



NAP News

September 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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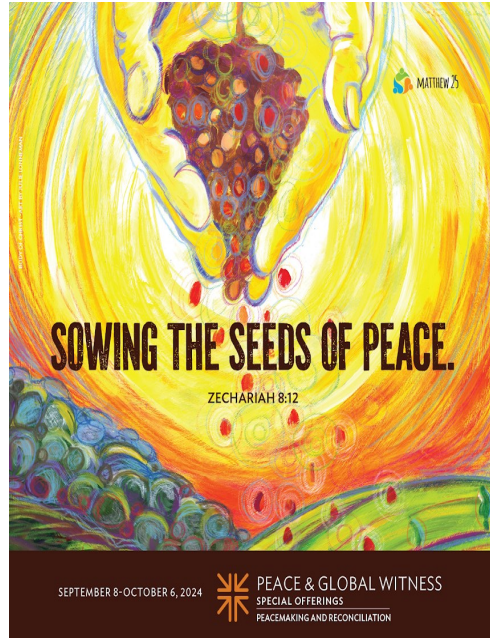
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Every fall, the Presbyterian Church's Peacemaking Program extends an invitation to join with people of faith from around the country and the world for **A Season of Peace**, a month-long pilgrimage designed to deepen the pursuit of peace for congregations, small groups, families, and individuals. This season is a time of growth, encouragement, challenge, inspiration, and education which invites you to consider your own relationship to peacemaking and justice.

In the culminating chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the author ratchets up the exhortations and reminders. "We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses" (12.1) they write. This heavenly band shines forth "the peaceful fruit of righteousness," (12.11) and by their example, they extend both encouragement and a

challenge: "lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet." (12.12-13)

This year's Path of Peace takes up this call in a distinct way. Each day, we offer a vignette of a Presbyterian who contributed to the civic and spiritual well-being of our church and world and made a significant impact on the common good here or abroad. Some battled injustice, others broke down barriers and dividing walls. Many advocated for marginalized communities and made room for them within the church. Each offers us an example of how peace can be pursued in tangible ways.

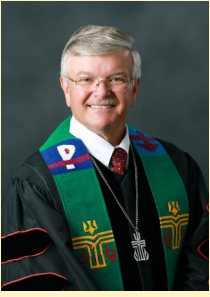
Our focus on particular individuals also invites one disclaimer. The Season of Peace is not unlimited. We weren't able to include every Presbyterian worthy of note. The list is not exhaustive, ranked, nor perfectly representative of all the Presbyterians whose examples shine forth for our consideration and emulation. The priesthood of all believers and the kingdom of heaven are, after all, notoriously resistant to our ordinary habits of ranking and classification. But these vignettes are representative of the many saints who have come before us whose lives can encourage and edify us. This fall in particular is a tense and tender time in our church, country, and world. Our hope is that these reflections will spur personal spiritual and moral growth while also serving as a sorely needed balm and a breath of fresh air. May they provide a counter-narrative of good news, true hope, and stirring inspiration that moves us all to work together along the path of peace for the well-being of all of God's beloved creation.

You have the option of subscribing to these reflections for daily delivery into your inbox or downloading the reflections from <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/season-peace> and printing the written portion of the reflections as a devotional resource.

This year's reflections were written and edited by Andrew J. Peterson.

The Season of Peace culminates on October 6th, World Communion Sunday, when congregations receive their annual Peacemaking Offering.





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

Dear Partners in Ministry,

As noted on the front page of this newsletter, each fall, the PCUSA's Peacemaking Program offers congregations and presbyteries the opportunity to join together for "A Season of Peace," which invites us to look at peace from a holistic perspective and to renew our call to be peacemakers in the name of Christ. But what does it mean to be a peacemaker? So often, I believe, we view peace as the absence of conflict, and thus spend a lot of time and energy *keeping the peace* rather than engaging in the difficult work of *making peace*. While keeping the peace is a worthy goal and is an important part of peacemaking, it seeks primarily to appease folks and rarely addresses the source of the conflict. Peacemaking, on the other hand seeks not only to lower the temperature but also to find creative and amicable ways to address the issues in ways that all of those involved have the opportunity to be heard and respected.

As we enter the final stretch of the 2024 political campaign, I have no doubt that the temperature of the partisan and divisive political rhetoric will dramatically increase. I also have no doubt that this escalation will impact most every aspect of our lives, including our relationships with our friends, colleagues, family members, and yes, even within our congregations. As the tension rises and tempers threaten to flare, we need to honor and embrace our call to be peacemakers. When engaged in situations where there are disagreements or conflicts, we can best respond not by trying to counter or rebut the argument or to prove our perspective is the only legitimate one, but by leaning in, by meeting in person over a coffee, by listening to others' thoughts, stories and perspectives, and then responding with respect, compassion, kindness, humility, speaking the truth in love. Like Jesus.

As followers of Christ, we are called to see others, and I would say especially to see those who think, look, and vote differently than we do as Christ sees them, to see them as those whom God loves just as much as God loves us. So, as we journey through the next two months, let us seek not only to keep the peace, but to be peacemakers who take to heart these words Paul penned to the Colossians. *"Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body."* (Col. 3:12-15)

**Grace & Peace,
Tom**

Dr. Lovell's Schedule

- September 15-21 Vacation
- September 22—Westminster, Decatur
- September 29—Big Cove, Brownsboro

Welcome Eucharistic Elders!

The following Ruling Elders have completed their training process and have been approved by COM as Eucharistic Elders: Carol Copeland, Ted Dixie, Karen Harrison, Anita Muse, Randy Pettus, Linda Rass, John Rogers, Cindy Saseen, Susanne Slaten, and Patrick Smith.

The next Eucharistic Elder Training will be held on Sunday, September 8, 2024 at 2:00pm at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Huntsville, AL.

To participate in this training, send your session-approved application to adminoffice@napcusa.org.

Attention Clerks!

GA Per Capita rates are going up!

2025 GA Per capita—\$10.84 (based on 2023 membership)

2026 GA Per Capita—\$11.26(based on 2024 membership)

SO.....NOW IS THE TIME

to take a good look at your membership rolls to ensure that your numbers reflect your active membership! The Statistical Reports that you file in January 2025 will be used for your 2026 Per Capita.

Attention Treasurers!

IT'S TIME TO CHANGE SOME OLD HABITS.

In an effort to streamline the work of the NAP Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper, AND keep in good practices with the PCUSA, **you are asked to begin submitting special offering collections for PCUSA and Mission Agencies DIRECTLY to those agencies.**

PCUSA Special Offerings

(One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Peace, Christmas Joy) should be sent to:

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
PO Box 643700
Pittsburg, PA 15264-3700**

Mission Offerings

(Medical Benevolence Foundation, Presbyterian Home for Children, Living Waters for the World, and others) should be sent directly to them. Their addresses can be found on their individual websites.

Per Capita, Unified Giving, and NAP invoices should continue to be submitted to North Alabama Presbytery at

PO Box 4031, Huntsville, AL 35815

Contact adminoffice@napcusa.org if you have any questions

WE'RE LOOKING

FOR THAT SPECIAL PERSON TO FILL OUR MINISTRY TEAM!

IS IT
SOMEONE
YOU KNOW?

A RETIREE?

A PART-TIME
CHURCH EMPLOYEE?

IS IT YOU?

A PRESCHOOL
PARENT?

WE'RE HIRING!

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
40 hours per month

TO: The Churches of North Alabama Presbytery
The Business Affairs and Personnel Team of North Alabama Presbytery recently received a Letter of Resignation from Krista Lovell as NAP's Administrative Assistant. We give thanks to God for Krista and her countless hours of service to this Presbytery. Our prayers will now be with Krista as she begins the transition to providing full-time care for her aunt, who is now living in their home.

Considering this news, **BAPT is now seeking applications for the position of Administrative Assistant.** We ask that you please share this letter with the members of your congregation and with other folks you think may be qualified and interested.

The Administrative Assistant Position Description is available on the NAP website: www.napcusa.org.
This position has been approved by the Executive Commission as a part-time, 40 hours a month position and would be perfect for a part-time church employee, a retiree, or a preschool parent. The position is completely remote so the person can work from home with flexible hours!

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter stating why they are interested and qualified for this position, along with a copy of their resume and two references.

Applications should be sent to Rev. Tripp Brogdon at tripp@standrewdecaur.org
Applications will be received until September 11, 2024.

Please keep these congregations in your prayers as they search for their next Pastor:

- ◆ **First, Athens—Pastor**
- ◆ **Westminster, Decatur—Pastor**
- ◆ **First, Florence—Pastor**
- ◆ **Westminster, Florence—Pastor**
- ◆ **First, Huntsville—Associate Pastor**

Pastor Search

August NAP Events

Commission on Ministry

Carol Copeland, Moderator

Thursday, September 5 @ 6:00 pm

via zoom

Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering

Barbara Allen, Moderator

Tuesday, September 10 @ 9:15 am

Camp Maranatha, Scottsboro, AL

Business Affairs & Personnel Team

Parker Moore, Chair

Thursday, September 12 @ 4:00 pm

via zoom

Executive Commission

Robin Palmer, Moderator

Monday, September 23 @ 10:00am

via zoom



2024 Important Dates

NAP Fall Stated Meeting

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

Maranatha Camp & Conference Center, Scottsboro, AL

Meeting includes: Worship, GA Commissioner Reports, Election of Presbytery Unit members, Commission/Committee reports

2025 Important Dates

NAP Winter Stated Meeting

Saturday, February 22, 2025

Copeland Presbyterian Church, Athens

Meeting includes: Worship with Communion, 2024 Necrology, Installation of Moderator & Vice Moderator, Voting on GA Constitutional Amendments, Adoption of budget, Receive Related Ministry reports of membership

NAP Summer Stated Meeting

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

First Presbyterian Church, Huntsville

Meeting includes: Annual Parity Report, Election of NAC member-at-large, Commission/Committee reports

NAP Fall Stated Meeting

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

Maranatha Camp & Conference Center, Scottsboro, AL

It's time to order new PCUSA calendars for your staff, session, teachers, and congregation!



- Monthly calendar pages from September 2024 to December 2025 on text paper that's easy to write on with pencil and that is erasable
- Lectionary for the Lord's Day and special liturgical days
- Colors for the liturgical seasons
- Liturgical days, programmatic emphases and secular holidays
- Monthly planning suggestions and resources
- Foldout synod/presbytery and world maps in color
- User-friendly 8½ x 11" size and hole-punched to fit into a standard binder

Cost \$11.00

(if ordered through NAP)

Email Krista at adminoffice@napcusa.org
with the number of calendars you'd like to order.

OPPORTUNITIES * OPPORTUNITIES * OPPORTUNITIES



The time is now! You've been hearing about Matthew 25 for the past few years, but you haven't taken the step to **add your voice to the choir** and join the movement. You've seen what other congregations are doing. You've been introduced to M25 at each of the Presbytery Stated Meetings.

SO..... What's holding you back? Think you're already doing enough? Need more information? As a Matthew 25 Presbytery, we have the resources to answer your questions and we're willing to meet with your session to help. Contact Krista Lovell (adminoffice@napcusa.org) or Lauren Rogers, our Ministry Engagement Advisor (lauren.rogers@pcusa.org) or any one of **our M25 churches** (First, Albertville; First, Cullman; Westminster, Decatur; First, Florence; First Ft. Payne; Faith, Huntsville; Fellowship, Huntsville) to learn more and get connected!

Since the early 70's, North Alabama Presbytery has been blessed by the work of our Peacemaking Committee to lift up peacemaking and social justice ideals and models in a world filled with unrest and division. To honor the work of the past AND honor our newly adopted status as a Matthew 25 Presbytery, we need your help in re-visioning how these two sister movements will look in North Alabama.

Volunteers Needed!



We are looking for individuals who embody the values of Peacemaking and Matthew 25 and are willing to work within the Presbytery to promote these values among our 26 congregations.

If you are interested in joining this Ministry Group, please contact Krista Lovell at adminoffice@napcusa.org or 615-516-7011

Are you sharing your worship service online?



BEST PRACTICES FOR REACHING ONLINE VIEWERS

1. **BE YOUR VIEWER!** Watch one of your worship services so you can see what your viewers are seeing. Do they see a vibrant congregation or just empty pews? Can they see who is speaking?
2. **Have a dedicated person or team** who will consistently "produce" a good quality video of your worship.
3. **Use a good camera or cell phone** for



the best quality you can produce within your budget and capabilities. Get a tripod for mounting your camera at a good place for optimum viewing.

4. **Film from a good angle.** Center your camera with a close up option so you can zoom in on the pastor as the sermon is preached. Side angles are distorted. Balcony angles don't show the persons who are speaking making them the least desired view!
5. **YouTube is the best platform for broadcasting worship** and storing services for future viewing. Accounts are free and your congregation and friends can "subscribe to your channel" for free. You can post the YouTube link on your website and Facebook page for easy access.
6. **"ENCOURAGE" your congregation to move to the front pews!** An empty sanctuary is a deterrent to a visitor who might be viewing your service.

It's Time to Register !

The Wee Kirk conference aspires to provide Christ-centered opportunities for inspiration, encouragement, and community among leaders of small membership churches so they can do the same in their congregations and regions.

Emmanuel Living!

Jesus said, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them." (John 14:23)

"Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard." (Isaiah 58:8)

Imagine your heart, your home, your church and your community being "God's Neighborhood" in which everyone...

- hears the Mr. Roger's call from God, "Won't you please be my neighbor?"
- is welcomed with open arms, open hearts, and open tables.
- greeted with the love of Christ and a "Howdy, Neighbor!"

Imagine the dawning, healing, and peace in your own heart, your own home, your own church, and your own neighborhood as EMMANUEL — God with us – truly comes and makes a home right where you are.

Imagine how you can be blessed by sharing hospitality in all its forms as you learn "EMMANUEL LIVING!"

2024 Tracks

- **Barnabas Track | The Pastor in a Secular Age** (begins Sunday after dinner), *Led by Rev. Dr. Andrew Root*
- **Biblical Track | Reclaiming the Book of Revelation for Worship and Faith** (Begins Monday at 3 pm), *Led by Dr. Christopher Holmes*
- **Creative Worship Track | Exploring Worship that's Welcoming!** (begins Monday at 3 pm), *Led by Rev. Burns Stanfield*
- **Leadership Track** (begins Monday 9 am and a Sunday night arrival is suggested) | *Making Room at the Table, Led by Rev. Dr. George B. Thompson Jr. and Rev. Dr. Beverly A. Thompson*
- **Mission Track | Missional Hospitality**, *Led by Rev. Herb Codington, Rev. Ray Jones, Lewis and Elsbeth Codington, and Elizabeth Codington, RN*
- **Spiritual Formation Track | Nine Spiritual Styles: Understanding and Caring for God-Given Diversity** (begins Monday 9 am and a Sunday night arrival is suggested), *Led by Rev. Dr. Martha Friz Langer and the Rev. Dr. Mark Friz*
- **Retreat Track**

Many people come to Montreat's Wee Kirk Conference simply to enjoy the fellowship of other believers in the beauty of Montreat. To encourage this, we have created a special "retreat track" that includes all the worship and plenary presentations with abundant time for prayer, recreation, fellowship, and spiritual renewal.

2024 Costs

Congregation Size	Per Person Cost	Couple Cost
Fewer than 100	\$200*	\$225*
100 and greater	\$380	\$405*

*A maximum of 6 persons, including clergy and spouse, from any one congregation may attend at the reduced rates. Additional persons will pay \$380 each.



Questions about registration? Email the registrar, Susan Akduman, at susana@montreat.org or call 828.419.9829.

To Register online—<https://montreat.org/events/wee-kirk-24>