

**Presbytery of Southern New England**  
Recommendation of the Administrative Commission  
regarding the First Presbyterian Church and Society of Holyoke MA  
(aka Presbyterian Church in the Meadows, Granby, MA)

The Administrative Commission, having worked in partnership with the Session of the First Presbyterian Church and Society of Holyoke MA, at their own request, provide the following Resolution to the Presbytery of Southern New England:

*Whereas*, the church was established August 26, 1886, as the First Presbyterian Church and Society of Holyoke MA; and the church property in Holyoke was sold August 31, 2004, and the congregation relocated to Granby MA and built a new church on 22 acres, which was consecrated on Oct. 18, 2009, with the informal name of The Presbyterian Church in the Meadows; and

*Whereas* the congregation's active membership is now 17 with an average Sunday attendance of 14 and is not able to continue as a congregation of the Presbytery; and

*Whereas* the Session and Administrative Commission embrace the Presbytery's commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the PCUSA's invitation to make reparations to the First People of the land whenever possible; and

*Whereas* the Session and Administrative Commission desire to have the property and building continue to be used for the upholding of God's Creation and a strong desire to transfer the many acres of property to an environmental organization; and

*Whereas*, it has been established that the original people of the land on which the current church and property sit include the people of the Nipmuc Tribe; and the Nipmuc Community Land Project share the same desire to be good stewards of the land;

**Therefore**, the Administrative Commission in partnership with members of the congregation, the Session and Presbytery Trustees **MOVES** that:

The congregation be dissolved and its remaining members be assisted with securing future pastoral care and transfer of church membership, as desired; and

The building and property be gifted (or sold for \$1.00) to the Nipmuc Community Land Project with humble acknowledgment of the colonization and seizure of lands that the Presbyterian Church USA has participated in or passively supported; and

The remaining cash assets, after closing costs, will be distributed to further local charity and Presbytery ministries as agreed upon by the Session and the Administrative Commission; and

A joyous celebration for the life of the congregation and its ministries throughout the decades will be held on **Sunday, September 7, 2025**, and the restoration of the property to its original owners the Nipmuc Tribe through the Nipmuc Community Land Project will occur on **Sunday, September 14, 2025**, or some other agreed-upon date; and lastly,

The Presbytery dismisses the Administrative Commission with thanks and gratitude at the conclusion of their work which is expected to be by the fall meeting of the Presbytery, *if the way be clear*.

**Members of the Administrative Commission:**

The Rev. Arthur Shippee  
The Rev. John Merz  
Elder Susan Labins