

MINUTES
Indian Nations Presbytery
Coordinating Council
August 20, 2025
Meeting by Zoom Video and In-Person at INP Office

Members present:¹ RE Sharon Burton; RE Malcom Champlin; RE Maribeth Culpepper, Cmte on Nominations Moderator; RE Rex Daly, COA Moderator; RE Rhonda George; TE Chas Gowing, CPM Moderator; TE Janet Ruark, COM Moderator; TE Vicki Rucker; RE Holley Sanders; RE Farrel Smith;

Ex-officio: TE Tracy Evans, Stated Clerk; TE John McKinnon, INP Moderator; RE Mike Mize, Acting Moderator and Board of Trustees President; TE Charlie Smith, Presbytery Pastor; TE Mary Ellen Waychoff, INP Vice Moderator;

Excused: RE Dave Delana, CC Moderator; TE Dan Junkin; RE Debra Kauffman; RE Tom Willoughby

Absent: TE Ernie Isch; RE Dave Butler

Also in attendance: INP Staff RE Sue MacHugh;

Call to order, Opening Prayer, Quorum

The meeting was called to order with a prayer led by Acting Moderator Mike Mize at 1:00pm. A quorum was present.

Approval of Voice

None needed.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda for the meeting was **approved**.

Approval of minutes

July 16, 2025, minutes were approved.

Officer and Staff Reports:

CC Moderator Report

- No report

Presbytery Pastor Report

- See attached report

¹ RE refers to a Ruling Elder; TE refers to a Teaching Elder also known as Minister of Word and Sacrament.

[https://indiannationspresbytery.sharepoint.com/shared documents/company/committees \(minus com\)/coordinating council/2025/minutes/8- aug/minutes august 20, 2025.docx](https://indiannationspresbytery.sharepoint.com/shared%20documents/company/committees%20(minus%20com)/coordinating%20council/2025/minutes/8-aug/minutes%20august%2020,2025.docx)

- There was discussion regarding the called August 9th meeting. The response overall was positive. All three presbyteries are in agreement to join in the process of constructing and creating a new Oklahoma presbytery.
- Discussion regarding the upcoming November 14-15 and how to get presbytery excited about attending that meeting. Pay mileage? Grants for costs? Party bus? Hybrid meeting?

Stated Clerk Report

- No report

INP Moderator

- No report

Committee Reports

Board of Trustees

- They continue working with the Administrative Commission on FPC Chickasha.

Committee on Administration

- Financial report was submitted.

Committee on Ministry

- Report submitted. Ordination of Tylar Gregg-Grant to be held August 24.

Committee on Nominations and Representation

- No report, though they are working hard!

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

- Working with COM regarding CREs
- Committee examination of Jakob Harmon was sustained. Presbytery needs to examine him to approve him as a Candidate for ministry.

INP Foundation Board

- No report

Care of Pastoral Leaders Network

- Retreat at St. Crispin's is coming up October 27-28. All pastoral leaders in Oklahoma are invited to attend. Focus will be on sabbath time.
- **Motion** to approve observing communion at the retreat. Motion was seconded and **carried**.

New Business

[https://indiannationspresbytery.sharepoint.com/shared documents/company/committees \(minus com\)/coordinating council/2025/minutes/8- aug/minutes august 20, 2025.docx](https://indiannationspresbytery.sharepoint.com/shared%20documents/company/committees%20(minus%20com)/coordinating%20council/2025/minutes/8-aug/minutes%20august%2020,2025.docx)

- Grant Application from Korean Presbyterian Church of Lawton was received regarding them hosting the Visionary Conference, to be attended by Korean churches, retired pastors, and spouses in the Synod of the Sun. It will be held in their church. They are asking for \$4000. Motion to grant the church \$4000 to be used for the Visionary Conference of November 3-5, 2025. Motion was seconded and **carried**.
- Motion to set aside the standing rules around presbytery meeting dates through 2026 in order to meet with and alongside the other two Oklahoma presbyteries. Motion was seconded and **carried**.
- The meeting of the corporation will need to be changed by the body. The possibility of a Zoom meeting for this matter as well as examining Jakob Harmon could handle both of these items. Decision to be made at the next Coordinating Council meeting.

Sharing Time

- Prayer concerns and joys were shared.

Adjournment

- **Motion** to adjourn with prayer **passed**. The meeting was adjourned with prayer given by Tracy Evans at 1:45

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy Evans
Stated Clerk

PRESBYTERY PASTOR REPORT

TO COORDINATING COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2025

At a special called meeting on Saturday, August 9th, at First Presbyterian Church in Norman, Eastern Oklahoma and Indian Nations Presbyteries joined with Cimarron Presbytery in approving two motions to move forward the process of creating a new, statewide Oklahoma Presbytery. (Cimarron Presbytery had approved the two motions at an earlier meeting.)

In separate meetings, Eastern Oklahoma and Indian Nations commissioners approved a motion to commit to joining together (along with Cimarron Presbytery) in the process of together constructing and creating a new Oklahoma Presbytery. They also agreed, as a sign of unity and commitment, to meet with the other current Oklahoma Presbyteries on these dates:

- Nov 14-15, 2025 at Sequoyah Lodge in Hulbert, OK, hosted by EOP
- Feb 21, 2026 hosted by Cimarron Presbytery
- May 1-2, 2026 hosted by Indian Nations Presbytery,
- August 8, 2026 meeting (location TBA)
- November 6-7, 2026 meeting (location TBA)

While an affirmative vote commits the Presbyteries to intentional conversation about the creation of a new Oklahoma Presbytery, there will be other points along the timeline that will require affirmation to go forward.

The Oklahoma Presbytery Task Force, which brought forth the motions approved on Saturday, has been meeting for almost two years to consider plans for the future. It has suggested that the three Presbyteries spend most of the next year exploring possible paths forward and details of a new Oklahoma Presbytery.

That work will include the formation of working groups: Communication, Creating Community, Finances, Structure/Administrative, and Personnel. These work groups would be populated with individuals from each of the three presbyteries. The work groups would be moderated by current members of the Task Force, and the efforts coordinated by the Task Force. Their work would come back to the three presbyteries for approval. During discussion at Saturday's meeting, commissioners also urged the addition of a Mission work group.

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The suggestion to add a Mission work group followed a presentation by the Rev. Dr. Sallie Watson, associate director for Mid-Council relations for the PC(USA), who spoke about her experience in an unsuccessful unification of the two Presbyteries in New Mexico. Watson said key considerations for bringing together Presbyteries are geography, cultures, clarity of the envisioned mission of the new entity, staffing, and money. She said mission ought to be the top priority, and warned of the danger of money – or lack of resources – as the driving force toward consolidation.

The Task Force does not have decisive powers to act or create. Rather, it does have suggestive power and will offer frameworks as starting points. The Task Force's goal is to empower commissioners and presbyteries to participate in the decision-making process. From the work of the Task Force over the last two years, it plans to sketch out plans going forward and empower the workgroups to explore the details and join in developing the various recommendations to come before the Presbyteries.

Once the three Oklahoma Presbyteries have agreed on the details of the new Oklahoma Presbytery, they will motion the Synod of the Sun and General Assembly Administrative Commission on Mid-Councils to officially form the new presbytery.

During opening worship at Saturday's meeting, the Rev., Tony Larson, Co-Moderator of the 226th and 227th General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (USA), preaching on the story of Elijah and Elisha (1st & 2nd Kings) and Jesus' journey to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-62), urged commissioners not to be distracted or dissuaded by excuses in following the Spirit.

The offering during Saturday's worship service was designated for the Norman Coalition for Refugee Support, a non-profit comprised of seven churches, including FPC Norman and Memorial Presbyterian in Norman, and numerous volunteers working together to resettle and support refugees in Norman. Currently, NCRS works with more than 100 new neighbors from Afghanistan, Cameroon, Colombia, Guatemala, Ukraine and Venezuela. NCRS hosted summer STEM activities for 10 Afghan 3rd-5th graders. Through a grant from INP, NCRS hosted its third year of summer school for 16 secondary Afghan students. Five Afghan students graduated from high school and four plan to attend post-secondary schools in the fall. This fall, 53 backpacks for Pre-K through 12th-graders were blessed, packed and distributed to 14 families. In addition to education support, NCRS assists with employment, finances, individual family needs, housing, learning English, legal and transportation needs.

In a separate specially called meeting, INP commissioners approved the sale by Memorial Presbyterian Church of Norman of its building and property. The congregation is currently seeking a new home in which it will nest and continue its work, worship, mission and ministry.