



# The Presbytery of Prospect Hill

Meeting Packet  
for the Stated Meeting of the  
Presbytery of Prospect Hill



February 24, 2024

Faith United Presbyterian Church  
Sioux City, Iowa

**DOCKET**  
**Presbytery of Prospect Hill Stated Presbytery Meeting**  
**Faith United Presbyterian Church, Sioux City**  
**February 24, 2024**

9:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship Time

10:00 a.m. Orientation for New Commissioners

10:30 a.m. Call to Order with Prayer and Land Acknowledgement      Michael Gewecke

Welcome by Host Church      Dave Koehler

Introduce First Timers and Guests      Michael Gewecke

Statement of Quorum by the Moderator

Approve Excused Absences

Seat Corresponding Members

Intention to Introduce New Business

Approve Docket

Worship with Communion

Installation of Vice Moderator

Offering Designated to Frontera de Cristo

Approve Consent Agenda

Presbytery Moderator's Report – p. 3

Approve Minutes October 21, 2023 Stated Meeting – p. 4

Budget and Finance Committee – p. 12      Bill Bruce

Missional Witness Committee – p. 15

US/Mexico Border Trip

Tamara EnTin

12:00 p.m. Order of the Day ~ Lunch Break

1:00 p.m. Resume Meeting

Council

Church Vitality Small Group Conversations – p. 18

Eric Olsen

Michael Gewecke

Executives' Reports

Mission Executive

Pastor to the Presbyteries

Administrative Executive and Stated Clerk

Amgad Beblawi

Ian McMullen

Annika Lister Stroope

Commission on Ministry – p. 21

Richard Francis

Lakeshore Center at Okoboji

Sara Sutter

Touching Base: Joys, Concerns & What's Happening

Michael Gewecke

Closing Hymn

Adjournment

A **called meeting** of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill will be

**Saturday, June 8, 2024**

**Lakeside Presbyterian Church, Storm Lake**

**10:00 a.m.**

to consider matters of congregational vitality

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The **Iowa Presbyterians Gathering** will be

**Saturday, August 24, 2024**

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The next stated meeting of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill will be

**Saturday, October 26, 2024**

at Lakeshore Center at Okoboji

Moderator Report ~ Prospect Hill Presbytery  
Rev. Michael Gewecke ~ March 2023

As I embark on my journey as Moderator, I am deeply honored to serve alongside our devoted and diligent Presbytery executives. Their relentless efforts have been pivotal in cultivating a strong sense of community and shared purpose within our Presbytery. We owe them a great debt for their constant attention to the administrative and spiritual health of our fellowship.

Equally deserving of recognition are the highly capable members of the Presbytery council. Their wisdom, discernment, and dedication to our collective mission have greatly enhanced our discussions over the course of the last year and I am deeply grateful for each of them.

Standing at the cusp of a new year, I am encouraged by the insightful conversations we have already had on the preparation and coordination of an upcoming year devoted to discernment. Our unified commitment to engaging difficult questions with unwavering faith in God's grace and guidance is a great gift.

In the spirit of unity and prayer, I humbly implore you to join me in prayer for our Presbytery this year. Let us lift up our Presbytery's leadership from the local Sessions to the Council and ask God for wisdom and grace as we deliberate on matters of significant importance. May the Holy Spirit guide us in the discernment process, and may our decisions reflect God's will for our community.

Thank you for your steadfast dedication to our shared ministry. May this coming year be a time of growth, unity, and a profound deepening of our faith in the God who is, was, and always will be faithful.

A summary of my activities as your Moderator from January through February:

- The Presbytery Council met on January 25th and February 2nd, administering the business of the Presbytery and coordinating the preparation for our Presbytery meeting on February 25th.
- I represented the Presbytery and celebrated with the Memorial Presbyterian Church in Cherokee, IA upon the installation of their new pastor Rev. Philip Beisswenger on February 11th at 2:00pm.

**The Presbytery of Prospect Hill  
Stated Meeting of the Presbytery  
Saturday, October 21, 2023**

The Presbytery of Prospect Hill met for a regularly called meeting on Saturday, October 21, 2023, at Lakeshore Center at Okoboji, Milford, Iowa.

Moderator RE Eric Olson called the meeting to order with prayer at 10:00 a.m. He led the Presbytery in an acknowledgement of the original inhabitants of the land on which the Presbytery was meeting.

Administrative Executive and Stated Clerk TE Annika Lister Stroope declared the presence of a quorum.

Church	Teaching Elder/CP	Occupation Code	Present/Absent/Excused	Ruling Elder
Alta, First	Rev. Denise Parrello	151	P	A
Armstrong, First	Rev. Suzanne Wobig	101	P	A
Auburn, United	Vacant		----	Shelle Kent
Battle Creek, First	Vacant		----	A
Breda, Wheatland	Vacant		----	A
Bronson, Elliott Creek	Rev. Ken Meissner		A	A
Carnarvon, Emmanuel	Vacant		----	A
Cherokee, Memorial	Vacant		----	A
Cleghorn, First	Vacant		----	A
Denison, United	Vacant		----	Gayle Chapman
Estherville, First	Rev. Dr. Dave Ullom	101	P	Steve Rose
Glidden, First	Rev. Anna Small	101	E	A
Hawarden, Associated	Vacant		----	A
Ida Grove, Westminster	CRE Shari O'Bannon	107	P	A
Lake City, Union	Rev. Randy Russom	101	P	Patricia Carroll
Lake Park, First	Vacant		----	James Kessler
Lawton, Community	Rev. Ken Meissner		A	A
LeMars, Presbyterian UCC	Rev. Jan Christensen	101	P	Mike Cunningham
Church	Teaching Elder/CP	Occupation Code	Present/Absent/Excused	Ruling Elder

Manilla, United	Rev. Lori Shannon		A	A
Manning, First	Rev. Anna Small	101	E	A
Odebolt, First	Vacant		----	Ruth Ann Mohr
Paullina, First	Vacant		----	Sharla Rupert
Ringsted, First	Rev. Suzanne Wobig	101	P	A
Rockwell City, St. Paul's	Rev. Denise Berns		A	A
Sac City, Unity	Rev. Missy Erickson	151	A	Ted Zimmerman
Schaller, First	Rev. Michael Sydnor	101	P	A
Sioux City, Faith United	Rev. David Koehler	101	P	Loretta (Lori) Hansen
Sioux City, First	Rev. Mark Bedford	101	P	Juliana Mayne
Sioux City, Westlawn	Vacant		----	A
Sioux City, Westminster	Rev. Kevin Freese		E	Duane Brown
So. Sioux City, First	Rev. Beth Hamilton	101	E	A
Spirit Lake, First	Rev. Clint Loveall	101	E	A
Spirit Lake, First	Rev. Michael Gewecke	103	P	----
Storm Lake, Lakeside	Rev. Jennifer Olson	101	P	Gary Ringgenberg
Vail, United	CRE Rebecca Brown	107	P	A
Wall Lake, Trinity	Vacant		----	A
Westside, United	CRE Rebecca Brown	107	P	A

<b>Other Ministers on the Roll of Presbytery</b>				
<b>Specialized Ministry and At-Large</b>				
Rev. Donna Gray	At-Large		P	
Rev. Dr. Cambria Kaltwasser	Northwestern College	644	E	
Rev. Jason Cunningham			A	

<b>Honorably Retired</b>				
Rev. Richard Francis		299	P	
Rev. Marshall Brown		299	P	
		299		
<b>Presbytery Staff</b>				
Rev. Dr. Annika Lister Stroope	Administrative Executive & Stated Clerk		P	
Amgad Beblawi	Mission Executive		P	
Rev. Ian McMullen	Pastor to the Presbyteries		P	
Jeannie Stolee	Office Manager		P	
Mickey Van Baale	Temporary Office Ass't.		P	
<b>Presbytery Committee Members Present</b>				
Eric Olson	Moderator of Presbytery		P	
Bill Bruce	Budget & Finance Chair		P	
<b>Corresponding Members</b>				
Rev. Sara Sutter	Lakeshore Center at Okoboji		P	
Rev. Kyle Nolan	Presbyterian Foundation		P	
<b>Guests and Others</b>				
Kathy Francis				
Renee Little	Don Justo Coffee			
Juli Coulthurst				
Cheri Hansen				

Art Attema				
Phyllis Attema				
Marj Feltman				
Alice Zimmerman				

Abbreviations:

TE=Teaching Elder or Minister of the Word and Sacrament

RE=Ruling Elder

CRE=Commissioned Ruling Elder

HR=Honorably Retired

Administrative Executive and Stated Clerk TE Annika Lister Stroope declared the presence of a quorum.

First-time Commissioners and guests were introduced.

M/S/C to seat TE Kyle Nolan of the Presbyterian Foundation and TE Sara Sutter, director of Lakeshore Center at Okoboji, as Corresponding Members.

By consent, the Presbytery approved excused absences.

TE Mark Bedford introduced an item of new business, which will be voted on at the close of the meeting. Council Moderator TE Jan Christensen reported that two items of new business will be introduced during the Council report.

The docket was approved, with this change: the offering will be taken for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for refugee relief in Palestine and Egypt.

Members of the Presbytery Council led the Presbytery in worship with Communion. TE Richard Francis preached and presided at Communion. Musician for the service was Phyllis Attema. TE Dave Koehler, Moderator of the Commission on Ministry, led the Presbytery in a service of Memorial of Teaching and Ruling Elders who joined the Church Triumphant in 2022. Other participants were TE Michael Gewecke, TE Jan Christensen, TE Jennifer Olson, and RE Eric Olson. An offering of \$401.93 was received.

M/S/C to approve the Consent Agenda:

- Presbytery Moderator's Report (attached)
- Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report (attached)
- Personnel Commission Report (attached)
- Presbyterian Women Report (attached)



M/S/C to approve Minutes of:

- March 25, 2023, Stated Meeting
- April 27, 2023, Called Meeting

TE Jan Christensen reported on the Council Retreat held October 19-20 at Lakeshore Center. On behalf of the Council, she moved that the offering from the October 21 presbytery meeting go to Presbyterian World Mission Israel/Palestinian relief. Also on behalf of the Council, she moved that there be a called meeting of the Presbytery on Saturday, June 8, 2024, at Lakeside Presbyterian Church, Storm Lake, time to be determined, for the purpose of discussion of congregational vitality assessment and criteria.

TE Mark Bedford presented the Nominating Committee report. He placed the following names in nomination:

- Presbytery Officers
  - TE Michael Gewecke, Presbytery Moderator, Class of 2024
  - RE Suzan Stewart, Presbytery Vice Moderator, Class of 2024
- Budget & Finance Committee
  - RE Bill Bruce, Chair, Class of 2026, second term
  - RE Craig Levine, Class of 2026, second term
- Commission on Ministry
  - TE Anna Small, Class of 2026, second term
  - TE Jan Christensen, Class of 2026, first term
  - TE Clint Loveall, Class of 2026, first term
- Committee on Preparation for Ministry
  - RE Kathy Francis, Class of 2026, second term
- Lakeshore Center Ministry Board
  - RE Ruth Ann Mohr, Class of 2026, first term
  - RE Phyllis Attema, Class of 2026, first term
- Missional Witness Committee
  - RE Kendall Von Glan, Class of 2026, first term
  - TE Beth Hamilton, Class of 2026, first term
- Nominating Committee
  - RE Janine Kock, Class of 2026, second term
  - TE David Koehler, Class of 2026, first term
- Permanent Judicial Commission
  - TE Cambria Kaltwasser, Class of 2028
  - RE John Mayne, Class of 2029
- Personnel Commission
  - TE Kevin Freese, Class of 2026, first term
- Commissioner to Synod
  - RE Bill Crawford, Class of 2026, first term
- Commissioners to General Assembly and Bills & Overtures Task Force
  - TE Mark Bedford
  - RE Shari O'Bannon

There were no nominations from the floor. M/S/C to close nominations. M/S/C to elect the slate as presented.

Administrative Executive and Stated Clerk TE Annika Lister Stroope presented an oral report. She called attention to the following documents:

- 2022 Minutes Reviews (attached)
- Harassment Policy, Anti-Racism Policy, and Child Protection Policy as required by the Book of Order.

She also reported that:

- There is parity of Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders in the Presbytery, so there is no need to adjust the number of commissioners.
- The Presbytery has adequate insurance coverage through The Insurance Board.
- The annual financial review will be completed by the Serakos accounting firm, the firm used by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.
- Boundary Training for Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders will be held Saturday, October 28, 2023, at First Presbyterian Church, Jefferson, Iowa.

M/S/C to adopt the Harassment Policy, Anti-Racism Policy, and Child Protection Policy as presented. The texts of all three policies are attached.

Pastor to the Presbyteries TE Ian McMullen gave an oral report.

- He noted three items of good news: the Rev. Jim Edwards has been called to pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Battle Creek; Memorial Presbyterian Church of Cherokee will vote on a pastor on October 29; TE Kevin Freese, HR, is serving as Supply Pastor for Westminster Presbyterian Church of Sioux City.
- He also expressed the appreciation of the Presbytery for CRE Lue Baker, whose long-term service at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Wall Lake, has come to an end. He asked prayers for the members of two churches of the Presbytery that closed this year: LeMars Plymouth and Carroll First.
- He called the Presbytery's attention to the churches who are seeking pastoral leadership: Paullina; Odebolt; Denison; Wall Lake; Carnavon; Lake Park; Sioux City Westminster; Lawton and Bronson; Vail and Westside.
- Ian reported on the results of a survey sent to church leaders in the Presbytery. Three requests surfaced: small church resources, support in times of transition, and educational opportunities. He reported that educational opportunities are being planned in 2024.

Mission Executive RE Amgad Beblawi gave an oral report.

- He thanked the Presbytery for their prayers for his wife Susan during a recent health crisis.
- He reminded the Presbytery of the United States' refusal to accept Jewish refugees at the beginning of World War II, leading to the death of thousands of European Jews. He drew the Presbytery's attention to parallels with the current refugee crisis and the churches' call

to extend compassion to all those in those in need.

- Our most recent Peacemaker, Efi Loufsadi, spoke to four churches of the Presbytery about her work with refugees in Greece.
- The next mission trip will be to the US/Mexican border.
- Amgad reported that he and Ian will be forming pastoral cohorts for mutual support. They will be open to both TEs and CREs.
- The Presbytery of North Central Iowa will sponsor a Presbyterian Disaster Assistance trip to Mississippi in 2024; it is open to members of Prospect Hill.
- As a result of a staff review conducted by the Personnel Commission, some of Ian's workload will shift to Amgad.

The Presbytery recessed for lunch at 12:00 noon. TE Mark Bedford led the Presbytery in prayer for the meal.

The Presbytery reconvened at 12:50 p.m.

RE Bill Bruce presented the report of the Budget and Finance Committee. He began by thanking the staff and committees for their work.

- M/S/C to accept and approve the August 31, 2023, Financial Report (attached).
- M/S/C to approve the 2024 Budget (attached). Per Capita for 2024 will be \$53.95.

TE David Koehler presented the report of the Commission on Ministry (attached). On behalf of the Commission, he moved that the Presbytery:

- Receive the LeMars Plymouth Administrative Commission Final Report (attached).
- Receive the Carroll First Administrative Commission Final Report (attached).
- Dismiss the LeMars Plymouth and Carroll First Administrative Commissions with Thanks.

The motion passed.

- Dave led the Presbytery in a prayer of thanksgiving for the ministry of the LeMars and Carroll churches.
- Dave called the Presbytery's attention to the written report, including the Family Medical Leave policy (attached).

Lakeshore Center at Okoboji director TE Sara Sutter gave an update on the work of Lakeshore. She called the Presbytery's attention to upcoming events.

Members of the Presbytery shared joys, concerns, and congregational events.

## New Business

### Proposed 2023 Presbytery Meeting Dates:

- Stated meeting Saturday, February 24, 2024, location to be determined. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will be held remotely via Zoom.
- Called meeting Saturday, June 8, 2024, at Lakeside Presbyterian Church, Storm Lake.
- Stated meeting Saturday, October 26, 2026, at Lakeshore Center at Okoboji.

M/S/C to approve the meeting dates.

First Presbyterian Sioux City requests permission to lease their chapel to a non-Presbyterian congregation for worship pursuant to the requirements of G-4.0206b. M/S/C to approve the request.

Immediate past Moderator RE Eric Olsen led the Presbytery in a service of Installation for 2024 Moderator TE Michael Gewecke. Vice Moderator RE Suzan Stewart will be installed at the February 24, 2024, meeting.

The Presbytery joined in singing “Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing.”

M/S/C to adjourn at 1:45 p.m. Moderator TE Michael Gewecke led the Presbytery in the closing prayer.

### The following written reports were also received and are included as Appendices:

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Presbytery of Prospect Hill					
Statement of Financial Activities					
12/31/2023	12		2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Support Over (Under) expected
Presbytery Operations and Missions					
Operating Support	4001	Presb Support - Per capita	\$136,782	\$201,136	(\$64,354)
	4002	Presb Support - Shared Mission	\$34,154	\$27,163	\$6,991
	4003	Presb Support - Synod Support	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
	4004	Presbytery Support - Donations	\$1,725	\$0	\$1,725
	4005	Presbytery Support - Other	\$0	\$5,000	(\$5,000)
	4006	Presbytery Support - tbd	\$28,350	\$0	\$28,350
	4101	Interest Checking & Savings	\$312	\$0	\$312
	4102	Interest - Edward Jones CDs	\$3,028	\$832	\$2,196
	4200	Other Income - general	\$14	\$0	\$14
	4601	Gain/(Loss) on Property Sale	(\$3,864)	\$0	(\$3,864)
		Operating Revenues	\$210,501	\$244,131	-\$33,630
			2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Costs Over (Under) expected
Operating Costs	5001	Per Capita Remittances to GA	\$44,302	\$40,976	\$3,326
	5002	Per Capita Remittances to Syno	\$22,880	\$22,880	\$0
	5101	Ops - PPH monument maintenance	\$16	\$16	\$0
	5102	Ops- GA meeting	\$1,405	\$0	\$1,405
	5103	Ops- Presbytery meeting	\$446	\$350	\$96
	5104	Ops - Moderator expense	\$0	\$500	(\$500)
	5105	Ops - Council Administration	\$2,067	\$500	\$1,567
	5106	Ops - COM Administration	\$9,133	\$5,000	\$4,133
	5107	Ops - COM background checks	\$130	\$0	\$130
	5108	Ops- Com training	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5109	Ops- COM meeting expen	\$208	\$0	\$208
	5110	Ops - CPM Administration	\$141	\$1,000	(\$859)
	5111	Ops- CPM Scholarships	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5112	Ops - Budget & Finance	\$58	\$250	(\$192)
	5113	Ops - COR Administration	\$0	\$100	(\$100)
	5114	Ops - Nominating Administratio	\$0	\$250	(\$250)
	5117	Ops - Mission Administration	\$0	\$100	(\$100)
	5118	Ops - Cmte Cong Vitality Admin	\$0	\$100	(\$100)
	5124	Ops - Accounting fees	\$6,680	\$7,000	(\$320)
	5125	Ops - Technology costs	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5128	Ops - Insurance	\$2,022	\$2,830	(\$808)
	5136	Ops - Permanent Judicial Comm	\$0	\$100	(\$100)
	5139	Ops - operating fees	\$27	\$0	\$27
	5140	Ops - UPP shared staff	\$115,484	\$115,484	\$0
	5601	Property Expense: Carroll	-\$3,882	\$0	(\$3,882)
		Operating Costs	\$201,117	\$197,436	\$3,681
			2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Outlays Over (Under) expected
Mission Outlays	5200	Mission & Ministry	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5201	M&M Mission and Witness	\$7,600	\$15,000	(\$7,400)
	5202	M&M Youth Triennium	\$0	\$1,700	(\$1,700)
	5203	M&M - Trips, workshops, events	\$0	\$5,000	(\$5,000)
	5204	M&M Camp Support	\$21,227	\$21,227	\$0
	5205	M&M - Theo Trg & Scholar	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5206	M&M - Lay Academy	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$2,500
	5208	M&M - Buena Vista Chaplin	\$0	\$0	\$0
		Mission Outlays	\$33,827	\$45,427	(\$11,600)
		Total Operations & Mission Costs	\$234,944	\$242,863	-\$7,919
		Net Operations & Missions	(\$24,443)	\$1,268	

**Presbytery of Prospect Hill****Statement of Financial Position****12/31/2023****Assets**

			c	f	Change
			Prior Year-end 12/31/2022	Current Yr. 12/31/2023	Assets Increased
Cash and Investments	1000	Checking	85,036.35	109,672.43	24,636.08
	1200	Edward Jones CDs	75,013.95	83,042.39	8,028.44
	1301	New Covenant Acct 1: Unrestricted	421,550.27	491,642.34	70,092.07
	1302	New Covenant Acct 2: With Restrictions	136,010.86	151,944.46	15,933.60
		<b>Total Cash and Investments</b>	<b>717,611.43</b>	<b>836,301.62</b>	<b>118,690.19</b>
Accounts Receivable	1401	Accounts Receivable UPP	264.00	30.00	(234.00)
Fixed Assets	1501	Asset: First PC, Carroll	0.00	0.00	0.00
		<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>717,875.43</b>	<b>836,331.62</b>	<b>118,456.19</b>

**Liabilities**

					Change
					Liabilities Decreased
Accounts Payable	2002	Accounts Payable - Synod P/C	2,037.29	1,906.67	(130.62)
	2003	Accounts Payable - Synod acctg	500.00	500.00	0.00
		<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<b>2,537.29</b>	<b>2,406.67</b>	<b>(130.62)</b>
Pass-through Payables	2501	Payable: GA Mission	1,725.43	1,531.51	(193.92)
	2502	Payable: Synod Mission	1,766.62	1,476.79	(289.83)
	2503	Payable: One Great Hour	1,091.15	388.02	(703.13)
	2504	Payable: Pentecost	0.00	0.00	0.00
	2505	Payable: Peacemaking	138.18	117.25	(20.93)
	2506	Payable: Christmas Joy	490.00	160.00	(330.00)
	2507	Payable: Disaster Relief	1,466.15	166.74	(1,299.41)
	2508	Payable: GA Designated	0.00	617.00	617.00
	2509	Payable: Theo. Educ. Fund	1,153.00	1,000.00	(153.00)
	2510	Payable: Lakeshore Center	1,990.34	2,083.30	92.96
	2511	Payable: Sudanese Nurses	0.00	0.00	0.00
	2512	Payable: Presb Desig	0.00	0.00	0.00
	2513	Payable: tbd	0.00	0.00	0.00
		<b>Total Pass-through Payables</b>	<b>9,820.87</b>	<b>7,540.61</b>	<b>(2,280.26)</b>
		<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>12,358.16</b>	<b>9,947.28</b>	<b>(2,410.88)</b>

**Net Assets**

					Net Assets
					Increased
Unrestricted	3000	YTD Unallocated Earnings	(97,855.00)	145,252.70	243,107.70
	3000.1	<b>Operating/Missions Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>(45,062.00)</b>	<b>(24,443.38)</b>	<b>20,618.62</b>
	3100	Prior Years' Unrest Net Assets	690,784.59	547,867.58	(142,917.01)
		<b>Total Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	<b>547,867.59</b>	<b>668,676.90</b>	<b>120,809.31</b>
Dedicated Accounts	2401	Dedicated - Small Church Revitalization	20,246.88	20,246.88	0.00
	2402	Dedicated - Lakeshore Center	12,499.94	12,499.94	0.00
	2403	Dedicated - Pastoral Assist	1,110.15	1,110.15	0.00
	2404	Dedicated - Youth Triennium	3,400.00	3,400.00	0.00
	2405	Dedicated - GA Meeting	500.00	500.00	0.00
	2406	Dedicated - Presb Peacemaking	6,060.11	6,117.86	57.75
		<b>Dedicated Account Total</b>	<b>43,817.08</b>	<b>43,874.83</b>	<b>57.75</b>
Designated Net Assets	3701	Desig. Net Asset - Reserve	0.00	0.00	0.00
	3702	Desig. Net Asset - tbd	0.00	0.00	0.00
	3703	Desig. Net Asset Synod Grant	6,701.33	6,701.33	0.00
		<b>Designated Net Asset Total</b>	<b>6,701.33</b>	<b>6,701.33</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Restricted Net Assets	3804	Rest Net Asset Cong. Dev.	79,985.94	79,985.94	0.00
	3805	Rest Net Asset CPM Scholar	25,700.82	25,700.82	0.00
	3806	Rest Net Asset Chambang	0.00	0.00	0.00
	3807	Rest Net Asset Mental Health	768.97	768.97	0.00
	3808	Rest Net Asset Academy Scholar	675.55	675.55	0.00
	3809	Rest Net Asset Holck Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
		<b>Restricted Net Asset Total</b>	<b>107,131.28</b>	<b>107,131.28</b>	<b>0.00</b>
		<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>705,517.28</b>	<b>826,384.34</b>	<b>120,867.06</b>
		<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>717,875.44</b>	<b>836,331.62</b>	<b>118,456.18</b>

Presbytery of Prospect Hill			2022 versus 2023 Comparison		
12/31/2023			2023 Actual	2022 Actual	2022 to 2023
<b>Dedicated Support and Outlays</b>					
Program & Dedicated Support	4400	tbd	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4401	Inc Church Revitalization	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4402	Inc Lakeshore Center	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4403	Inc Pastoral Assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4404	Inc Youth Triennium	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4405	Inc GA Meeting	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4406	Inc Presb Peacemaking	\$247	\$0	\$247
		<b>Program and Dedicated Support</b>	<b>\$247</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$247</b>
<b>Program &amp; Dedicated Outlays</b>					
	5400	tbd	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5401	Exp Church Revitalization	\$4,000	\$0	\$4000
	5402	Exp Lakeshore Center	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5403	Exp Pastoral Assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5404	Exp Youth Triennium	\$0	\$0	\$0
	5405	Exp GA Meeting	\$500	\$0	\$500
	5406	Exp Presb Peacemaking	\$489	\$0	\$489
		<b>Program and Dedicated Outlays</b>	<b>\$4,989</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4989</b>
<b>Pass-through Receipts and Remittances</b>					
Pass-through Receipts	4500	Remits: Net Clearing	\$0	\$0	
	4501	Remits: GA Mission	\$11,270	\$11,431	-\$161
	4502	Remits: Synod Mission	\$10,392	\$11,557	-\$1,165
	4503	Remits: One Great Hour	\$11,519	\$12,437	-\$918
	4504	Remits: Pentecost	\$1,203	\$1,043	\$160
	4505	Remits: Peacemaking	\$620	\$842	-\$222
	4506	Remits: Christmas Joy	\$4,742	\$3,091	\$1,651
	4507	Remits: Disaster Rel.	\$6,245	\$6,904	-\$659
	4508	Remits: GA Desig.	\$14,646	\$15,751	-\$1,105
	4509	Remits: Theo. Educ Fund	\$2,750	\$2,903	-\$153
	4510	Remits: Lakeshore Center	\$20,269	\$7,970	\$12,299
	4511	Remits: Sudan Nurses	\$1,655	\$900	\$755
	4512	Remits: Presb Desig	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4513	Remits: tbd	\$4,744	\$62	\$4,682
		<b>Total Pass-through Receipts</b>	<b>\$90,055</b>	<b>\$74,892</b>	<b>\$15,163</b>
<b>Unallocated Investment Gains and Losses</b>					
	4301	Inv Inc New Covenant Unrest	\$70,092	(\$76,650)	\$146,742
	4302	Inv Inc New Covenant Restrict	\$15,934	(\$21,205)	\$37,139
		<b>Net Unallocated Investment Gains/Losses</b>	<b>\$86,026</b>	<b>(\$97,855)</b>	<b>\$183,881</b>
<b>Unallocated Changes to Net Assets</b>					
Restricted Net Asset Income	4804	Rest NA inc Cong Development	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4805	Rest NA inc CPM Scholarship	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4806	Rest NA inc Chambang	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4807	Rest NA inc Mental Health	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4808	Rest NA inc Academy Scholarshp	\$0	\$0	\$0
	4809	Rest NA Inc Holck Fund	\$63,969	\$0	\$63969
		<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$63,969</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$63969</b>
<b>Consolidated Activities</b>					
	YTD Operating and Missions Surplus (Deficit)		(\$24,443)	(\$45,062)	\$20,619
	YTD Increase (Decrease) in Dedicated Accounts		(\$4,742)	\$0	(\$4,742)
	YTD Unallocated Investment Gains (Losses)		\$86,026	(\$97,855)	\$183,881
	YTD Unallocated Changes to Net Assets		\$63,969	\$0	\$63,969
	<b>Total Financial Activities</b>		<b>\$120,809</b>	<b>(\$142,917)</b>	<b>\$263,726</b>

Missional Witness Committee  
Report to the Presbytery of Prospect Hill  
February 24, 2024

Our first meeting of 2024 was held on January 30.

1. We are encouraging congregations in Prospect Hill to support PC(USA) mission workers. We have promoted this in the Presbytery newsletter by including brief biographies of mission workers and the work they are doing together with their contact information.

2. Mission Executive Amgad Beblawi shared an idea for a Mission Forum Series on "Global Issues Through the Eyes of Faith." He noted that there is a lot of information (and misinformation) available from a political standpoint, but we need to ask ourselves, "What is the witness of the Church in this situation?" This would be tailored to individual congregations. Examples of topics:

1. Israel/Palestine: Amgad has given presentations in 5 churches and has invitations to more.
2. US/Mexican border: those who went to the Frontera de Cristo mission trip can speak to this.
3. Ukraine: Mission Co-Worker Ellen Smith will be in Iowa in April, but she would be available outside that time via Zoom. We will be working to encourage congregations to invite her.
4. World Refugee Crisis: Roger Dahl, retired Red Cross executive, member of Central Pres. in Des Moines, is willing to speak on this.
5. South Sudan: Sherry Koehler

3. Amgad asked us to consider this question: Should this committee be offering a prophetic voice to the Presbytery? We will take this up at our next meeting.

4. Someone will make a report on the US/Mexican border trip at the February 24 Presbytery Meeting.

5. Amgad will be part of a PC(USA) delegation to Israel/Palestine April 13-24. Purpose: to tell the churches in Palestine "you are not forgotten." The vast majority of Christians in Israel/Palestine are Palestinian. Thirty-five people are going. (Original idea was that 4-5 people might go). Participants include one former General Assembly Moderator, Presbyter & Synod executives, seminary professors, Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders. The Tri-Presbytery Personnel Commission has approved the trip. Goals for the trip:

1. Express solidarity with the suffering in Israel/Palestine; hope to meet with Hamas-held hostages and with imprisoned Palestinians, human rights advocates.
2. Live into and demonstrate the connectional church
3. Raise awareness and encourage discussion in the PC(USA). "Silence in the face of evil is evil." (Bonhoeffer)
4. Raise awareness outside the Church of where the Church stands



Kendall Von Glan reported on the Frontera de Cristo mission trip. Among other things, he learned that the organization has a clothing program that is in constant need of socks and underwear, so he has been asking the churches where he fills the pulpit to donate, and several have responded. He also learned that the political ads give a distorted view of the situation. He was impressed with how the church on both sides of the border is responding with limited resources. Even those who are granted asylum have basic needs that the mission tries to meet. We decided to ask those attending the February 24 Presbytery meeting to bring socks and underwear to donate. Richard will ask the Presbytery Council to approve this request.

Sherry Koehler has made some further connections in South Sudan, but the local violence has made it unsafe to travel to the area. Fundraising continues for furniture, internet connectivity, etc.

Missional Witness Committee:

TE Richard Francis, Moderator

RE Sherry Koehler

TE Donna Gray

TE Beth Hamilton

RE Kendall Von Glan

RE Amgad Beblawi, Staff Support

## Learn about Presbyterian Mission Workers

The Missional Witness Committee would like to encourage congregations of the presbytery to learn about the ministry of our mission workers serving overseas. They are dedicated and passionate teachers, church planters, doctors, public health specialists, seminary professors, and evangelists. They organize and host mission teams from the United States. They accompany, they listen, they work in partnership with Christians in 50 countries around the world.



We invite you to learn about their work, read their letters, and support their vital ministry in support of the gospel through your prayers and gifts. A complete list of all mission coworkers is at [www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mission-connections/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mission-connections/).

The Missional Witness Committee has selected the following mission workers for support in 2024:

Josh Heikkila, Ghana

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/the-rev-joshua-heikkila/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/the-rev-joshua-heikkila/)

Mark Hare & Jenny Bent, Costa Rica

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/mark-hare-and-jenny-bent/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/mark-hare-and-jenny-bent/)

Kurt Esslinger & Hyeyoung Lee, South Korea

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/rev-kurt-esslinger-and-hyeyoung-lee/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/rev-kurt-esslinger-and-hyeyoung-lee/)

Mark Adams & Mariam Escobar, U.S.-Mexico border

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/the-rev-mark-adams-and-miriam-maldonado-escobar/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/the-rev-mark-adams-and-miriam-maldonado-escobar/)

Ellen Smith, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/ellen-smith/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/ellen-smith/)

## **A Year of Discernment**

The New Testament employs over 80 diverse metaphors to vividly describe the church. These metaphors, such as “the Bride,” “a body,” “the flock,” “an army,” and “a field,” highlight different aspects of the church’s characteristics and functions. However, a common thread unites these metaphors: they all represent entities susceptible to change.

Change is an ever-present reality in our lives, yet we can easily overlook its profound implications. The world around the Presbyterian Church has changed significantly. In 1990, 90% of Americans identified as Christians. Today, that number has dropped to 64%, and researchers predict it may fall below 50% in the next decade. Presbyterians in Prospect Hill Presbytery are witnessing these changes firsthand as our local communities evolve. We acknowledge that young people are increasingly disinterested in the church, and we grapple with declining church membership, worship attendance and financial giving.

If we are honest with ourselves, all of the churches within our Presbytery face real and substantial challenges to our present and future ministries. Within the last seven years, we have closed or dismissed an average of one church every year. Year over year, our total congregational membership continues to decline and there are reasonable estimates that we may lose up to a third of our remaining congregations in the coming decade. In the face of such a dire reality, we acknowledge there are no simple solutions to these complex challenges.

Admitting that this is true, we must also recognize that the generations of Christians before us have successfully navigated countless seasons of rapid change. To do so, they relied on the scriptures, unceasing prayer, and courageous humility, trusting in the Spirit of God to guide them. Despite lacking earthly power, buildings, or substantial financial resources, their legacy endures in congregations that gather under the cross of Jesus Christ today.

In this season of rapid change and increasing struggle for our churches, we can either choose to continue on our present course, hoping against hope that our fortunes will change or we can confess these challenges honestly and trust that God to lead us into the future. Although we may debate how the world has changed, we can be certain that our God has not. Drawing inspiration from the earliest church, we too should embrace study, prayer, and courageous humility to follow the Spirit of God in this uncertain era.

Recognizing that this is the time to have difficult and honest conversations about the health of our Presbytery, the Moderator Team of Presbytery of Prospect Hill calls upon our Presbytery to commit to make 2024 a year of honest reflection and intentional spiritual discernment. We may discover it is difficult to confront our doubts and fears about the future of our churches, but it is the only path to rediscovering the promise of the resurrecting Christ. While we may feel inadequate in our ability to study, pray, and courageously follow God's Spirit, we must trust in God's faithfulness to be seen in our weakness.

1. In order to help congregations honestly assess the scope and depth of their present vitality and future viability, every church will receive a comprehensive congregational vitality assessment, developed collaboratively by Executive Pastor Ian McMullen and the

COM. Prompt, attentive, and prayerful completion of this assessment is essential as it will help guide the intentional conversations happening this year within the Presbytery leadership, provide the foundation for any future Presbytery proposals, and even create a “baseline” for congregational viability in the future.

2. Additionally, the Moderator Team has organized a special meeting of the Presbytery solely focused on honestly assessing the challenges our Presbytery faces. Scheduled for June 8th, this gathering will involve prayer, study, and challenging conversations around the characteristics of vital congregations and assessing their health. It will include initial results from the congregational assessments as well as vitality reports from the Presbytery leadership. Representation from every congregation is crucial as the outcomes could significantly influence how our Presbytery offers support and potentially closes congregations in the long term.
3. To facilitate this process, we call every Council of our Presbytery, from the Moderator's Team to each congregation's Session, to dedicate at least one meeting this Spring to study, prayer, and discernment to confess the reality of our struggles and to prayerfully ask God for guidance. A discussion guide is attached to this letter to assist in initiating these conversations. We encourage you to host these conversations in advance of the June 8th Presbytery meeting, where they will serve as valuable starting points for our prayerful discernment together.

Amidst the world's ever-changing landscape, we steadfastly hold onto the unchanging nature of God. In times when our churches encounter struggles amidst these changes, we place our trust in the unwavering faithfulness of Jesus Christ. Just as previous generations of Christians have done, our calling does not lie in predicting the future but in diligently studying, fervently praying, and faithfully following God's leading.

We urge you to fully participate in this year's discernment process. The congregational health assessment, our upcoming meeting on June 8th, and the subsequent prayer and discernment activities provide valuable opportunities for us to seek God's guidance collectively.

The Moderator Team of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill

*Trusting A Faithful God:  
Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*

As we gather to reflect upon the journey of our ministry in the past, today, and tomorrow, let us approach this conversation with courageous hearts, led by the Spirit of our faithful God.

- Read Psalm 100 and Psalm 102
  - Discuss:
    - How can the Psalmist both bring such unrestrained praise to God (Psalm 100) and also confess such honest struggles (Psalm 102)?
    - What does this have to teach us about ourselves and our God?
- Exploring God's Past Faithfulness
  - Take a moment to recall a specific instance when you felt God's undeniable faithfulness in your congregation or ministry.
    - What was the church or ministry doing well?
    - How can you now see God working in those moments?
- Facing Our Present Challenges
  - Identify and discuss the greatest challenges currently facing your congregation or ministry. Be honest and vulnerable in sharing the obstacles you encounter. Give special attention to the internal challenges that hinders your Gospel work.
    - We all know that congregations are struggling with membership, giving, etc.
      - Might there be deeper struggles?
      - What could they be?
    - What could we do without?
    - What can't we move forward without?
- Being Stretched and Transformed into the Future
  - Despite the limitations you may experience today, how can your church or ministry be stretched to be better stewards of our time, talent, and treasures to serve our communities and equip future generations of the church?
  - Consider what innovative approaches, ideas we might have been afraid to voice, and creative intentional efforts to pass on the faith.
- Pray (Though you can adapt this to your group, it is recommended you leave open time in each section so that everyone has an opportunity to pray out loud if they desire.)
  - Thank God for the ways that he has been faithful in the past.
  - Confess our doubts and fears. Courageously name the most pressing struggles that we are experiencing.
  - Ask God for hope, wisdom, and guidance as we seek to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel and equip the next generation of disciples.

At the end of your time of prayerful discernment, please write a careful summary of your conversation, as we encourage you to bring your insights and the fruits of your discussions to the special Presbytery meeting on June 8th.

Commission on Ministry  
Report to the Presbytery of Prospect Hill  
February 24, 2024

Since the October 21, 2023 meeting of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill, the Commission on Ministry has taken the following actions:

- Approved Elder Communion Training, led by Rev. Richard Francis for Ruling Elders at United Presbyterian Church of Denison.
- Pastor to the Presbyteries, Rev. Ian McMullen, led Elder Training at Lakeside Church in Storm Lake.
- COM members did 7 Liaison Visits with congregations.
- Approved the agreement between the United Presbyterian Church of Denison and the Rev. Richard Francis for him to serve as Temporary Supply Pastor beginning January 1, 2024, for a one-year renewable term.
- Elected the Rev. Richard Francis as Moderator of the Commission on Ministry.
- Approved the call of the Rev. Philip L. Beisswenger as Pastor of Memorial Presbyterian Church, Cherokee, Iowa. Terms of Call are as follows:

Effective Salary

Cash Salary	\$50,000
Housing Allowance	\$30,000
Total	\$80,000

Reimbursable expenses (by voucher)

Automobile expense (65.5/mile)	\$3,000
Business/professional expenses	\$500
Continuing Education	\$1,500
Other allowance	Cell phone
Moving costs (up to)	\$2,000

Full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions.

Family dental insurance

4 weeks of vacation including Sundays (minimum 4)

2 weeks of Continuing Education including Sundays (minimum 2)

Philip began his service at Memorial Church on January 1, 2024. He was installed as pastor on February 11, 2024, with the following Installation Commission:

Teaching Elders:

1. Ian McMullen
2. Sheryl Puderbaugh
3. Michael Gewecke (Moderator)

Ruling Elders:

1. Angy Becker, Elder from Memorial Church

2. Rebecca Brown, Elder from Lake City Union Church and Commissioned Ruling Elder, Vail and Westside Churches

COM has no action items for the Presbytery.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Richard Francis, Moderator

### **Recommendation**

- 1) The Presbytery of Des Moines overtures the 226<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2024) to direct the Administrative Services Group, through Research Services, to conduct a churchwide study, the scope of which would include examining the frequency of churches experiencing financial hardship due to the rising costs, higher deductibles, non-renewals and unavailability of church property and casualty insurance, primarily due to more frequent catastrophic weather events due to climate change.**
- 2) This study should further seek to determine if these insurance issues are disproportionately affected small churches, congregations in rural settings, and congregations of color, as well as the mid-councils that serve such churches.**
- 3) Report findings and recommendations from the study to the 227<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2026).**

### **Rationale**

Climate change has increased weather events all over the world. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports that there were 28 disasters in the United States in 2023 that caused \$1 billion or more in damages. Catastrophic events were spread across the year and across the country and included damaging hailstorms and windstorms in the central part of the country. Church congregations have been hit by these events and their buildings and property have sustained significant damage. Insurance companies are trying to reduce their losses and are ending relationships with churches (some of which go back decades) and / or increasing premiums and deductibles. Many small churches in the PCUSA have been dropped by their insurance carriers and have experienced difficulty finding policies that adequately cover their building for reasonable premiums and deductibles. While this problem may affect regions in varying degrees, the trend points to problems for congregations all over the country for the coming years. Many church congregations are one major weather event from not being able to sustain their building financially.

We have learned many times over that challenges affecting our churches do so disproportionately for myriad reasons. The PCUSA has a longstanding tradition of looking at how risks and costs are distributed across our congregations and mid councils, and if those inequities are disproportionately affected for reasons of injustice, geography, or other demographic reasons, they offer ways to redress that. If injustice, geography, or any other demographic factor plays some role in risk and cost being distributed inequitably in the case of property and casualty insurance, the recommendations made at the 227<sup>th</sup> General Assembly should account for that.