



NAP News

June 2024



Do you have news you'd like to have included? Send submissions to adminoffice@napcusa.org by the 25th of each month.

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On June 19, 1865, Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas with the news that the more than 250,000 enslaved Black people in the state were free. The historical legacy of Juneteenth shows the value of never giving up hope in uncertain times.

Juneteenth marks our country's second independence day. Though it has long been celebrated among the African American community, it is a history that has been marginalized and still remains largely unknown to the wider public.

As a Matthew 25 Presbytery, we are committed to dismantling structural racism through courageous conversations that promote a deeper understanding and awareness of the profound impact of racism in all our lives.

Our conversations begin on June 18th when we gather for our Summer Stated Meeting at Faith Presbyterian Church, Huntsville!

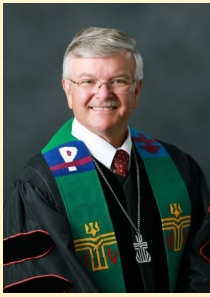
Register as a Elder Commissioner, Pastor, or Visitor at adminoffice@napcusa.org

Continue the conversations while you put your faith into action on June 19th from 9-12 at the Sleep in Heavenly Peace Juneteenth Bed Build at 6000 Technology Drive, # 7, Huntsville, Alabama 35805 !

Register for the Juneteenth Bed Build at <https://shpbeds.org/chapter/al-huntsville>
(Sleep in Heavenly Peace is a nation-wide non-profit that provides hand built beds for children who don't have a safe place to sleep. The offering from the NAP Summer Stated Meeting will be donated to SHP/ Huntsville for their continued good work for the families living in Madison County. See the May newsletter for more information and pictures from Fellowship, Huntsville's service with SHP.)

“Antiracism is not a program, a mission project, or even a study course, Antiracism is a way of being. In order to shift how we move and breathe in the world, we must first look at the ways of being upholding the systems of oppression we seek to dismantle. Only then can we consider new practices and ways of embodying the life-giving values we seek to animate. When you begin to change yourself, you affect change in the systems around you. It starts with you.”

(from Antiracism as a Way of Being is a six-module video series developed for NEXT Church by Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training.)



From our Executive Presbyter, Dr. Tom Lovell...

Dear Siblings in Christ,

At its October Stated Meeting in 2023, North Alabama Presbytery voted unanimously to become a Matthew 25 Mid-Council, committing ourselves to radical and fearless discipleship by embracing one or more of these three foci: **building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty.** As part of our commitment to the Matthew 25 initiative, we have emphasized one of these foci at each meeting of Presbytery. The Summer meeting of our Presbytery will be held on Tuesday, June 18th, at Faith Presbyterian Church. Our meeting falls on the eve of Juneteenth, providing an opportune time for our Presbytery to focus on how we can work together to identify and dismantle structural racism.

Yes, I know racism is an emotionally and politically charged issue. As one who grew up in North Carolina in the late 1950's and 1960's, I witnessed first-hand the segregation and mistreatment of people of color. I heard racial slurs used as a part of normal conversation. I remember the struggles of integration, and witnessed the hatred espoused by hooded white men carrying torches. I also have come to realize the many privileges that I have been afforded over the course of my 68 years simply because of my race, while people of color have had to struggle mightily for those same privileges. And while there have been some monumental changes over the years, the impact the structural racism of our past as well as the remnants of those same structures that exist today need to be identified, addressed, and dismantled.

The introductory paragraph to the Confession of Belhar found in the PCUSA Book of Confessions asks: ***"How should the church respond when sin disrupts the church's unity, creates division among the children of God, and constructs unjust systems that steal life from God's creation?"*** The Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa faced this question under the system of laws known as Apartheid, which separated people by race, and responded with the creation of the Confession of Belhar in 1986. The Belhar Confession was added to the PCUSA Book of Confessions in 2016. The Confession is a powerful document which demands Christ's work of reconciliation be made manifest in the church and in the world. The Confession proclaims that the unity we have in Christ, ***"...is therefore both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ....a reality which must be pursued and sought; and one which the people of God must continually be built upon to attain; that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity, and hatred between people and groups is a sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly that anything that threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted."***

While we have come a long way in race relations since my childhood days, there is still much work to be done. With the current assault upon diversity, equity, and inclusion, the continuing struggle that not only people of color confront on a daily basis, but also the struggles and mistreatment confronted by immigrants, people from other cultures, as well as the LGBTQ+ community, we must not only continue this work, but as those who claim Christ as Lord, we need to increase our efforts to work for the end of racial, ethnic, gender, or any other type of prejudice, exclusion, or discrimination. That is why the 222nd General Assembly (2016) approved a Church-Wide Antiracism Policy, and section G-3.0103 of the Book of Order provides for councils of the church including presbyteries and sessions to address the issue of racism.

Our Presbytery will address this issue at our June 18th meeting, which I hope will serve as a catalyst for continued discussion as well as the development of an anti-racism policy for our Presbytery which might also serve as a model for our congregations.

May God grant us grace as we seek to create a church and a world where all people are seen, valued, and treated as God's precious children.

**Grace & Peace,
Tom**

Dr. Lovell's Schedule

June 2—Copeland, Athens

June 16—Westminster, Florence Session

June 30-July 4—General Assembly, Utah



EUCHARISTIC ELDER TRAINING

One of the responsibilities of the Presbytery is to provide worship leadership for our congregations. While the majority of our congregations have ordained pastoral leadership, almost one-third of our congregations do not. That reality often makes it difficult for those congregations to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on a regular basis.

In response to that reality, and in accord with the authority granted by the Book of Order, the Commission on Ministry (COM) is seeking Ruling Elders who are interested in being trained to serve the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in those congregations without ordained worship leadership. These elders will be called, "Eucharistic Elders," and upon completion of their training will be authorized by the COM to serve the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in specific circumstances and congregations.

The training will be conducted by our Executive Presbyter, Dr. Tom Lovell, and our Stated Clerk, the Rev. Tom Lewis.

**The training will be
Saturday, July 27, 2024
at Faith Presbyterian Church,
Huntsville
from 9:00am until 12:00 Noon.**

**Those interested in serving as an
Eucharistic Elder should email the
Presbytery at
adminoffice@napcusa.org to receive
an application form.**

Eucharistic Elders will need to be
endorsed by their Pastor or the Session.

If you have any questions,
please contact Dr. Lovell
at execpresbyter@napcusa.org
or 615-975-5693.

June NAP Events

Commission on Ministry

Carol Copeland, Moderator

Thursday, June 6 @ 6:00 pm

via zoom

Business Affairs & Personnel Team

Parker Moore, Chair

Thursday, June 13 @ 4:00 pm

via zoom

Executive Commission

Robin Palmer, Moderator

No meeting in June

NAP Summer Stated Meeting

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Faith Presbyterian Church, Huntsville



The PC(USA) 226th General Assembly will be meeting June 25—July 4, 2024 In Salt Lake City, Utah

North Alabama Presbytery is blessed to have the following people serving as Commissioners:

Teaching Elder—Rev. Tom Lewis

(Copeland, Athens)

Committee Assignment: General Assembly Entity Coordination
Receives all items related to the operation and functions of assembly entities, including amendments to the Organization for Mission, reports from the Unification Commission, and approval of workplans.

Ruling Elder—Mark Icenogle

(Covenant, Huntsville)

Committee Assignment: Race, Sexuality, and Gender Justice
Receives items of business related to justice actions regarding race, sexuality, and gender identity. Includes items related to reproductive justice, anti-racism, and anti-trans legislation.

Youth Advisory Delegate—Avy Elmore

(Westminster, Decatur)

Committee Assignment: Polity

Receives items recommending constitutional changes to the Book of Order and the Book of Confessions. Some items with constitutional changes may be referred to other committees for discernment alongside of relevant topics.

Executive Presbyter, Rev. Dr. Tom Lovell
will be attending the plenary sessions June 30-July 4.

Please keep our Commissioners and all who are involved in the planning of this bi-annual meeting in your prayers.

North Alabama Presbytery Summer Stated Meeting June 18, 2024

Faith Presbyterian Church

5003 Whitesburg Drive, Huntsville, AL 35802

Registration & Fellowship - 8:30am

Clerks, please pre-register your Elders.

Pastors, please pre-register yourselves.

Call to Order & Worship - 9:00am

Rev. Gregory Bentley preaching.

Meeting 10:00am—2:50pm

Committee reports, ministry guests, presentations, & a group Bible Study.

BBQ & sides lunch will be provided

Cost: \$13

Please reserve your lunch in advance.

(adminoffice@napcusa.org)



Important Dates

PC(USA) 226th General Assembly

June 24—July 4

Salt Lake City, Utah

NAP Fall Stated Meeting

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Maranatha Camp & Conference Center
Scottsboro, AL

BEING



MATTHEW 25



pcusa.org/matthew25 | #BeingMatthew25

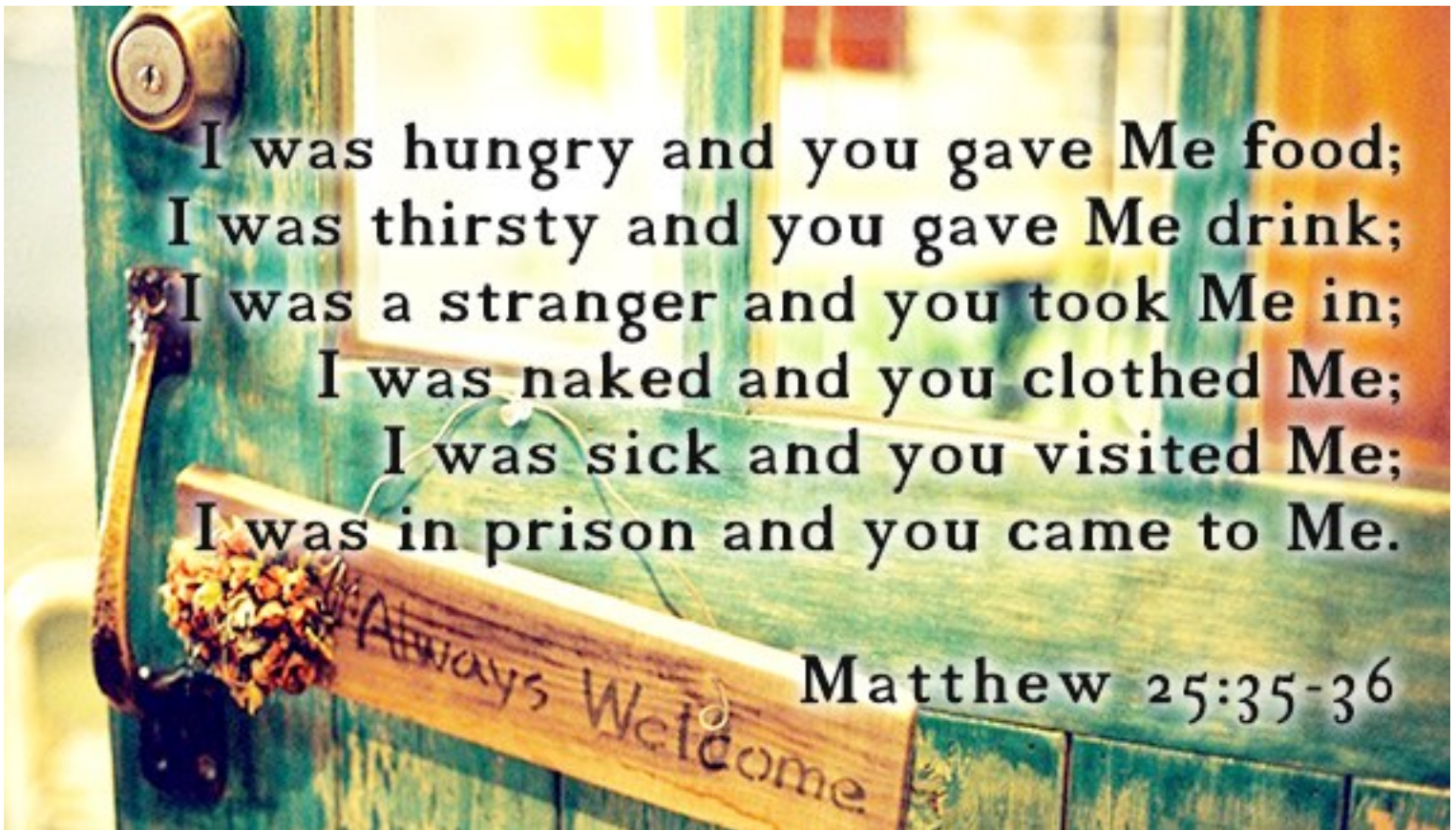
How is your church living out Matthew 25 in your community?
We'd love to share your stories to inspire others!
Send your story and pictures to Krista at adminoffice@napcusa.org



First, Florence is hosting a new ministry to *Welcome the Stranger* with compassion and love!

Home Free Haven, a local ministry providing hope writes, "Behind this door awaits endless opportunity! We're beyond grateful to have an office space to connect with our unhoused friends! This space will serve as a central hub, providing access to one of our Mobile Hydration Stations, Fresh Start laundry vouchers, essential supplies, and valuable resource connections. **Thank you, First Presbyterian Church Florence Alabama, for your continued support in our mission** to extend our services beyond winter shelter. We

deeply appreciate this space you've provided, and we are dedicated to utilizing it effectively. *We'll be in office by appointment only at 224 E Mobile Street in downtown Florence for the next few weeks as we finalize the scheduling details for our upcoming summer day program. Our "Clean Up & Cool Down" days will offer our friends access to air conditioning during the hottest part of the day as well as showers, refreshments, and essentials.* "



Celebrating Ministry Grants !

North Alabama Presbytery congratulates the following who received Ministry Grants in May:



First Presbyterian, Florence

Grant for \$25,000 for new sound and video systems in their Fellowship Hall to increase community participation as well as enhance congregational events!



NAP Montreat Group

Grant for \$2,000 for scholarships for youth and adults attending the Montreat Youth Conference July 6-13, 2024.



The NAP Ministry Grant program has funds available to help churches and congregations with ministry to college students, mission projects, and building upgrades. Congregational grants are capped at \$25,000 and ministry grants are capped at \$5,000.

Applications and details are on the NAP website—www.napcusa.org

Celebrating Milestones !



Congratulations to Stacey White who graduated from Dubuque Seminary in May and has been “Certified-Ready to Receive a Call” by the Commission on Ministry! Stacey began her journey to become a Pastor in 2020 as a NAP Inquirer and then Candidate for Ministry. She has served internships at Westminster, Decatur and Grace, Madison and is currently on the Pulpit Supply List as she discerns where her next call will be!

Congratulations to First Presbyterian, Cullman

who celebrated 70 years of ministry on Pentecost Sunday. Special guests included founding member Mrs Betty Bryan and retired longtime music director Mrs. Jan Sayle.

Photo courtesy Jeff Underberg

Front: Earnest Hauk, Kerri Bryan, Betty Bryan, Clay Bryan, Jan Sayle

Back: Susan Martin Hauk, Rev. Robin Lambert, Clerk Barry Adams





NAP Youth and Adults are headed to MYC24 in July!

The Montreat Youth Conference is an annual event in the beautiful North Carolina mountains where youth and adults come together to fellowship, sing, play, and deepen their relationship with God. Often called “God’s thin place”, Montreat provides a unique experience for spiritual growth among peers and loving adults who walk alongside youth on their journey of faith.

Current registrants include:

Westminster, Decatur

Joanna Rogers, Miller Roberts, Claire Frazier, Mikya Grace, Breann Moriarty—Youth; Sally McLemore, Jacob Robers, Isaac Englund—Work Crew; Katie McLemore, Janie Rogers, Sherry Frazier—Adults.

Fellowship, Huntsville

Johari Bentley, Kaylin Houston—Youth; Miriam Bentley—Planning Team; Greg Bentley, Diann Benfley—Adults.

First, Athens

Avery Paysinger, Colleen King—Youth; Suzanne Paysinger, Kristin Kling—Adults.

First, Sheffield

Libby Brake—Planning Team; Hannah Brake, Jaina Glaze—Adults.

Faith, Huntsville

Ayden Bolding—Youth.

***While early registration has closed, there is still time to register any youth who will be entering 9th grade thru graduating 12th graders/**

***College students can also register for work crew to help run the activities of the week.**

Total cost is \$700 for youth/work crew and \$150 for adults.

Contact Rev. Jaina Glaze (revjainaanderson@gmail.com) ASAP if you have a youth, college student, or adult who would like to attend and stay with the NAP group at Reynolds Lodge.

There’s plenty of room and the NAP group would love to add more individuals for this special NAP tradition!



MARANATHA
camp & conference center

The summer camp season is NOW!

Please keep the counselors, staff, campers and their families in your prayers as they grow in their faith and meet new friends at camp!

	Programs & Days	Available Week of...						
		June 2	June 9	June 16	June 23	July 7	July 14	July 21
	Day Camp Pickup Location	Huntsville	HCove	Huntsville	Madison	Huntsville	Madison	Huntsville
K - 3rd	Day Camp (M-F)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4th	Day Camp (M-F)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Overnight Camp (Sun-F)	✓				✓		✓
5th	Day Camp (M-F)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Overnight Camp (Sun-F)	✓		✓		✓		✓
6th	Overnight Camp (Sun-F)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Adventure Camp (Sun-F)					✓		✓
7th	Overnight Camp (Sun-F)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Adventure Camp (Sun-F)					✓		✓
8th	Overnight Camp (Sun-F)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Adventure Camp (Sun-F)		✓		✓	✓		✓
9th	Overnight Camp (Sun-F)		✓		✓		✓	
	Adventure Camp (Sun-F)		✓		✓			
10th	Overnight Camp (Sun-F)		✓		✓		✓	
	Adventure Camp (Sun-F)		✓		✓			
11th	Timothy Leadership (Sun-F)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Overnight Camp (Sun-F)						✓	
12th	Adventure Camp (Sun-F)		✓		✓			
	Timothy Leadership (Sun-F)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓