

January 2026 Mission Council update for the Current

Dear Friends in Christ,

I'm writing with an update following the **November 13 called meeting of the Presbytery**, along with a brief snapshot of where Mission Council's work now stands.

### **2026 Budget Approved**

At the November 13 called meeting, the Presbytery **approved the 2026 budget**. I am grateful for the thoughtful engagement that led up to that vote—particularly the listening sessions and the careful work of the Budget Committee. This budget reflects both our financial realities and our shared desire to align resources with mission.

### **Staffing Model & Job Description**

The Presbytery also **approved the job description for a combined General Presbyter / Stated Clerk position**. This marks a significant step forward in clarifying leadership expectations and creating a sustainable staffing model for the Presbytery.

In addition, the Presbytery **directed the Committee on Nominations to nominate a search committee at the February 2026 stated meeting**. Mission Council and the Personnel Committee will continue to support this work as it moves toward an active search.

### **Current Interim Staffing**

Our interim structure remains in place:

- Rev. Kerry Foster continues to serve as **Temporary General Presbyter and Temporary Stated Clerk**.
- Barbara Espigh continues as **Temporary Assistant to the Stated Clerk and Associate for Administration**.

### **December Mission Council Action: Accounting Task Force**

At its December meeting, Mission Council **approved the formation of an Accounting Task Force** to align our accounting practices more fully with the Presbytery's **Resource Management Policy**. This work will focus on clarity, consistency, and accountability in our financial processes as well as recommending a plan for continuing oversight. They will also recommend to the MC the funds that require a grant application process.

The task force members are:

- Barclay Bradshaw, RE, Three Chopt
- Doug Jackson, RE, Three Chopt
- Barb Young, RE, Hebron
- Gary Selmeczi, RE, First Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville

I will convene the task force, with Rev. Kerry Foster also serving.

## **Other Ongoing Work**

- The Forest Hill AC continues its work. MC will nominate another person to serve on the AC at the February POJ meeting.
- Listening Sessions for the Revised Manual of Administrative Operations are open. Please register and give your input to make this document better.

Thank you for your faithful, patient, and prayerful engagement this season of discernment. The decisions made this fall—and the work now underway—are helping position the Presbytery for greater clarity and sustainability in the years ahead. Please contact me with any questions. More phone calls, fewer emails.

Grace and peace to you in the New Year,

**Joel Morgan**

Moderator, Mission Council  
Presbytery of the James