spend a few days at a friend’s house on Ocean Isle Beach in North Carolina. It happened to be the same week a pastor I used to work with in Nashville was vacationing with his family. They went to Ocean Isle almost every summer so he knew about a Sunday morning worship service held near his rental home. He invited our family to park in their driveway and walk over to the service with them.

The worship service was hosted by Shallotte Presbyterian, which has been doing a weekly service on the beach for 54 summers. The service is primarily a ministry for vacationers, though I believe some of their own members attend regularly as well. There were people from all over the east coast in attendance, and some of them had been attending these beach services for dozens of years.

The service was short, maybe 30 minutes. It was just a couple songs, a children’s moment, and a brief sermon. There were 100 or so people in attendance. Some were dressed up a bit, but most of us were in our beach gear. Greeters from Shallotte welcomed attendees with song lyrics, juice, coffee, and donuts. As my family worshiped from the back (so our kids could build sandcastles and run back and forth to the donut table), a question kept coming to mind...

“Where is our beach?”

While working together in Nashville, my pastor friend and I had spent many hours studying and discussing Missional Theology. Shallotte Presbyterian’s beach ministry is, I think, a pretty good example of a missional ministry. Craig Van Gelder, one of the leading voices in Missional Theology, has written, *“It is not the church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of mission that has a church in the world...God is on the move and the church is always catching up with him. We join his mission.”*

For over five decades now, Shallotte Presbyterian has made the effort to meet God where God is already moving... at the beach. For half a century, this church has invested significant time, energy, and finances to meet people where they are... at the beach.

“Where is our beach?” I just couldn’t shake that question. How do we join in God’s movement and mission in our community? How do we meet people where they are? Where is our beach?

The next morning I was sitting on the beach when a news story popped up on my phone. Tyger River Park, just 2 miles from our church (Tyger River Presbyterian), was about to host 92 softball teams – 4,000 players, family members, and friends. Some of these teams would be arriving from as far away as Texas and Massachusetts to compete in USA Softball Junior Olympic Cup.

Tyger River Park isn't a beach, but it does have a giant sandbox at its sprawling playground. And although the park isn't on the ocean, it does have a massive splash pad. And so I wondered, "Is this our beach?"

On the beach with us that morning was one of my wife's friends. What I learned that day is that her husband was a college softball coach and helped organize many of the tournaments held at Tyger River Park. She was a former competitive softball player herself and grew up traveling for games and tournaments. So I "pitched" the idea...

What if Tyger River Presbyterian hosted a Sunday morning worship service at Tyger River Park for families and friends attending tournaments? Perhaps, like vacationers at Ocean Isle, some of these players and families would appreciate the opportunity to worship while away from home. Is this our beach?

A few months later our church did have the opportunity to host one service in the park before COVID hit. But we really don't know yet how far this idea will go. It could be a homerun, which would be great. Or it could be a strikeout, and that would be okay too. Because either way, this question has been a gift to our church and will continue to guide us forward... "Where is our beach?" Where is God moving around us, and how can we join in God's mission?

As your congregation considers applying for a Missional Grant, you're invited to think and pray on this question, "Where is God moving in your community, and how can you join in God's work?"

Where is *our* beach?

Foothills Presbytery Worship Team Report
February 9, 2021

The team met via Zoom on December 3 and January 7. In addition, there were, not surprisingly, a number of email exchanges involving the entire group as we worked through the planning and execution of the worship service for the February 16 Presbytery Meeting.

The team elected to use a Lenten theme for the service, and to structure it around readings by Susan Palo Cherwien. The readings, with verses from the hymn “How Firm a Foundation” interspersed, are intended to guide us through a brief but meaningful Lenten journey. As always, we attempted to reflect the diversity in our presbytery in our selection of worship leaders, and we are grateful for the gracious responses to our requests.

We (along with a group of presbytery musicians) also assisted by the Presbytery staff in the planning and preparation for the worship service designed for December 27. It was hoped that this service might be especially helpful for churches with small staffs who were already overextended with all the extra services and duties associated with the Advent/Christmas seasons. This service was extremely well-received; 25 congregations have reported making use of it.

Looking ahead, the team stands ready to assist with worship for the May Stated Presbytery meeting. Additionally, we are preparing a service designed for use on April 11 (the Sunday after Easter).

Respectfully submitted,

Holt Andrews, chair