



NAP News

September 2026



NAP News is a monthly newsletter provided by the NAP staff

to celebrate ministries and provide updates for the churches of North Alabama Presbytery.

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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A Season of Faith and Peace

As September begins, we are encouraged to remember that God calls us to live with faith, gratitude, peace, and compassion. This month is a time to care for God's creation, seek justice, welcome others, and strengthen our relationships with God and one another. We observe a Season of Peace beginning in September, reminding us that summer comes to an end and a new season begins. We open our hearts to God to serve.



Actively Engaged in the World

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING SPECIAL HAPPENING PLEASE LET US KNOW!

Our Impact Ministry Team at Copeland Presbyterian Church in Athens, AL created this rock garden to spread God's Love.

Welcome to our Rock garden!

Take one for inspiration, share one for motivation or leave one to help our garden grow!



PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL EVENTS HAPPENING! Or a story tell!

Happening at Copeland Presbyterian Church:

September 2026 PRAYER CALENDAR



COPELAND
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*Be still,
and know that
I am God.*
PSALM 46:10

♥ Let's commit this month to drawing closer to God through daily prayer. ♥

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 Pray for a new month filled with God's guidance. LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23	2 Pray for wisdom in all decisions. JAMES 1:5	3 Pray for unity and love in our church family. JOHN 13:34	4 Pray for our nation and our leaders. 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2	5 LABOR DAY WEEKEND Pray for all who work and provide for others. COLOSSIANS 3:23
6 Pray for our worship to glorify God. PSALM 95:6	7 LABOR DAY Pray for rest, renewal, and safety for all workers. EXODUS 20:8-10	8 Pray for students, teachers, and school staff this year. PROVERBS 3:5-6	9 Pray for discernment in every situation. PROVERBS 2:6	10 Pray for those who are lonely or hurting. ISAIAH 41:10	11 PATRIOT DAY Pray for peace, healing, and unity in our nation. ROMANS 12:18	12 Pray for missionaries and the nations. MATTHEW 28:19
13 Pray for a deeper hunger for God's Word. PSALM 119:105	14 Pray for our families to grow in faith together. DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7	15 Pray for strength to live out our faith daily. PHILIPPIANS 4:13	16 Pray for kindness and grace in our relationships. EPHESIANS 4:32	17 Pray for provision for those in need. PHILIPPIANS 4:19	18 Pray for joy and gratitude in every season. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18	19 Pray for peace in our hearts and homes. JOHN 14:27
20 Pray for new visitors to feel God's welcome. HEBREWS 13:2	21 Pray for compassion to serve others selflessly. MARK 10:45	22 Pray for God's protection over our church family. PSALM 121:7-8	23 Pray for boldness to share our faith. ACTS 4:29	24 Pray for patience and understanding. COLOSSIANS 3:12	25 Pray for a forgiving heart. COLOSSIANS 3:13	26 Pray for those battling illness. JAMES 5:14-15
27 Pray for a heart that seeks God above all else. MATTHEW 6:33	28 Pray for contentment in God's plan for our lives. PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13	29 Pray for the Holy Spirit to work in us daily. GALATIANS 5:22-23	30 Pray for hope and trust in God's promises. ROMANS 15:13			

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.

*They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.*

ISAIAH 40:31



Please enjoy this September Prayer Calendar.
May it enrich your walk with Jesus, deepen your relationship with God,
and encourage you in your daily faith journey throughout the month.

Blessings to you!



MONTREAT MATTERS!

This summer the First Presbyterian Church of Florence sent me on an amazing trip to Montreat church camp. My youth director and I were sent with a group mixed with Decatur and Huntsville.

Montreat was an amazing opportunity for me to not only grow spiritually, but also meet many other fellow children of God.

At Montreat I made countless friends that I stay in touch with all the time. I made friends in many different ways including in small group, back home group, worship, and just doing activities around camp. I am incredibly thankful that the church decided to send me and allowed me to go have an amazing time at Montreat church camp.

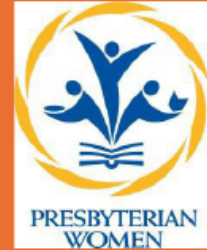
Gresham Morgan

This is what Montreat is doing for our kids! What amazing testament of what Montreat did for Gresham's life. He shared with his church what it meant for him to be able to go. He had others excited to go or return again. Thank you Gresham for sharing your experience.

MONTREAT 2026!



North Alabama Presbyterian Women 2026 Fall Gathering



September 8, 2026

**Maranatha Camp and
Conference Center**

1091 Jeffrey Road
Scottsboro AL 35769

9:15 -9:50 Registration and Meet & Greet

10:00 Worship and Program

Lunch to follow*

* A box lunch may be ordered no later than September 1. Cost is \$15 payable at Registration. See your local PW Moderator or e-mail Randi Harbin at janerandi@aol.com to order.





Executive Presbyter, Reverend Bob Phelps

A word from our Executive Presbyter,

Try to Remember, But Don't Get Hung Up

I'll admit that I'm not a big musical theater fan. But I've had a tune running around in my head recently from what was, and may still be, the longest running Broadway show, *The Fantasticks*. I've never seen the play, so I don't have context, but I know that "Try to Remember" is the most memorable song from that show. It has a catchy tune and memorable lyrics that make it easy to get stuck in my head.

The song starts with the words, "Try to remember the kind of September when life was slow and oh, so mellow."

As we turn the calendar page to another September, I'll admit that I've tried to remember the kind of September the song sings about, and I just can't. For the past way-too-many years that I've worked in and for the Church, September has been a busy time—cranking back up programs and activities that have slowed down some during summer, looking ahead to the even busier Advent and Christmas seasons, thinking about stewardship season and budget preparation, getting the choir started back up---it makes me tired just remembering. Beyond the Church, of course, long-awaited college football fills many calendars. High school fall sports and band competitions fill many others. It's winding-down-toward-playoff season for baseball fans. Families are settling into school routines with homework, fund-raisers, and extra-curricular things beyond sports. Before I was in ministry as a career, I taught public school, so I was the reason many of those families had schedules to adjust.

So most of you are probably in the same boat with me, trying to remember a time that never was.

As we venture into this busy month, let's try to be thankful for all the resources we have to accomplish all the things that lie before us. Let's not forget that some of the most valuable resources we have are each other. Sessions work best when they function as a team and don't waste time trying to protect empires. Presbytery's agencies function most efficiently when they can rely on their members to be attentive to the tasks before them. In addition to each other, we have the promise of the presence of God's Spirit while we attend to the work of God's Church.

Instead of trying to remember a time that probably never was, let's be thankful for all the good things going on in North Alabama Presbytery and for opportunities we have to be part of them.

Grace and Peace,

Bob

WE NEED TO TALK Continues to Provide Opportunities for Conversation

Our WE NEED TO TALK series of conversations about issues related to ministry continues to provide opportunities for us to have sit-down, face-to-face opportunities to learn and grow together. In September we have added an additional session to the previously announced gathering to discuss actions of this summer's General Assembly. The first of those two gatherings will be on Tuesday, September 1, at 10 am at First Presbyterian Church in Sheffield. There will be second opportunity to participate in this conversation on Monday, September 28, at 10 am at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Decatur. Both conversations will be open to everyone. They will be in addition to opportunities we have to discuss these matters at Presbytery in October. We look forward to seeing you at the one most convenient to you.

In addition, we are still planning to schedule a conversation on Technology in the Church later this fall. Watch for announcements about where and when.

Also, early in 2027, we will gather to talk about Mission in a special event at Lakeside at Maranatha. We'll gather on Friday afternoon January 8 and depart on Saturday afternoon, January 9. In our time together, Rev. Jim Truesdell, pastor at First Church, Athens, and former staff member of the Frontier Fellowship, will guide our conversation about Mission and how we can strengthen our commitment to it. More information will follow as plans continue, but mark your calendars now so you'll be sure to have a place around the table.

Planning Underway for Older Adult Ministry in the Presbytery

We know that several of our congregations have special ministries for and with Senior Adults. We are beginning to plan for similar ministries on the Presbytery level. During September, Bob will be attending the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network Conference in Knoxville. When he returns, he will gather a local planning team to learn from what others do and what we might do to minister to people in the Senior stage of life. Watch for news as these ministry plans develop.

David Dark Speaks at Westminster, Florence

On Thursday, August 20, David Dark came from Nashville to speak at Westminster Church in Florence. Dr. Dark is on the faculty at Belmont University in Nashville and is a member of Downtown Presbyterian Church there. His presentation challenged those attending to consider the public dimension of our faith. Trey Suey, Supply Pastor at Westminster, shares the following reflection on Dr. Dark's presentation. We are grateful for Westminster Church's invitation to all of us to hear this important speaker.

A New Normal

This past week, Dr. David Dark challenged us with the title of his book, *We Become What We Normalize*.

Everything we do in life is informed by ideas—good ideas, bad ideas, and inherited ideas. Many of them are like loose little rocks that somehow become stuck in our shoes without our knowing where, when, or how they got there.

These are the assumptions we carry about God, the world, and ourselves. We may not know where we received them, why they matter, or when we began thinking this way. We simply know that we do. This is our assumed—or embedded—theology. It has often gone unchallenged and unanalyzed.

When Jesus invites us to follow him, he invites us to rethink everything—to reconsider all we have assumed to be true in light of the gravitational pull of divine love. When our lives begin orbiting around that love, everything else is put into perspective.

We become people who practice a deliberate theology: a thoughtful faith that is unafraid to ask hard questions. Such a faith also exposes everything that is not essential to following Jesus as a potentially unnecessary burden.

One burden we often carry is the religion of institutionalism. We throw ourselves upon the altar of institutions that care little for our souls and much more about our usefulness.

The Rev. Will Campbell offered this warning about the idolatry of institutionalism:

“All institutions, every last single one of them, are evil; self-serving, self-preserving, self-loving; and very early in the life of any institution it will exist for its own self. So beware out there this week. True soul freedom cannot be found in any institution...”

That warning includes the church.

When a church cares more about preserving its building and traditions than it does about being a hospital for the hurting and a living room for the lonely, it has lost the plot. It has become self-interested rather than Christ-centered.

Here at Westminster, we do not want to become that kind of institution. We want to abide in divine love—and divine love is always flowing outward toward a world in need while inviting in the outcast and marginalized.

That is why we are here. That is who we are.

We are in this together. Let's keep stumbling toward Jesus.

With love, Trey





News from the Stated Clerk:

Summer is waning, and most of our kiddos are back at school! Prayers for all the teachers and students of all ages.

As we enter the fall, the biggest task on our plates as Clerks of Session is to do a full review of the minutes for 2025.

All Clerks of Session should have received an email connecting them with another Clerk of Session peer to complete this minutes review. This year we are using a new process, so please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you're feeling a little lost!

Each Clerk of Session has been sent a checklist of required items. Please use the checklist to amend your minutes if there are omissions or errors. Then send your minutes and check sheet to your peer for review. Once the peer report has been completed, the peer reviewer will return those minutes to the Stated Clerk, either by mail or email (rev.jainaanderson@gmail.com or FPC; 130 E Fifth St; Sheffield, AI 35660.)

All the information is in your email, but please don't hesitate to reach out if you need help!

Thank you for all you do!

Jaina Glaze,

NAP Stated Clerk



**We Need
to talk...**

A Series of Conversations
Intended to Help us Grow
Together in Faith and
Ministry



**We Need
to talk...**

**About the Actions of
General Assembly**

What happened at General Assembly in Milwaukee this
summer?

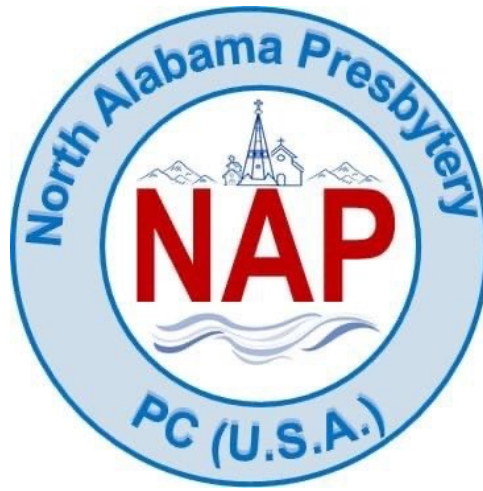
What do those decisions mean for our ministry?

**Tuesday, September 1, 2026, 10:00 am
First Presbyterian Church
Sheffield, AL
(130 East 5th Street)**

**Monday, September 28, 2026, 10:00 am
St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
Decatur, AL
(3310 Danville Road SW)**

**Resource Persons/Conversation Starters:
Rev. Jaina Glaze and Elder Randy Pettus
Commissioners to this year's Assembly**

Please let us know
if you have
anything special
coming up!



Executive Commission (EC)

Rev. Greg Bentley
2026 NAP Moderator
Anita Raby
EC Moderator &
2025 NAP Immediate Past
Moderator
Dr. Randy Pettus
2026 NAP Vice Moderator
Carol Copeland
COM Moderator
Rev. Michael Bowe
CORN Moderator
Randy Pettus
BAPT Moderator

Business Affairs & Personnel Team (BAPT)

Randy Pettus, Moderator
Robert Peagler
Rev. Tripp Brogdon
Carol Mebane
Parker Moore
Dag Rowe

Commission on Ministry (COM)

Carol Copeland,
Moderator
Linda Rass
Wes Stubblefield
Cindy Sasseeen
Kelly Elmore
Rev. David Kling
Ted Dixie
Julie Rice

Rev. Tripp Brogdon
Rev. Robin Palmer
Joycee Pettis-Temple
Rev. Micheal Bowe

Committee on Representation & Nominating (CORN)

Rev. Michael Bowe, Moderator
Jerry Witt
Mary Mitchell
Rev. Traci Loveman
Bill Valentine

Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC)

Rev. Peggy McClure
Tonya Gaines
Keith Fraser
Rev. Rosemary McMahan
Christi Robinson

Presbyterian Women

Linda Faulk Moderator
Patti Andrews Vice Moderator
Barbara Allen Past Moderator
BJ Breeding, Secretary
Karen Madison, Treasurer

Presbyterian Men

Ted Dixie, President

Our Staff

Rev. Bob Phelps
Executive Presbyter

Rev. Jaina Glaze
Stated Clerk

Sheila Gilliam
Administrative Assistant

NAP Events

Executive Commission

Anita Raby Moderator

Monday, September 21, 2026, 10am

Commission on Ministry

Carol Copeland, Moderator

Thursday, September 3, 2026, 6pm

Business Affairs Team

Randy Pettus, Moderator

Thursday, September 10, 2026, 4pm

Attention Treasurers!

Thank you for your generous support of our Presbytery in 2025!

If you have not paid your Per Capita—please do so immediately as NAP is required to pay the full amount regardless of what it receives from churches.

Attention Clerks!

GA Per Capita rates are going up!

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

2026 GA Per Capita—\$11.26 (based on 2025 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.

2026 Important Dates

*Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering
September 8, 2026, 9:15-9:50am registration
Camp Maranatha, Scottsboro, AL*

NAP Fall Meeting

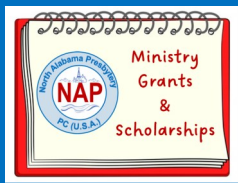
*Tuesday, October 20, 2026, 9:00am
Camp Maranatha; Scottsboro, AL*



Do you have a story to share
about a special ministry
in your congregation?

Email your article and pictures
to
adminoffice@napcusa.org
by the 25th of the month
to be included in the next
newsletter!

***If you have any changes in your
Church Staff please let the NAP
office know,
Rev.Jainaanderson@gmail.com***



Congratulations to the following churches who received Ministry Grants in January & February:

- ⇒ Westminster Decatur, \$15,000.00 HVAC system
- ⇒ First Guntersville \$20,000.00 HVAC in kitchen, drum set, projector screen, general maintenance
- ⇒ First Athens \$7,500.00 HVAC System
- ⇒ Senior Adult Ministry \$2,500.00 Start a new Ministry
- ⇒ Montreat \$3,000.00 Youth Camp
- ⇒ Westminster Florence \$15,000.00 Mold removal

FAQ's about Ministry Grants: New form on website soon

⇒ **Where did the idea of Ministry Grants originate?**

In late 2022, NAP was gifted with half of the proceeds from the sale of Trinity, Huntsville to be used as a help to other churches who are initiating new ministries and/or struggling with aging buildings. In addition, NAP receives monthly support for "Campus Ministry" that can be used for scholarships to Montreat Conferences and/or college ministry supported by local congregations.

⇒ **What can Grants be used for?**

New ministries that need a jump start to get them going.
Technology improvements to help your congregation spread the Good News of the Gospel.
Building repairs that impact ministry.

⇒ **Is there a limit to what we can ask for? YES!**

Ministry Grants for congregations are capped at \$25,000 per calendar year.
Ministry Grants for college ministry are capped at \$5,000 per calendar year.

⇒ **Can we apply for the same grant in a following year? NO!**

Ministry Grants are limited and designed as one-time offerings for a specific purpose.

⇒ **How can we apply for a Ministry Grant?**

Visit the NAP website at www.napcusa.org and download one of the Grant forms. Forms must be approved and signed by your Session and must have a detailed cost sheet attached. Return your completed form to the Business Affairs and Personnel Team via adminoffice@napcusa.org.

⇒ **BAPT meets monthly to review applications.**

Have more questions? Contact Randy Pettus, Moderator of BAPT at rjpettus@gmail.com