

Journey of Faith

Rev. Laura Neely

I was baptized as an infant in the Presbyterian Church in Burlington, NC. My mom was the director at my church's preschool. Many days, my brother and I played there while my mom readied classrooms or met with teachers. As a child, I did all the church activities I could. Singing in the choir and attending midweek storytimes that taught me Scripture and early words of faith. At church, I felt comfortable, safe, and loved. I could run down the hallways with joy and abandon, confident that this was where I belonged.

As a 14-year-old, I reluctantly went on my first high school mission trip. It pushed me out of my comfort zone, showing me what poverty looked like for the first time. My world broke open, and I ached for strangers whom I now understood as brothers and sisters. After this trip, I could articulate that I wanted a job that helped people.

During my teenage years, my family faced a number of challenges. The youth group was a place of solace. There, I saw a different way to live, guided by radical belonging and acceptance. That wasn't what I saw at school, and it changed my priorities and gave me purpose. Still, those days inform my ministry. These were the years when an inkling of a calling began to take root. Mentors asked me, "Have you ever thought about being a pastor?" The seed was planted.

In college, at Queens University in Charlotte, NC, I studied Philosophy and Religion. I completed two internships in Youth Ministry and felt called to create space for young people to know God and feel a sense of belonging. I traveled to Guatemala several times, which also ignited my love for mission.

After graduation, I started at Columbia Seminary. In my second year at Columbia, I began to have questions about ministry that the classroom could not answer. I read the books and heard my professors talk about what it is like to do ministry, but I wanted to see it for myself. The next year, I took a full-time internship in upstate South Carolina. I served two congregations: a large programmatic church and a small family-driven church. I put into practice all that I was learning. I returned for my final year of seminary, able to think about real people and contexts, and excited to get back into the local church after graduation.

As a new seminary graduate, God called me to Corpus Christi, TX, to serve as Associate Pastor for Youth, Education, and Mission at Parkway Presbyterian Church. I had to look up Corpus on a map. I spent eight and a half years in my first call. I'm thankful for the longevity! I watched children grow into young adults. I saw hopes for ministries blossom into reality.

In 2021, I was called back to the southeast to serve First Presbyterian Church of Lagrange, GA. There, I oversaw the Christian Education program and delved into Pastoral Care. Three years later, that position ended as the church sought a different vision for its ministry.

With this ending, my family took the opportunity to move back to Texas to be closer to family. In the process, I discovered a new calling: Speech Therapy. I believe I can apply many of the care skills I learned and honed in the church alongside new ones in the therapy world. Even now, I am seeking that call I heard as a teenager to do work that helps people. I am excited to be back in Mission Presbytery. While I am not seeking full-time ministry, I hope to use my ministry background in creative and meaningful ways to continue serving God's Church with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

Statement of Faith

Rev. Laura Neely

I believe in one triune God—creator, redeemer, and sustainer. We belong to God as children and a family of faith.

I believe in God, the creator, whom Jesus called Father. God spoke creation into being, proclaiming it all good. In God's image, humans were created from the dust and commissioned as caretakers of all the earth. God made a covenant with Israel, blessing them as a people and covenanting to be their God. That promise continues with us.

I believe in Jesus Christ, Mary's child, the Son of God, the Word of God in the flesh. Fully human and fully divine. In the person of Jesus, God came to live the fullness of life with the people he loved so much. Christ came to walk with us: proclaiming the good news, speaking out for the oppressed, healing the sick, living in simplicity, loving in abundance, and teaching his followers a different way of living. He was persecuted, died on the cross, and was resurrected. Like the women who gave witness at the tomb, we still declare the miracle of the empty tomb, saying: He is risen!

We proclaim Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, redeemer of all people. Through God's free gift of grace, in Christ, even as we sin, even as we turn from God, we are continually welcomed to start again; welcomed home again like a beloved child.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who unites us with Christ through the Lord's Supper, who cleanses and claims us as God's own through Baptism. The Spirit flows through our lives renewing us, shaping us, re-forming us, revealing God's will in and for our lives, and reconciling us to God and to one another.

I believe in the authority of scripture as God's Word to us. These ancient words proclaim God's activity in the world, share the witness of a holy people, and declare the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit guides us in understanding and knowledge of the Bible. Our faith is grounded in the narrative as recorded in scripture – an ancient text that still reveals Truth to us today.

As a visible sign of an invisible grace, God instituted two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the sign and seal that we are claimed as God's own children, welcomed into the newness of life with Christ, and united with the family of faith. Baptism is the mark of God's covenant with us and our commitment. Through the Lord's Supper, in partaking of the bread and cup, the Spirit lifts us to Christ. In this meal, we remember the sacrifice Christ made for us. Through common elements, we proclaim transformative work already at play and the promise of the kingdom to come.

The Church is the communion of believers gathered and scattered out into the world. With Christ as the Head of the Church, we are the body of Christ. We are empowered to use our gifts for the glory of God. We are called to be the Church to a suffering and broken world by loving God and our neighbors through serving others, seeking justice and peace for all people, and spreading the good news of the Gospel as a witness to God's steadfast love.

From our first to our final breath, our purpose is to glorify God with all that we are. We are imperfect people, but by the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are forgiven and sent. God's love is big and lavish and unfathomable. All we can do in response is share that love in joyful thanks.

Journey of Faith – David Angulo

In very Presbyterian fashion, my journey of faith and sense of God's call began at birth. Before I could respond, God's grace had already claimed me as part of the covenant community. Born to a Mexican Presbyterian minister and a preschool teacher, I was raised surrounded by God and the people of God, learning from an early age what it meant to trust, follow, and serve. My father shaped my early understanding of Scripture, theology, and church history, while my mother grounded our home in daily spiritual practices like meditation on the Word, personal devotion, and communal prayer. Alongside them, my grandparents and extended family, a lot of them deeply rooted in ministry themselves, nurtured and modeled a lived faith. It was not until I left home to attend Presbyterian Pan American School that faith became personally owned rather than inherited. Living away from family for the first time at 15 years old was difficult, and almost immediately after arriving at Pan Am I became homesick. Two gifts sustained me in that season: the seeds of faith planted early in my life, and soccer! Through personal prayer and Bible study, I encountered God's presence in a new way and experiencing a companion in what I can only call the Spirit. During a senior-year visit to Austin Seminary, I sensed a call toward seminary study (though not a call toward ministry specifically) not too long after that trip I would resolve that I would one day return there as a student. At Schreiner University, my involvement in ministry deepened. An unexpected invitation from Rev. Gini Norris-Lane to join a freshman faith group opened the door to what would become long-term campus ministry leadership. I led worship, Bible studies, and service initiatives and even received the Good News in Campus Ministry award for engagement over four years. Yet increased exposure to the realities of ministry like future careers opportunities and a long process of ordination also brought hesitation about pursuing theological education. Nonetheless, I had "a still small voice" prompting me to apply to Austin Seminary. When I began at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 2021, the breadth and depth of theological study felt overwhelming, classes and academics were the easier part of it, however times I doubted my adequacy for ministry beyond seminary. Over time, however, professors, peers, church leaders, and mentors consistently affirmed gifts I struggled to see in myself for a long time. At one point I sort of expected to have a dramatic "Road to Damascus" moment of certainty but instead I discovered that my calling has been unfolding through many smaller, faithful invitations from God. Looking back, I now recognize a pattern: early seeds of faith, leaving home, deepening faith, early discernment, campus ministry leadership, leading Bible study groups, applying to seminary, providential relationships, daily prayer, opened doors amid difficulty. God has been calling steadily, not suddenly. And in each season, however imperfectly, I have done my best to answer. My parents, teachers, friends, colleagues, and my wife have sustained me throughout this journey, and I give thanks to God that these saints have surrounded me like a cloud of witnesses. With gratitude and humility, I continue to respond as I am able: "Here I am, Lord. Send me!" Congregational ministry is where I presently discern God's call, and by God's grace, I will continue to answer.

David Angulo

Statement of Faith

I believe God to BE. God is, has been, and will be for all of eternity. Exodus 3:14 is one of the foundational texts of my personal faith. God reveals to Moses His name "I AM WHO I AM." God, always there, being... God. God is holy, good, and sustains God's creation. God is a God of relationship and communion, of being in one another. This is why I believe God to be in the form of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, existing each person in God, they commune in perfect unity. God has created the universe, but most importantly for me, God has created humanity. God created humanity because of his nature as a God of relationship and communion. We were created in the image of God, *imago dei*. As such we share qualities with God, like love, compassion, care, and most importantly recognizing each other's connection to one another and seeing God in one another. God made the world and sustains it by bringing about divine providence to all creation. God has created the rest of the world for us to live in, not to rule over it, abuse it or make it do what we want, but rather to steward it, care for it, and use it towards the well-being of all, instead of being driven by greediness. God wants to commune with us, always has, always will, and constantly calls us to commune with Him. In this attempt God sent his only begotten Son to humanity, to teach us about His great love, about how to live with one another, and most importantly how to love one another truly. However, this world is broken, and human nature has a tendency to idolatry, tyranny, and harm towards others. Jesus' mission to the world was to stand "against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of (this present) darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." He did so in a human body, with flesh and bones, experiencing joy, grief, friendship, love, fear, and ultimately death at the hands of these worldly powers. Jesus rose from the death and ascended to heaven, and he sits at the right hand of the Father. In his life, Jesus established the covenant life and gave us a commandment to love God and love one another in unity. And through his disciples and followers he established the church. He also left for us the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gives us courage, vitality, understanding, and wisdom to enter into the world that we have been called to serve as elected people. It gives us the tools necessary to show the goodness of God, share the good news, and bring about justice, compassion and love for all. Through the disciples and witnesses we receive the word of God, the Scriptures that offer a guide for Christian life, and a witness to the life of Christ, a model of how to act as the elected people. In Scripture, we encounter instances of special revelation (as Calvin would call it) to specific people, like the Israelites, but most importantly through Jesus Christ. I also believe in general revelation, the human ability for all to know God in our day-to-day life, through creation, our divine connection to God and others, and our human experience, including reason. It is through revelation that we know God, although not fully, we can never fully know God, and our life is a constant journey to knowing another "side" or unknown part of God. I also believe the church to have been elected for service and salvation. As Christians and elected people, we are called to obedience to God's commandments to bring about justice, liberation, and freedom. We do this with the help of God, and the Holy Spirit, who are constantly revealing to us how to live in sovereign righteousness and love. I believe that that the church exists where the Word of God is truly preached and heard, the Sacraments rightly administered, and ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Pin</u>	<u>Organization Name</u>	<u>Stats Submitted</u>	<u>Membership Accepted</u>	<u>Congregation Accepted</u>	<u>Racial Ethnic Accepted</u>	<u>Finance Accepted</u>
Adamsville	8845	First Adamsville					
Austin	10338	Hope	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	10600	Shepherd of the Hills	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	11552	Austin Taiwanese					
	11699	Genesis	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	12042	Presbyterian Church of Lake Travis	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	12091	New Covenant Fellowship					
	21668	Covenant	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21669	El Buen Pastor					
	21670	Faith	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21671	Central	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21673	Hyde Park	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21674	University	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21675	Westlake Hills					
	21676	Westminster	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	8621	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	8634	St Andrews	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Beeville	21678	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Boerne	3449	St Mark	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Brownsville	11840	Primera Iglesia-Mexico	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21680	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Burnet	21682	Burnet	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Canyon Lake	11111	Canyon Lake	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cheapside	8623	Cheapside					
Collegeport	21684	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Copperas Cove	3446	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Corpus Christi	11554	Faith Community	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	11628	Island	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21686	El Divino Salvador	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21689	Grace	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21690	Jackson Woods	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21691	Parkway	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cotulla	21694	First	Y		Y	Y	Y

<u>Location</u>	<u>Pin</u>	<u>Organization Name</u>	<u>Stats Submitted</u>	<u>Membership Accepted</u>	<u>Congregation Accepted</u>	<u>Racial Ethnic Accepted</u>	<u>Finance Accepted</u>
Cuero	21696	First					
Del Rio	21697	First					
Dripping Springs	12121	Dripping Springs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
El Campo	21701	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Elgin	21702	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fredericksburg	21707	Memorial					
Georgetown	11792	San Gabriel	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21708	First		Y			
Giddings	21709	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Goliad	21710	Goliad					
Gonzales	21711	The Presbyterian Church	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Harlingen	21713	Second	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21714	Treasure Hills					
Harper	8628	Harper					
Helotes	21715	Forest Hills					
Junction	21716	First					
Karnes City	21717	First					
Kerrville	21718	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Kingsville	21719	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21720	Gethsemane	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
LaFeria	21712	New Hope		Y	Y	Y	
Lago Vista	10843	Rolling Hills Community					
Lampasas	8857	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Laredo	21724	Sinai					
Leander	21725	Leander					
Llano	21726	First					
Lockhart	21727	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21728	Faith/Fe	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Luling	21729	First		Y	Y	Y	Y
Manchaca	7767	St Johns					
Marble Falls	21730	St Andrew	Y	Y	Y		Y
McAllen	12044	First Korean	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21732	First					

<u>Location</u>	<u>Pin</u>	<u>Organization Name</u>	<u>Stats Submitted</u>	<u>Membership Accepted</u>	<u>Congregation Accepted</u>	<u>Racial Ethnic Accepted</u>	<u>Finance Accepted</u>	<u>Suppl. Questions</u>
Mercedes	21734	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Mission	21735	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
New Braunfels	21737	First						
	21738	New Braunfels	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Palacios	21739	First						
Pipe Creek	11110	Pipe Creek	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Pleasanton	21741	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Port Lavaca	21743	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	7925	Six Mile						
Refugio	21747	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Rockport	21750	First						
Rocksprings	21751	First						
Round Rock	10869	Round Rock	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	11794	Grace	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
San Antonio	10427	Holy Trinity	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	10759	Northminster	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	21752	Alamo Heights	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	21755	Boldtville	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	21756	Covenant	Y	Y			Y	
	21757	Crestholme						
	21758	Emmanuel						
	21760	Grace	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	21765	Cross Roads	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	21767	Northwood						
	21769	St Andrew		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	21770	San Pedro	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
San Benito	23344	First Korean						
	8047	Oak Hills	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	8635	Divine Redeemer	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	8636	Los Angeles Heights	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	8637	Madison Square	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	8640	University	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
21772	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		

<u>Location</u>	<u>Pin</u>	<u>Organization Name</u>	<u>Stats Submitted</u>	<u>Membership Accepted</u>	<u>Congregation Accepted</u>	<u>Racial Ethnic Accepted</u>	<u>Finance Accepted</u>	
San Benito	21773	Iglesia Getsemani						
San Marcos	21774	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	21775	Memorial						
Schulenburg	12197	St Paul's						
Seguin	21776	First						
Sinton	21777	Sinton						
Smiley	8633	Pilgrim						
Smithville	8638	First						
Taylor	21781	Everlasting Hope	Y		Y	Y	Y	
Tivoli	21782	Tivoli						
Uvalde	21783	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Victoria	21785	First	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	21786	Grace	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	21787	Nicea						
Weslaco	21789	San Pablo	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Wimberley	11200	Wimberley		Y	Y	Y	Y	
Woodsboro	21790	Faith						
Total			71	74	74	73	73	0

2025 Presbytery Statistical Report

Updated Report E.3

Presbytery	Mission		
Address	7201 Broadway #303, San Antonio, TX 78209		
Phone	210-826-3296	Fax	210-826-0917
Email	missionpby@missionpby.org		
Web Site	www.mission-presbytery.org		



Membership

Prior Active Members	16158	Adjusted membership	16050
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Gains

Certificate	164
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Youth Professions	88
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Professions & Reaffirmations	366
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Total Gains	618
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Total Ending Active Members	15535
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Losses

Certificate	67
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Deaths	224
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Deleted for any Other Reason	842
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Total Losses	1133
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Baptisms

Presented by Others	96
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At Confirmation	27
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All Other	16
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Average Weekly Worship Attendance	5923
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Friends of the Congregation	1510
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Ruling Elders on Session	587
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Do you have Deacons? Yes / No	26 / 48
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Age Distribution of Active Members

17 & Under	365
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18 - 25	658
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26 - 40	1318
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41 - 55	1877
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56 - 70	2597
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Over 70	3692
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Total Age Distribution	10507
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People with Disabilities

Hearing impairment	474
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Sight impairment	145
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Mobility impairment	573
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Other impairment	246
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Gender Distribution

Women	6148
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Men	4386
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Non-Binary	25
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Youth in Congregation

Age 4 and under	453
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Elementary School (K-5th grade)	851
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Middle School (6th – 8th grade)	409
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High School (9th – 12th grade)	486
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Total Youth	2199
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Racial Ethnic

Asian/Pacific Islander/South Asian	185
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Black/African American/African	206
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Middle Eastern/North African	24
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Hispanic/Latino-a	969
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Native American/Alaska Native/Indigenous	14
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White	8620
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Multiracial	150
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Total Racial Ethnic	10168
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Budgeted Income	28,866,114
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Budgeted Expense	29,502,378
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Receipts

Regular Contributions	143,456,696
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Capital Building Fund	3,686,246
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Investment Income	2,866,760
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Bequests	1,539,588
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Other Income	5,417,268
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Subsidy or Aid	746,015
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Expenditures

Local Program	25,793,018
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Local Mission	2,339,690
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Capital Expenditures	7,984,378
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Investment Expenditures	1,500,367
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Per Capital Apprt	158,588
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Other Mission	922,599
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Stated Clerk, Rev. Laurie Palmer
Mission Presbytery
March 6-7, 2026
Updated February 26, 2026

Motion: To approve the excused absences for this meeting.

COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

Motion: To elect the following people to the Human Resources Committee, and to the Permanent Judicial Commission

There might be more names to present at the meeting.

Human Resources

TE Jack Barden, Austin, Class of 2028

Permanent Judicial Commission

TE Walt Lee, San Antonio, Class of 2029

For information:

1. An allegation has been made against a minister member of Mission Presbytery and an Investigating Committee has been formed.
2. Please find attached the Annual Statistical Report roster of churches who submitted their reports, and Mission Presbytery's totals as a result.
3. An updated Mission Presbytery Bylaws and Manual of Operations is in the packet. If

Mission Presbytery votes in the affirmative for General Council's motions, the updated documents will be considered the first reading at the meeting. Mission Presbytery would vote to update them at the June 12-13, 2026, presbytery meeting.