

**Presbytery of Yellowstone - Stated Meeting
March 13-14, 2026
via Zoom**

Friday March 13, 2026

26-011. Opening of the Meeting

The Presbytery of Yellowstone met on March 13 and March 14, 2026, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Due to weather, the meeting scheduled in-person at Forsyth had to be changed to a Zoom meeting. Moderator Melissa Bell welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer. The theme for the meeting: ***“The Great Adventure: Stronger with Christ.”***

26-012. Installation of 2026 Moderator: Rev. Kathy Goodrich and 2025 Presbytery Moderator Melissa Bell installed Rev. Dave Thompson as the 2026 Moderator of Yellowstone Presbytery.

26-013. Roll Call: The Stated Clerk conducted roll call. Attendees were asked to register by email to caroline@yellowstonepcusa.org noting their name, church, and position (minister member, member due to position, commissioner, corresponding member or guest).

Ruling Elder Commissioners, CREs, Other RE's and visitors

Anaconda	RE Cal Boyle, St Timothy’s; CRE Veva Larson
Billings First	RE Sandy Schoenberger, Commissioner; Diane Ascheman, Commissioner; Cheryl Banks, PMT Co-moderator; RE Russ Kline, LC member, Nicole Boldaski, guest.
Billings St Andrew	RE Sandy Welch, Rep/Nom Moderator; Jim Tarr, Commissioner
Big Hole	RE Julie Boksich, LC moderator
Bozeman	RE Ric Tieman, Treasurer; RE Debbie Ernst, PMT Co-moderator;
Butte	RE Kevin Shuttlesworth, Commissioner
Colstrip	RE Gail Beckam, Commissioner
Deer Lodge	Absent
Dillon	RE Terry Johnson, Commissioner
Ennis	Brian Conklin, LP
Forsyth	RE Danny Pratt, LC member; Vicki Waddington, LP; Kris Krockner, guest.
Hysham	RE Greg Lackman, Commissioner; Laureen Lackman, guest; RE Waine Milmine, guest;
Jordan	RE Bev Harbaugh, Commissioner
Lewistown	RE Melissa Bell, LC member; CRE Margee Smith
Manhattan	RE Stephanie Bergstrom, Commissioner; RE Debbie Blackburn, guest
Miles City	RE Caroline Fleming, Stated Clerk
Phillipsburg	Absent
Poplar	Absent
Stanford	Absent
Terry	RE Andy Pehl, Commissioner; RE Nancy Pehl, Camping/Youth Moderator;
White Sulphur Sp.	Absent
Wolf Point	Absent

Minister Members:

Present: Jim Bell, Warren (Rusty) Craig, Debbie Funke, George Goodrich, Kathy Goodrich, Karolee Larson, Neva Rathbun, Jamie Schmeling, Susan Thomas, David Thompson, Kim Woeste, Laura Wood.

Excused: David Bierschwale, Dan Krebill, Jody McDevitt, Nicole Melara, Harlan (Lanny) Rounds,

Absent: David Andrew, Priscilla Bell, Ashley Birk, Kimberly Briggs, J P Carlson, Dick Davis, Mary Davis, John Dyce, Wenda Fry, Steven A Hundley, Doug Johnson, Brent Long, Freeman McCall, Sherwood McKay, Marcia Muir, David Murchie, Sally Ralston, Mary Grace Reynolds, Deborah Schmidt, Sarah Tunall,

2025 RE Moderators, Members, and Leadership Cabinet Voting Members also listed with their churches above:

RE Melissa Bell, Outgoing Moderator & LC member; RE Julie Boksich, LC moderator; RE Russ Kline, LC member; RE Ric Tieman, Treasurer; RE Cheryl Banks PMT Co-Moderator; RE Debbie Ernst, PMT Co-moderator; Sandy Welch, Rep/Nom Moderator; RE Nancy Pehl Camping/Youth Moderator; RE Danny Pratt, LC member; RE Caroline Fleming, Stated Clerk.

Corresponding Members: None.

Staff with Voice: RE Caroline Fleming (Stated Clerk), RE Ric Tieman, Treasurer

Quorum/Balance: 23 voting RE's and CREs, 12 voting MWS. A quorum was declared present.

26-014. Omnibus Motion and Clerk's Report (Attachment A): The Stated Clerk moved the following:

1. That the agenda for this meeting posted on www.yellowstonepcusa.org be approved.
2. That the roll for this meeting be established by email to caroline@yellowstonepcusa.org
3. That all requests for excused absences received by the Stated Clerk be approved.
4. That any Corresponding members at the meeting be seated and given voice.
5. That Presbytery grants the Moderator authority to give privilege of the floor to people, other than Members or Commissioners, for the purpose of reporting to this meeting.
6. That all written reports posted on the website www.yellowstonepcusa.org be received.
7. That the Moderator and the Stated Clerk be empowered to suggest and adjust the agenda during the meeting, as may be necessary.
8. That the minutes of the Presbytery meetings of October 3-4, 2025, December 15, 2025, and February 6, 2026 be approved as printed on the presbytery meeting website.
9. That the minutes of the Administrative Commission to install Rev. Nicole Melara on February 7, 2026 be approved as printed on the presbytery meeting website.

The Clerk reported that all churches submitted their reports in a timely manner. She also reported that, after calculating the number of Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders and the number of Ruling Elders eligible to vote, there are 31 TEs and 33 REs and CREs authorized to vote on business before the Presbytery. Therefore, no MWS/RE imbalance exists in Yellowstone Presbytery for 2026.

26-014. Opening Worship and Dwelling in the Word: Laura Wood led presbyters in prayer and Kathy Goodrich read the presbytery vision statement and led in the reading of Matthew 14: 13-21. Presbytery divided into small groups to discuss the scripture and how it speaks to Jesus using the smallest amounts to create abundance.

26-015. Workshops: Presbyters chose to attend one of two workshops:

1. Enriching Our Prayer Life - Ephesians 6:18 - Presbytery Prayer Team helped people explore why we pray, ways to pray, and learning to pause and listen to God.
2. Holding the Ship Together -Acts 27:13-17 - Dave Thompson led presbyters in discussing how we continue to be the Church and keep our focus upon Jesus in a season of political and social unrest.

26-016. Business Meeting part 1:

- **Representation/Nomination Team (Rep/Nom) report (Attachment B):** Team Moderator Sandra Welch presented the first reading of the following nominations:
Synod Commissioner Class of 2027 TE Karolee Larson
Pastoral Ministry Team Class of 2028 TE Nicole Melara
- **General Presbyter's Report:** Kathy Goodrich reported that, though we have very few churches with installed pastors, God has equipped us for ministry. She asked presbyters to think about how the church in Acts managed without pastors, how they met and worshipped together then went out to spread the Gospel and to heal. God is calling us to look at everyone's spiritual gifts and use them for ministry. She asked what would make someone be drawn to our church in a non-Christian culture. Answers included friendship, fellowship, compassion, smiles, joyful spirits, and a family feeling. When she asked what people are hungry for, answers included a sense of value and belonging, having a voice, a listening ear, and affirmation. We need to be people of prayer who can, like Jesus, empower people. She ended her report with a prayer that we will be God's conduits for forgiveness and good.
- **Leadership Cabinet Report (Attachment C):** Moderator Julie Boksich reported on the team's implementation of the presbytery vision statement. With sadness the team accepted the resignation of Ric Tieman as presbytery's treasurer effective September 30, 2026. The following were elected as corporate officers for 2026: President Dave Thompson, Vice President Julie Boksich, Secretary Caroline Fleming, and Treasurer Ric Tieman.

Leadership Cabinet made the following recommendations to Yellowstone Presbytery:

1. Leadership Cabinet recommends to Presbytery that Sandy Welch be elected as 2026 Rep/Nom moderator. Recommendation passed.
2. Leadership Cabinet recommends to Yellowstone Presbytery that we modify the 2026 budget to include \$3,600.00 for a Treasurer position and \$800.00 for the Treasurer's travel to meetings. Recommendation passed.
3. Leadership Cabinet recommends that Yellowstone Presbytery approve Russ Kline, Kurt Kochner and Ric Tieman work with the Presbyterian Foundation to establish a Permanent Endowment Fund for the Westminster Spires Camp. Recommendation passed.
4. Leadership Cabinet recommends to Yellowstone Presbytery that the June 12 presbytery meeting be held in Bozeman and be extended to include a Saturday morning June 13 for worship and celebration of Rev. Kathy Goodrich and her ministry with Yellowstone Presbytery as she is scheduled to retire on June 30, 2026. Recommendation passed.
5. Leadership Cabinet recommends to Yellowstone Presbytery that all expenses for Kathy Goodrich's Retirement Party be paid from the Equip and Encourage fund of Yellowstone Presbytery. Recommendation passed.

Leadership Cabinet proposed the following changes to the Standing Rules of Yellowstone Presbytery (changes are in red):

S4.02 The moderator shall be elected by the presbytery at the last stated meeting of the year and shall assume office January 1 of the new year. Installation will be done at the first meeting of the new year and shall serve in that office until January 1 **the following year**. The moderator shall possess the authority and carry out the responsibilities of that office set forth in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

S4.03 The vice moderator shall be elected by the presbytery at the last stated meeting of the year and shall assume office January 1 of the new year. Installation will be done at the first meeting of the new year and shall serve in that office until January 1 **the following year**. The vice moderator shall carry out such duties as may be assigned by the moderator. In the event of the inability of the moderator to carry out required moderatorial responsibilities, the vice moderator shall act for the moderator until the presbytery is able to elect a person to exercise the duties and privileges of that office.

S6.02.02 Ministry Team Moderators, except for the Moderator of the Representation/ Nomination Team, shall be nominated by the Representation/Nominating Ministry Team each year for a term of one year. The Moderator of the Representation/ Nomination Team shall be nominated

by the Leadership Cabinet each year for a term of one year.

This was the first reading of the proposed changes. There will be a second reading, discussion and vote at the June meeting of Yellowstone Presbytery.

Treasurer's Report (Attachment D): FY 2025 is 100% complete. The Administrative budget income sits at 86% and expenses are at 90%. A transfer from the Administrative Support Fund of \$23,200.00 covered the budget shortfall of account 4001 Administrative Support. No other budgeted transfers were needed. Program budget income sits at 120% and budget expenses are at 112%. A \$10,000 transfer was made from Program Reserves to cover the shortfall. Both budgets were successfully achieved and the year ended with a surplus from Administrative (\$18,224) and Program (\$507) budgets totaling \$18,731. A change in the denomination's special offerings was reported. The Pentecost Offering will no longer be received, but its work will continue through giving to the Christmas Joy Offering. The Peace & Global Witness offering will also no longer be received. The new offering named the World Communion Offering will begin in 2026.

26-017. Good News from Churches:

- **Dillon:** Rev. Daniel Triller trained people well before he left. The church has groups meeting regularly, and new people are attending worship.
- **Ennis:** There has been some growth over the winter. The Lenten Bible Study meets at the Episcopal church and has 20 to 25 attending each week for lunch and study.
- **Lewistown:** The church is moving forward. A new person has answered the call to lead Sunday School, and the children offer a program a month during worship. CRE Margee Smith is working to empower some young people to accept leadership roles.
- **Deer Lodge:** Rev. Laura Wood is serving as Interim Pastor and feels people are capable and working hard. The church hosted a community Blue Christmas Service, and the church was packed for the Christmas Eve Service. The church is open for practice and performance at the high School State Music Festival. Several churches are sharing hosting roles for Lenten meals. The church looks forward to hosting the November meeting of Yellowstone Presbytery.
- **St. Andrew:** The church has developed a new, user-friendly website.
- **Terry:** The call process is moving forward and now open to seeking a presbyterian pastor since there has been no response to a call for a Lutheran pastor.

26-018. Prayer Request and Recess for the evening: Prayers were requested for Wenda Fry and her family. Wenda's father and mother-in-law both passed away this week. Moderator Dave Thompson closed the day with prayer and a reminder that we re-gather at 8:30 a.m.

Saturday, March 14, 2026

26-019. Opening Prayer and Dwelling in the Word: Moderator Dave Thompson called presbyters back from recess and opened the meeting with prayer and reading Psalm 122. Presbyters met in small groups for discussion of the passage and prayer for one another.

26-020. Good News from Churches:

- **Hysham:** A family of five will be baptized tomorrow. Sunday School attendance is growing, and new young families are attending worship. George Goodrich prayed for Hysham.
- **Forsyth:** The church has a long history of community service including deceased member Hazel Walker who played a key role in starting the local food bank. We were planning to bring items for that food bank to Forsyth, but weather stopped our travel plans.

***Action:** A motion was made and seconded to send \$500.00 to the Forsyth food bank. The motion passed.

Had we met in person in Forsyth, there would have been opportunity to take part in some hands-on repair work at the church manse. The opportunity is still available still available. Contact Danny Pratt if you would like to be part of this project.

The Forsyth confirmation class is in process and includes two youth from Hysham.

26-021. Business Meeting part 2:

- **Rep/Nom Report (Attachment B):** Team Moderator Sandra Welch presented the second reading of nominations.
*Action: Rep/Nom nominates the following:
Synod Commissioner Class of 2027 *TE Karolee Larson*
Pastoral Ministry Team Class of 2028 *TE Nicole Melara*
With no others being nominated, Karolee and Nicole were elected unanimously to their positions.
- **Pastoral Ministry Team Report (PMT) (Attachment E):** Six churches are currently seeking pastors.
*Action: PMT recommends Yellowstone Presbytery dismiss Rev. Richard (Dick) Davis and Rev. Mary Davis to Glacier Presbytery at their request, and if the way be clear. The motion passed.
- **Camping & Youth Ministry Team Report Attachment F):**
The summer camp schedule at Westminster Spires is:
July 12-16, students entering 3rd-5th grades
July 19-24, students entering 6th-8th grades
July 26-31, students entering 9th -12th grades
Nicole Boldaski and Hunter Skov have been hired as co-directors of the 2026 camping season. Camp registration opens April 15th. Applications for staff positions are being taken now.
Nicole shared a video of the 2025 camping season that can be found on the camping website. More information can be found on the website www.westminsterspires.org

26-022. Workshops: Presbyters chose to attend one of two workshops:

1. Enriching Our Prayer Life (repeat) - Ephesians 6:18 - Presbytery Prayer Team helped people explore why we pray, ways to pray, and learning to pause and listen to God.
2. Learnings from the Feeding of the 5,000: Don't Waste a Crisis/Challenge - Mark 6 - Kathy Goodrich led this workshop focused on our feeling overwhelmed and challenged but realizing that Jesus can do more than we imagine.

26-023. Reflections On and "Take-Aways" From the Meeting:

- A sincere thanks to Forsyth for willingness to host this meeting. Though weather prohibited us from driving, we hope to meet in Forsyth in-person next year.
- Thanks to all workshop leaders. All workshops were incredibly good. Recordings of each one will be available on the presbytery website, www.yellowstonepcusa.org soon.
 - Enriching Prayer Life: Thanks for sharing different types of prayer, the Lectio 362, and encouragement to pray together.
 - Feeding the 5,000: Thanks for opening our minds to help us lead our congregations even when we feel we have very little to work with.
 - Holding the Ship Together: Thanks for reminding us not to dress rehearsal for tragedy, but instead to dress rehearsal for hope.
- Business meeting:
 - Thanks to Dave Thompson for stepping up again to serve as our Moderator and for his excellent work at moderating.
 - Thanks to presbytery leaders who had to quickly change a hoped-for in-person meeting to a Zoom meeting due to weather.
 - Thanks to all churches' willingness to share their successes and hopes with everyone.
 - Thanks to all who attended.

26-024. More Good News from Churches: With time to spare in the docket, several churches shared their good news:

- **Miles City:** Four people joined the church membership recently, and three children were baptized. Two more plan to join soon and a child will be baptized. The church allows a Foster Parent Support Group to meet at the church each month. The monthly Breakfast Church is going strong with a couple new people willing to step into leadership roles.
- **Jordan:** The church offers worship at 10 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Sundays and has just started a 5:30 p.m. Thursday evening service. They have received one new member, and another person will join soon. Session had revived the church newsletter.
- **Terry:** The church sent youth to the ski retreat for a great weekend. They are in search of one more person to answer the call to serve as an Elder.

Karolee offered prayers for Miles City, Jordan, and Terry churches.

26-025. Announcements and Closing:

- **Next Presbytery Meeting in Bozeman June 12 & 13.**
 - We will *celebrate Kathy Goodrich's ministry* as she approaches retirement. We ask everyone to bring cards, notes, pictures, or other items for a scrapbook that will be created for Kathy.
 - Also, please *bring the displays of your church's ministry* that were created for the Forsyth meeting.
- Don't forget to give to the presbytery meeting offering: Westminster Camp Scholarships at www.yellowstonepcusa.org or by mailing a check to Yellowstone Presbytery, P.O. Box 1254, Bozeman, MT 59771.
- The meeting was closed with the Halverson Benediction.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caroline Fleming, Stated Clerk