

## THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW HARMONY

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### To the Sessions and Congregations of our Presbytery of New Harmony:

As I visit our congregations to worship, often to preach and lead a Sunday school class, entitled “Presbyterian 101”, I make a gift to the ministry and mission of that particular church. That is one of the ways Jen and I are involved in stewardship of our financial resources and share in the work of Christ’s church in this part of God’s realm.

When I was very young, **I had this idea that the offering collected on Sunday morning was buried.** I thought that since people who die got buried in order to be with the Lord, then God’s money, as it was called, gets buried in order to get to God. Later in my childhood, **my dad** would give me money so that I would have something to give to the Sunday school offering. My dad wanted me to participate and he was teaching me the importance of faithful and regular giving. He also wanted me to be a part of something greater than myself – **the shared mission and ministry of the church of Jesus Christ.**

**Shared Mission** is a critical part of **our life together as presbytery** – it’s how we are a part of something greater than just our particular congregation – and I hope you will consider making a generous pledge to Shared Mission for 2019.

Many have given generously in the past and I hope and believe will continue that generosity; to you I say thank you. Your faithfulness is greatly appreciated! Might you consider a **2.5% increase** in order for us to continue the mission and ministry we do together? Your Guiding **Council** is asking for this level of increase to continue to support our united ministry efforts through Shared Mission.

Other congregations have not made a pledge this year and have not been giving regularly to Shared Mission; to you I ask that you prayerfully consider pledging and also giving generously so that you are a part of what God is doing in, through and among us. Shared Mission is part of our connection to each other, as well as to the presbytery and to the larger church.

### Shared Mission work alongside Per Capita dollars to

- assist and support our congregations as they bear witness to Jesus Christ in their communities
- provide officer training for new and continuing Elders and Deacons
- provide training and support for Clerks of Session
- provide fellowship and learning opportunities for pastoral leaders
- guide and support congregations searching for pastoral leadership
- support and encourage inquirers and candidates for ordained ministry
- support and encourage ruling elders who seek to be commissioned to pastoral service
- help pastoral leaders in times of particular need

The mission of the Presbytery of New Harmony is to strengthen, nurture, and sustain its congregations and ministers, and to participate in the wider mission of the church through its higher governing bodies.

- reach out to congregations and communities in times of disaster and other crises
- encourage the development of new ministries of love and witness in our communities
- offer legal guidance to our congregations as the need arises
- provide for the ongoing ministry of Camp Pee Dee
- stand against the sins of racism and bigotry
- promote ministries of social justice
- support the creation of new worshipping communities
- support more than 250 mission co-workers in over 60 countries around the world in the areas of church life, agriculture, medicine, education and social justice and peacemaking

I hope that you can begin to see why I believe in Shared Mission, and in the good work we can and do accomplish together. **Our gifts are making a difference in the name of Jesus Christ!** Beyond the work we do as the Presbytery of New Harmony, these gifts support the work of the Synod of South Atlantic and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), reaching around the globe to bear witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world.

My dad is coming to the end of his life, having been diagnosed with mesothelioma. He is a lifelong Presbyterian, the longest serving member and an elder in his church – the same church where I was baptized, confirmed, ordained first as an elder and then a minister of Word and Sacrament. As I reflect on my dad's life, he always taught me to give as a way of saying thanks to God. With the money he gave me to give to the church, my dad nurtured my giving, my stewardship, my discipleship and my involvement in the life and work of Christ's church. It is a joy for me to give to the churches where I visit and participate as your Transitional EP and Stated Clerk.

**You will make a difference in this world with your Shared Mission gift! The cause of Christ will be served and the realm of God will be furthered!** The generosity of our congregations is the reason we, as a presbytery, can do and be what Christ is calling us to do and be. In this time transition, we are striving that make that so, even more! Great things are happening in our life together and we want to continue to respond to Christ's call! Please join us in being a part of what God is doing in our midst.

Joyfully joined with you in service to Jesus Christ,



**Rev. Gavin D. Meek**  
**Your Transitional Executive Presbyter / Stated Clerk**  
**The Presbytery of New Harmony**