

# **ACTIONS OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA 2021**

Bryan Chapell, Stated Clerk

## **St. Louis, Missouri, Site of Forty-Eighth General Assembly, June 28-July 2, 2021**

The Forty-eighth General Assembly of the PCA met in St. Louis, Missouri, after a two-year hiatus occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. A record total of 2,114 commissioners (1,499 Teaching Elders and 615 Ruling Elders) registered, representing 967 churches from 86 presbyteries. The theme of the Assembly, hosted by Missouri Presbytery, was “**Unhindered: Proclaiming the Unhindered Kingdom.**” Ruling Elder Phil VanValkenburg was Host Committee Chairman.

Worship is an important aspect of the General Assembly. In the Tuesday evening Communion Service, retiring Moderator Ruling Elder **Howard “Howie” Donohoe** preached on “Heaven” from Luke 23:32-43. On Wednesday, **Rev. Russ Whitfield**, associate pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church of Washington, D.C., preached on “Truth in Advertising” from Jonah 4:1-11, and on Thursday **Rev. Abraham Cho**, senior pastor, Redeemer Presbyterian Church East Side, New York, preached on “The Spiritual Power of Weakness” from II Corinthians 2:14-3:5.

This year’s Assembly-wide seminar topic was “The Future Glory of the Church: The PCA We Envision for Christ’s Purposes.” Panelists were: Rev. Michael Allen (Academic Dean and John Dyer Trimble Professor of Systematic Theology, RTS Orlando), Rev. Charles (Chuck) Garriott (Executive Director, MNA Ministry to State), Rev. Brian Habig (Pastor, Downtown Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC), Rev. Julius Kim (President, Gospel Coalition), Dr. Philip Ryken (President, Wheaton College) and Dr. Thurman Williams (Pastor, New City West End, St. Louis, MO).

## **Moderator, Teaching Elder L. Roy Taylor**

The PCA has a tradition of electing a minister or a ruling elder as Moderator in alternating years. This year retiring PCA Stated Clerk TE L. Roy Taylor was elected Moderator. Dr. Taylor professed faith in Christ as a boy of five years and sensed a call to the ministry at age eight. Raised in a Baptist church in Birmingham, Alabama, Dr. Taylor was introduced to Reformed theology when required to read Cornelius Van Til for an apologetics class early in his seminary career. Soon he found himself supplementing his assigned reading with the works of Hodge, Berkhof, and Berkouwer, and during his time at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, he became a Presbyterian. Upon graduation, he accepted a call to serve as the pastor of Rainbow City Presbyterian Church outside Gadsden, Alabama. He and his church became part of the PCA at its foundation; he has attended every General Assembly since. Following his service in Rainbow City, Dr. Taylor joined the faculty of Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, as professor of practical theology (1977–1982 and 1993–1998). Between teaching posts, Dr. Taylor served as senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. At the 26th General Assembly in 1998, he was elected Stated Clerk of the PCA, and served in that office until his retirement in September, 2020. While Stated Clerk, Dr. Taylor also served on the Board of the National Association of Evangelicals from 1998 to 2020, which he chaired from 2006 to 2020. In 1998 and 1999 he served as president of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC). From 2006 to 2020 Taylor was a member of the Board of World Relief. Since retiring, Dr. Taylor has moved to Greenville, South Carolina, and has become full-time caregiver to his wife of 56 years, Donna, who has Alzheimer’s disease. The Taylors have two children and nine grandchildren.

### **Coordinator Transitions 2019-2021**

- **Administrative Committee/Office of the Stated Clerk**  
**Dr. Bryan Chapell** was elected by the 48th General Assembly as the fourth Stated Clerk of the PCA, having served as Stated Clerk Pro Tempore during the hiatus caused by the postponement of the 48th General Assembly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. TE Chapell follows **Dr. L. Roy Taylor**, who **retired** as Stated Clerk of the PCA, effective September 2020, after serving over two decades in that position.
- **Covenant Theological Seminary**  
**Dr. Tom C. Gibbs** was elected by the Board to serve as the sixth President of CTS, following the retirement of **Dr. Mark L. Dalbey**, who served as President for nearly a decade. Rev. Gibbs comes to this position from Redeemer Presbyterian Church (PCA) in San Antonio, Texas, where he served as senior pastor. The official transition took place during General Assembly.
- **Mission to North America**  
Effective January 1, 2021, **RE Brent Andersen** was called by the MNA Committee to serve as **MNA Interim Coordinator Pro Tempore**, subject to the approval of the 48th General Assembly. His call was approved by the Assembly. Along with a successful career in banking, RE Andersen brings to this role extensive experience in missions and church planting leadership at the Session and Presbytery levels. Mr. Anderson follows former MNA Coordinator **TE Paul Hahn**, who resigned from MNA effective December 31, 2020, to answer God's call to serve as interim pastor for Pacific Crossroads Church (PCA) in Los Angeles. **The MNA Coordinator Search Committee** is actively leading the search for the next Coordinator.
- **PCA Retirement & Benefits, Inc.**  
**TE Edward W. Dunnington**, assumed the Presidency of PCA Retirement & Benefits, Inc. (RBI) in July of 2020. Rev. Dunnington follows **RE Gary D. Campbell**, who retired after serving as President for 14 years. Mr. Campbell will remain on staff as Investment Specialist.

### **Highlights from the Reports of the Ten Assembly-level Ministries**

The Assembly heard informational reports from each of the Permanent Committees and Agencies and acted on their recommendations. Under the provisions of *RAO* 14-6.h and i, Committees of Commissioners (CoCs), which review the report and recommendations of their assigned Committees or Agencies, may by majority vote offer an alternative to any of their Permanent Committee's/Agency Board's recommendations. This year, several such alternative recommendations were adopted. The most substantial are recorded below.

- **Administrative Committee/Office of the Stated Clerk** – Cancellation of the 2020 General Assembly had a significant negative impact on the Committee budget. But through a combination of expense reductions, end of the year gifts from churches and individuals, the voluntary contribution by many Commissioners of Assembly registration fees already paid, and gifts from Committee members, AC staff, and members of the SJC, the Committee closed the year very near to break-even. Several overtures assigned to both the AC and the Overtures Committee were answered by reference to answers provided by the latter, which are recorded below. Budgets of the ten Assembly ministries were approved.
- **Committee on Discipleship Ministries** – During the pandemic, CDM provided relational connection for women around the United States and Canada as well as MTW missionaries

through their Facebook Live Hinged Bible study in Ephesians and a summer study of the “Messy Women in Jesus’ Genealogy.” Other events highlighted were a February Women’s Ministry Leadership Training and an upcoming August 20-21 Children’s Ministry virtual GROW Conference. CDM’s Children’s Ministry Certification program has certified 73 students to date, with 45 enrolled in the program for 2021. CDM is partnering with Christ Covenant Church in Matthews, NC, to utilize the Help[H]er ministry to train women to shepherd women in crisis and with Covenant Church in Nashville to encourage and equip music and worship directors. Commissioners at this Assembly were invited to take part in a Men’s Ministry survey to help CDM’s Men’s Ministry Team get a better sense of what PCA churches are doing to encourage and equip their men.

- **Covenant College** – This past year the college recorded record retention of students. For the third consecutive year a record amount was raised for the College’s annual fund. Fall enrollment is 29% ahead of the previous year and 7% ahead of budget; fall 2022 inquiries are 38% ahead of the previous year. Ninety-three percent of graduates are members or regular attenders of a church, and 45% are or have been in some form of church leadership.

The Assembly adopted an alternative recommendation offered by the Covenant College Committee of Commissioners concerning one set of Board minutes, taking exception to the Board’s adoption of a sabbatical policy for Trustees. The Board is charged to report its action on this exception to next year’s General Assembly.

- **Covenant Theological Seminary** – Enrollment reached a 7-year high this year. This was the third year for the seminary’s hybrid programs for the M.Div and MABTS degrees, which make those programs more affordable, accessible, and flexible for potential students. The Hope for the Future campaign exceeded its goal of raising \$40,000,000.
- **Mission to North America** – Despite the pandemic, church planting efforts moved ahead in 2019 and 2020. Church planters and pastors were added among the African American, Hispanic, Korean American, Haitian American, and Portuguese Language communities, and the Unity Fund awarded scholarships to 56 minority candidates preparing for elder leadership. Thirty-four new English as a Second Language ministries were launched. Metanoia Prison Ministries added 50 new in-prison mentors and 200 new Correspondence Ministry students. Despite the pandemic, major volunteer responses to numerous natural disasters were mobilized by MNA Disaster Response. Engaging Disabilities conducted workshops and webinars and developed curriculum content for engaging with people with disabilities in the local church. MNA Chaplain Ministries serves 166 PCA military chaplain and 58 Civilian Chaplains, five of which are both.
- **Mission to the World** – Through its Member Care Network, Regional Hub Teams, and use of its cloud-based software platforms, MTW maintained close contact with its missionaries, missionary candidates, and churches in America throughout the pandemic. Teams in the field developed a ten-year plan, outlining goals for new countries to be opened, new cities and unreached people groups to be engaged, new churches to be planted, new campus ministries to be developed, and new church planting support ministries. Despite the pandemic, 2020 saw the third largest class of new missionaries sent in the last nine years.

Three overtures sent to the Assembly, (one to the 2019 Assembly, the other two sent this year), calling for amendment of the MTW policy manual to limit “line authority” leadership of all field teams involved in church planting and church development to ordained elders, had been referred to the MTW Permanent Committee. The Permanent Committee recommended an amendment to one of these overtures that would have provided a procedure for the appointment of qualified unordained team leaders in extraordinary instances. An alternative recommendation offered by the MTW Committee of Commissioners requiring that these positions be filled by ordained elders was adopted by the Assembly.

- **PCA Foundation** – The PCA Foundation has over \$135 million in assets under management. In 2020 the Foundation facilitated 45% more contributions than in 2019. In 2020 the Foundation donated \$13.5 million to PCA churches and ministries, and \$6.7 million to other like-minded Christian ministries. Eleven percent of PCA churches use the Foundation’s online giving tool.
- **PCA Retirement & Benefits** – RBI has recently completed a Pastoral Wellness Survey to gain a better understanding of the needs of our pastors in order to serve them most effectively. The Korean American Presbyterian Church and Associate Reformed Church have each approved RBI’s 403B as their denominational retirement plan.
- **Reformed University Fellowship** – RUF added new campuses to their work during the pandemic, even though activities were forced to move online. RUF has grown from one campus minister in 1974 to 170 today; from 4 campus staff in 2016 to 49 today; from 6 interns in 1986 to 176 today.
- **Ridge Haven Conference Centers** – During 2020, Ridge Haven was permitted to open camp following local Covid-19 restrictions, and was able to hold a full 11 weeks of camp at their North Carolina campus and 3 weeks at their Iowa campus. Though 2020 attendance was cut in half due to the pandemic, 2021 is on pace to be the busiest summer in their history. Ridge Haven is raising funds to build a gym on the North Carolina campus and is expanding the ministry in Iowa.

### **Review of Presbytery Records (RPR)**

Two significant items were acted upon after considerable debate:

- *A recommendation concerning the minutes of Calvary Presbytery.* Calvary had forbidden a minister to preach or teach his stated difference with the Westminster Standards that Presbytery had accepted as “not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (RAO 16-3.e.5.b). The 2018 Assembly found this to be an exception of substance. Calvary’s response expressed its disagreement with that judgment, which the 2019 Assembly reiterated. In response, Calvary renewed its disagreement. The RPR Committee recommended that the matter be referred to the SJC, the procedure prescribed in RAO 16-10.c to be followed when the Assembly and a Presbytery reach an impasse on such a matter. A Minority Report was filed (RAO 16-7.h), calling for the Calvary’s response to be ruled satisfactory; this minority report was adopted by the Assembly.
- *A similar recommendation concerning the minutes of Northwest Georgia Presbytery.* The 2019 Assembly had taken exception with that Presbytery’s refusal to allow a minister to

teach his approved exception; the Presbytery expressed disagreement in their response. The Committee recommended that the response be ruled unsatisfactory and that the matter be referred to the SJC. In this case there was no minority report, but a motion from the floor that the Presbytery's response be ruled satisfactory was adopted.

The Committee had also recommended that Mississippi Valley Presbytery be cited with an exception of substance for refusing to allow a minister to teach his approved exception. Upon motion from the floor, that proposed exception was removed from the report.

A motion to remove an exception of substance from the report on Korean Northeastern Presbytery concerning a failure to examine the Sessional records of every one of its churches was adopted.

### **Interchurch Relations**

Because of time constraints and COVID-19 restrictions, fraternal denominations were asked to submit videos rather than sending representatives to this year's Assembly to bring greetings and share ministry information. The videos were viewed during various times throughout the week.

### **Reports of Ad-Interim Committees**

The 2019 General Assembly established two Ad-Interim Committees (AIC), which reported to this year's Assembly:

- The AIC on Human Sexuality completed its work and released its report in May 2020. In a video presentation to the Assembly, Dr. Tim Keller and Dr. Kevin DeYoung highlighted the Report's Preamble and Twelve Summary Statements. Though the Committee did not present any recommendations for the Assembly to adopt, an overture from Calvary Presbytery, which called for the Assembly to declare the Report Biblically faithful and to refer it to the Committee on Discipleship Ministries for inclusion and promotion among its denominational teaching materials, was approved. Members of this Committee were: TE Bryan Chapell, Chairman; TEs Kevin DeYoung, Tim Keller, and Jim Weidenaar; REs Derek Halvorson, Kyle Keating, and Jim Pocta.
- The AIC on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault requested that the Assembly extend it another year to complete its work, and approve a budget for that year of \$25,000. Both actions were approved by the Assembly. One of the commissioners indicated that a donor has pledged to provide up to \$25,000 for the work of the Committee. Members of the Committee are: TE Dr. Timothy LeCroy, Chairman; TEs T. Calhoun Boroughs, Lloyd Pierson, and Shane Waldron; REs Kelly Dehnert, David Haburchak, and Robert Goudzwaard. Mrs. Rachael Denhollander, Mrs. Ann Maree Goudzwaard, Dr. Diane Langberg, Dr. Barbara Shaffer, and Mrs. Darby Strickland serve the Committee as advisory members.

### **Standing Judicial Commission**

The Standing Judicial Commission reported on cases they had acted upon since the 2019 Assembly and recommended changes to 4.1 and 2.10.d of the *Operating Manual of the SJC (OMSJC)*. The amendments were adopted.

### **Overtures Brought to the Assembly through the Overtures Committee**

An overture is ordinarily a request of a Presbytery for the General Assembly to take an action. Forty-seven overtures were submitted to the 48th General Assembly. See <https://www.pcaac.org/general-assembly/overtures/> for a list of all overtures and the text of each one as originally submitted (note that Overture 7 was withdrawn). **The Assembly adopted recommendations in**

**the following Overtures referred to the Overtures Committee**, chaired this year by TE W. Scott Barber. (Note: Changes to the *BCO*, initially adopted by the 48th General Assembly, must subsequently be approved by majority vote of 2/3 of the Presbyteries and finally approved by majority vote of the 49th General Assembly before they become a part of the *BCO*.)

- Overture 5 from Calvary Presbytery, to amend *BCO* 20-4; 24-3; 24-4 regarding election of a Pastors, Associate Pastors, and officers, adopted as amended.
- Overture 9 from Presbytery of the Ascension, to amend *RAO* 15-6.s.2) and 3) regarding the number of members of the Overtures Committee required to file a Minority Report, adopted as amended.
- Overture 17 from Pacific Northwest Presbytery, to revise *RAO* 9-3 to clarify funding for Ad-Interim Committees, adopted as amended.
- Overture 18 from Pacific Northwest Presbytery, to amend *BCO* 24-1 to clarify that a Session has discretion on some parts of the exams of officer nominees, adopted as amended. Overture 6 was answered by reference to the action on this overture.
- Overture 22 from Pacific Northwest Presbytery, to amend *BCO* 32-20 regarding time considerations for offenses, adopted as amended.
- Overture 23 from Gulf Coast Presbytery, to amend *BCO* 17 by adding a clause which prohibits ordination of men who self-identify as “gay Christians”, “same-sex attracted Christians” or like terms, adopted as amended. This overture was amended extensively before it was presented by the Overtures Committee and approved by the Assembly: the chapter of the *BCO* it is proposed to amend was changed from *BCO* 17 to 16, and the proposal was changed to identify those not qualified for ordained office as “those who profess an identity (such as, but not limited to, ‘gay Christian,’ ‘same sex attracted Christian,’ ‘homosexual Christian,’ or like terms) that undermines or contradicts their identity as new creations in Christ, either by denying the sinfulness of fallen desires (such as, but not limited to, same sex attraction), or by denying the reality and hope of progressive sanctification, or by failing to pursue Spirit-empowered victory over their sinful temptations, inclinations, and actions....”
- Overture 26 from Philadelphia Metro West Presbytery, to amend *BCO* 10 to permit sessions and presbyteries to adopt rules for videoconference or telecommunication meeting, adopted as amended. (The Overtures Committee amended the proposal by striking the proposed changes to *BCO* 10-7 and instead proposing amendments to *BCO* 12-6 and 13-4.)
- Overture 31 from Northwest Georgia Presbytery, to amend the *BCO* 22 process for an Assistant Pastor to become an Associate Pastor, adopted as amended.
- Overture 33 from Pacific Northwest Presbytery, to amend *BCO* 38-1 concerning the confession document for a case without process, adopted.
- Overture 37 from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery, to amend *BCO* 21-4 and 24-1 to more specifically examine the moral requirements for church office, adopted as amended. The proposals call for presbyteries and sessions examining pastors, elders, or deacons to give specific attention to a variety of “potentially notorious concerns, such as but not limited to relational sins, sexual immorality (including homosexuality, child sexual abuse, fornication, and pornography), addictions, abusive behavior, racism, and financial mismanagement” when examining candidates for church office.

Twenty-eight members of the Overtures Committee filed a Minority Report with language that paralleled the language used in the proposal for Overture 23. The Assembly defeated the Minority Report and approved the Committee recommendation that would add to the

PCA Constitution the standard that any person seeking ordained office (pastor, elder, or deacon) “must not be known by reputation or self-profession according to his remaining sinfulness, but rather by the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ Jesus (I Cor. 6:9-11).” The overture also encouraged sessions and presbyteries “to appoint a committee to conduct detailed examinations of these matters and to give prayerful support to candidates” who are seeking church office as a pastor, elder, or deacon. Overture 30 was answered by reference to the action taken on this overture; Overture 16 was answered by reference to the action on this overture and the action on Overture 38.

- Overture 38, from Calvary Presbytery, to commend the AIC Report on Human Sexuality, adopted.
- Overture 48, from Korean Capital Presbytery, to repudiate anti-Asian racism, created unexpected conversation when it was opposed by some Asian pastors and elders who thought it would create special considerations for one group of persons that could undermine our unity in Christ. Persons of varying views had worked together in the Overtures Committee to craft the following statement, which was overwhelmingly approved by the Assembly:

The Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Racial and Ethnic Reconciliation to the 46th General Assembly speaks clearly both to the reality of the Imago Dei in all people and to the sin of racism, particularly when it affirms: a) the vision of the redeemed in Revelation 7:9-11, where all nations and ethnicities are fulfilled in Christ; b) the image of God reflected in all people; and c) the image of Christ reflected in His body. (*M46GA*, Appendix V passim, but especially p. 599.). At the same time, we recognize the pain, and, at times, violence, that the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community has experienced, particularly due to events of the past year. We express our grief together with our AAPI brothers and sisters over the pain and suffering that has occurred, whether this has happened due to unbiblical religious claims, racist pride, or any other cause. We, finally, assure our AAPI brothers and sisters of our love and support, and of our desire to walk together in ways that reflect the commitments of the Racial Reconciliation Report.”

- Overtures 45 and 46, from Metro Atlanta and New York Metro Presbyteries respectively, which called for the Assembly to “seek Asian American flourishing,” were answered by reference to the action taken on Overture 48. In addition, the Assembly was directed to take note of a pastoral letter developed by Metro Atlanta and New York Metro and attached to their overtures, and the Assembly approved the proposal from Metro Atlanta to ask the Moderator to appoint an Asian American commissioner to lead the Assembly in a time of corporate prayer on behalf of our Asian American brothers and sisters. Dr. Taylor called on TE Jon Chung to lead in that prayer.

#### **Overtures Brought to the Assembly through MNA and MTW Committees of Commissioners**

- Overture 8, from Catawba Valley Presbytery, regarding a boundary change, was adopted.
- Overture 11, from Central Carolina Presbytery, regarding a boundary change, was adopted
- Overture 13 from Mississippi Valley Presbytery, to endorse Lifeline Children’s services, was adopted.
- Overture 14, from Evangel Presbytery, calling for amendment of the MTW policy manual to limit “line authority” leadership of all field teams involved in church planting and church development to ordained elders, was adopted (see Mission to the World, above). Overture 3

was answered with reference to Overture 14, as was Overture 41 to the 47th General Assembly.

The following Overtures were **not adopted** by the 48th General Assembly:

- Overtures 19-21, 34, and 35, all from Pacific Northwest Presbytery recommending changes to various provisions in the *BCO* Rules of Discipline, were referred to the 49th General Assembly Overtures Committee.
- Overtures 40 and 41 from Tennessee Valley Presbytery, proposing changes to *BCO* 32 and 35 to allow victim protection and expand witness eligibility in disciplinary cases, were also referred to the 49th General Assembly Overtures Committee, and in addition referred to the AIC on Domestic Violence for advice to be given to that Committee.
- Overtures 12, 28, and 29 from Philadelphia Metro West Presbytery, regarding procedures for Presbytery disciplinary investigations, were referred back to that Presbytery without prejudice.
- Overture 1 to amend *BCO* 8-7, which would have required that PCA chaplains be endorsed only by the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains, was not adopted.
- Overture 10 to amend *RAO* 15-6.s, which would have restricted the content of Overtures Committee Minority Reports, was not adopted. (The OC recommendation to answer in the affirmative as amended was not adopted by the Assembly).
- Overture 15 to amend *RAO* 11-2, which would have disallowed electronic communication regarding voting at General Assembly, was not adopted.
- Overture 24, to reduce the General Assembly registration fees for Ruling Elders, was answered in the negative, effectively not adopting the proposed change. Overture 39 was answered in reference to Overture 24.
- Overture 27 to amend *BCO* 36, which would have required the censure of excommunication to be carried out publicly, was not adopted.
- Four overtures requesting study committees were not adopted:
  - ✓ Overtures 32 and 43 requesting a study committee on Biblical ethics and digital media;
  - ✓ Overture 36 requesting a study committee on white supremacy; and
  - ✓ Overture 47 requesting a study committee on Critical Race Theory.

### Assembly Videos

Video recordings of Assembly business sessions and worship services may be found at: <https://livestream.com/accounts/8521918/events/9731338>

### Summary of Actions on *Book of Church Order* Changes

Changing the *BCO* requires a majority vote of one General Assembly, the majority vote of two-thirds of the Presbyteries, and a final majority vote of a subsequent Assembly (*BCO* 26-2).

#### *BCO* amendments given final approval by the 48th General Assembly

- *BCO* 42-4, 43-2, 43-3 regarding methods and deadlines for filing cases
- *BCO* 32-8, 32-13, 35-10 to allow video testimony by witnesses

#### *BCO* amendments sent down by the 48th General Assembly to the Presbyteries for approval

- *BCO* 20-4, 24-3, 24-4, regarding election of pastor, associate pastor, and officers (Overture 5).



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- *BCO* 24-1 allowing Session timing discretion in officer examinations (Overture 18; Overture 6).
- *BCO* 32-20 regarding time considerations for offenses (Overture 22).
- *BCO* 16-4 to disqualify those who profess an identity that undermines or contradicts their new identity in Christ from serving in church office (Overture 23).
- *BCO* 12-6 and 13-4 to permit telecommunication meetings (Overture 26). Note: the original overture proposed an addition to *BCO* 10. The Overtures Committee substituted a change to *BCO* 12-6 and to 13-4.
- *BCO* 22-2, regarding process for an Assistant Pastor to become an Associate Pastor (Overture 31).
- *BCO* 38-1 regarding confession document in case without process (Overture 33)
- *BCO* 21-4 and 24-1 to clarify moral requirements for church office(Overture 37; Overtures 16 and 30 answered with reference to 37).

### **PCA by the Numbers**

The Stated Clerk reported the following statistical changes between 2019 and 2020.

- The total number of churches increased by 13 to 1,580.
- The number of mission churches stayed the same.
- The number of ministers increased by 60 to 5,117.
- Sunday School attendance decreased by 26,700 to 65,648.
- Total professions of faith dropped by 1,761 to 8,314.
- Total membership (communicant, non-communicant, ministers) decreased by 383 to 383,338.
- Total reported giving decreased by \$2,905,566 to \$934,585,585.

### **Suggested Prayer, Offerings, and Events**

- October 17, 2021, a day of prayer for the ministry and mission of Covenant College.
- November 2021, a month of prayer for Global Missions (MTW).
- A special offering for MTW Compassion Ministries on a date chosen by local sessions.
- November 7, 2021, a day of prayer for the Persecuted Church Worldwide (MTW).
- Annual Ministerial Relief Ministry offering (PCA-RBI).
- *The Assembly approved the request that churches contribute to the Administrative Committee based on 0.35% of total tithes and offerings (excepting capital campaign projects).*

**The Forty-ninth General Assembly will meet June 22-24, 2022, in Birmingham, Alabama.**