

## **April 2025 Mission Council Email for Current**

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Your Mission Council met on March 19, 2025, to continue our work of guiding and supporting the work of our presbytery. As always, we are grateful for the faithfulness and commitment of all those who serve in leadership across our congregations and committees. Below is a summary of our discussions and decisions from this meeting.

### **Business Items**

- **Staff Accountant Search** – The Personnel Committee is reviewing the job scope with input from Cindy Hollingshead. Once the job description is finalized, a search group will be formed.
- **Communion for Ruling Elders Training** – The Mission Council approved the celebration of the Lord's Supper on March 29, 2025, as part of the training for Ruling Elders learning to serve communion.

### **Reports Received**

- Reports were received from the Mission Council Moderator, Temporary General Presbyterian Kerry Foster, and Temporary Stated Clerk Barry Parks.
- Cindy Hollingshead provided financial reports, including a Budget to Actual update, a Net Assets Report, and a summary of 2025 Covenants received from churches.
- The Special Finance Committee is completing its work and expects to present their report in May. They will bring financial recommendations to the June Stated Meeting of the POJ. In coordination with this group, there will be two virtual listening sessions for members of the Presbytery to ask questions about their recommendations.
- The Committee on Nominations is working to fill vacancies on the Permanent Judicial Committee class of 2029.

### **Personnel Committee Updates**

- The Personnel Committee will review and revise the personnel policy with legal counsel before final approval by the Mission Council.
- Performance evaluations for the Temporary General Presbyterian (TGP) and Stated Clerk will begin, along with reviews (conducted by the TGP) for other staff members.
- The Personnel Committee requested updated job descriptions and contracts for current employees and will collaborate with Chandra Easter to develop a Presbytery Office organizational chart.
- Jen Rowe will serve as the liaison between the Mission Council and the Personnel Committee in 2025.

## **Task Force Updates**

- **Communications Task Force** – Doug and Associate for Communications Leah Tweel are assessing our current communication practices and will conduct surveys to improve outreach and engagement.
- **Connections Task Force** – A proposed structure for regional gatherings in the Fredericksburg area has been developed, ensuring no congregation has to travel more than approximately 30 miles. This model will be expanded across the Presbytery to see how many locations would be needed for in-person meetings across the POJ. Once the Task Force has evaluated this model, planning for the regional gatherings will begin.
- **POJ Meetings Task Force** – Discussions are ongoing about meal logistics and ways to encourage in-person attendance at Presbytery meetings through additional training or presentations. The task force is also evaluating the costs of in-person, hybrid, and fully virtual meetings. The Mission Council accepted an invitation from First Church Charlottesville and Meadows to host the October 18, 2025, Stated Meeting of the Presbytery.

## **Trustees**

You may or may not know that those elected to the Mission Council also serve as the Trustees of the Presbytery (Trustees of the Presbytery of the James, Inc). Currently, the Trustees are overseeing six former church properties in some state of either being sold or leased. We are also seeking to address deferred maintenance at the POJ office and other options for the best stewardship of our resources.

We continue to seek God's guidance in our work together, and we are grateful for the prayers and support of our churches and leaders. If you have any questions or feedback, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Grace and peace,

**Rev. Joel Morgan**

Moderator, Mission Council  
Presbytery of the James