

Stated Clerk's Summary and Reflections

of the Fifty-Third General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America

Assembling to Celebrate and to Advance the Ministry of the Church

The Ohio Valley Presbytery welcomed 2,456 elders from more than 1,000 churches to Louisville, Kentucky, for the 53rd General Assembly, our largest ever. Overall, 1,637 teaching elders and 819 ruling elders were in attendance, which marked the most ruling elder commissioners in the history of the Assembly and the largest percentage of total commissioners since 2005. Through the worship and work of the Church, we were welcomed as Christ welcomed us, for the glory of God. While the Assembly was not without moments of disagreement and debate, sorrow and gravity, the overarching tone of the week was one of constructive engagement, confidence in the Church's mission, and gratitude for God's ongoing work.

The Assembly convened Tuesday evening following worship with a focus on leadership, holding the annual election of its Moderator and the election of a new Stated Clerk. The Assembly elected longstanding ruling elder Mel Duncan of Calvary Presbytery as Moderator and teaching elder Fred Greco of Houston Metro Presbytery as Stated Clerk. RE Duncan's commitment to the church's mission and his experience in navigating its processes fostered both order and collegiality, which led to an early adjournment on Thursday afternoon.

The Work of the Church

The reports of our Committees and Agencies painted a picture of a church actively engaged in education, missions, partnership, and pastoral care.

Mission to the World (MTW) celebrated the results of the 10-year long 1% prayer initiative. From the churches who participated, 1.9% of their adult members were sent to serve in global cross-cultural missions from 2016-2026. MTW continues to focus on developing leaders and healthy teams.

Over the past few years, **Geneva Benefits** moved recordkeeping to Fidelity (cutting fees 10%), distributed \$762,635 in Relief Awards to pastors and widows in need, and secured \$3.2 million from the Lilly Endowment for pastor wellbeing, including more than \$109,000 last year for sabbaticals for under-resourced churches. Every church is called to two actions: utilize Geneva's services and participate annually in the "Look After" offering to keep the Ministerial Relief Fund equipped to care for those who have faithfully served.

The **Committee for Discipleship Ministries'** (CDM) gatherings for leaders in children's and women's ministry reached capacity this spring, and plans are underway for gatherings this fall for men and youth leaders. CDM continues to partner with other Committees to produce resources for local church leaders.

Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS) is celebrating its 70th year of ministry and rejoicing in the stewardship entrusted to them to train the next generation of pastors, ministry leaders, and counselors for the PCA. This past year, Covenant received a grant of nearly \$10M from the Lilly Endowment—the largest single grant in the school’s history—to collaboratively work to recruit, equip, and sustain pastors for our denomination and beyond. In addition, Covenant announced that Dr. Cameron Clausing, currently teaching at Christ College in Sydney, Australia, will be joining the Seminary’s Systematic Theology faculty beginning in the 2026-2027 academic year.

Ridge Haven (RH) reported that over the past decade, they have been fortunate to serve more than 114,000 people and, in 2025, welcomed 13,711 guests through camps, retreats, and ministry events that strengthen churches and equip the next generation to serve Christ’s church. In response to growing year-round demand within the PCA, Ridge Haven has launched an \$8 million capital campaign to expand its capacity while continuing to provide an affordable resource and service to the Church, that has seen the completion of a new pool at its campus in Cono, Iowa, and, in Brevard, NC, a chapel atop Keyes Summit, four family cabins, five camper cabins, and a second lake as a part of its family camp expansion.

Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) not only ministers to over 20,000 students weekly (up 32% since it began measuring this in 2022) through over 200 campus ministries, including RUF, RUF-International, and RUF-Global ministries, it also continues to be a pipeline for leadership in the PCA with nearly 250 former campus ministers serving the church as church planters, pastors, and denominational staff with thousands more former RUF students in church membership and leadership. RUF began nine new works in 2025 and expects continued growth in the year ahead.

The **PCA Foundation** (PCAF) received \$155.4 million in gifts and distributed \$115.5 million of which PCA churches received \$31.5 million, PCA Committees and Agencies received \$7.7 million, and other Christian ministries received \$76.4 million. Total assets decreased in the past year by 21.4% (\$109 million) to \$400 million, resulting from a write-down of the value of volatile cryptocurrency holdings that carry trading restrictions. The Foundation continues to seek to assist Christians to give in tax efficient ways that maximize total giving for PCA churches and other ministries.

Covenant College (CC) is grateful for and encouraged by God’s provision for its largest ever incoming freshmen class last fall and its largest ever overall enrollment projected for this coming fall. They are delighted to have thus far raised \$50.5M in gifts and pledges, above and beyond the campaign goal of \$46.8M, and pray for the final funds needed to complete a new campaign project. The College is excited to see what God will continue to do in light of this growth and generous support.

Mission to North America (MNA) reported that 54 new churches were planted in 2025 with five church planter assessments held. **ESL and Refugee and Immigrant ministries** had a record year with 56 new ESL ministries started, 78 total training sessions and 16 enrichment seminars,

while curriculum sales doubled, making it the top seller in the CDM bookstore. **Metanoia Prison Ministry** added volunteers and served 405 new prisoners, which, on top of its already remarkable footprint in prisons and its correspondence ministry, now strategically positions it to serve 400 prisons across the nation. **Korean American Ministries** held seminars in several major Korean cities in collaboration with the Kosin denomination that drew more than 600 leaders—including the Moderator, General Secretary, Permanent Committee members, and Presbytery leaders of Kosin.

In conjunction with the Committee on Discipleship Ministries, the **Administrative Committee** (AC) announced the release of “Equipping for Service: *BCO* Basics,” a video series to train and equip the Church in the principles, structure, and pastoral use of the *Book of Church Order*. These videos are not lectures for seminary students, but tools to help leaders in the Church have clarity, confidence, and shared understanding of Presbyterian church government. As ordered by the 52nd General Assembly, the AC is studying the Assembly and how arrangements for it, such as location, can better serve the church. As part of this study, a survey to help understand the key factors was announced that will become available in August or September, with every elder encouraged to participate.

Study Committees

Both the Ad Interim (or study) Committee on Christian Nationalism and the Ad Interim Committee on the Directory for Worship presented partial or preliminary reports and were granted an additional year to complete their work. The Committee on Christian Nationalism presented a partial report that seeks to offer pastoral guidance and clarify areas of permissible theological diversity while continuing its work toward a more complete report next year. This partial report is available at <https://pcaga.org/christiannationalismreport/>.

The Committee on the Directory for Worship presented a report that included a proposed revision of the Directory for Worship. They are seeking feedback as they move towards a final proposed rewrite for next year. Their report is available at <https://pcaga.org/dfwreport/>.

The Assembly also erected a new Ad Interim Committee on Artificial Intelligence. This committee has been tasked with reporting on the teaching of Scripture and the *Westminster Standards* with a particular reference to our anthropology (*WCF* 4, 7) and ecclesiology (*WCF* 25) as well as suggesting general principles for the use or limits of artificial intelligence technology (AI) in the Church.

Please be in prayer for these Committees and their important work for the life of the Church.

Amendments to the *Book of Church Order* and the *Rules of Assembly Operations*

Amendments to our *Book of Church Order* (*BCO*) require approval of a majority of the General Assembly, the advice and consent of $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Presbyteries, and final approval by a subsequent General Assembly. Thirteen *BCO* amendments (*BCO*) were sent down to Presbyteries by the 52nd Assembly. Ten of those returned to the 53rd Assembly after having received the approval of

at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Presbyteries, with nine receiving final approval. These amendments are now reflected in the *BCO* available online at <https://www.pcaac.org/book-of-church-order/>.

- Amend *BCO* 12-3 so that a Session may elect one of its members as moderator in judicial cases
- Amend *BCO* 18-2 to allow flexibility on applications to come under care
- Amend *BCO* 24-1 to clarify a Session's role in examining officer nominees
- Amend *BCO* 31-10 to require the vote of the entire court to suspend an officer's official functions administratively during process
- Amend *BCO* 35-9 to require recording all parts of a trial other than deliberations
- Amend *BCO* 36-4 to add language for the administration of definite suspension from office
- Amend *BCO* 36-5 to conform the language to *BCO* 37-3 regarding suspension from office
- Amend *BCO* 36-8 and 42-2 to provide for elevation of a censure without an entirely new trial
- Amend *BCO* 41-3 to allow supplemental judges for a Session trial

The phrase "as interpreted in these *Standards*" was restored to *BCO* 29-1 after the Committee on Constitutional Business ruled it was an editorial correction since no record of General Assembly removing the phrase could be found.

[Actions on Overtures](#)

The Assembly faced a historic number of overtures, with 90 submitted to this Assembly and one referred to it from the 52nd Assembly in 2025. Twenty overtures were answered in the affirmative. These overtures included seven *BCO* amendments, which are now sent down to Presbyteries for their advice and consent (*BCO* 26-2). Information on those amendments is available at <https://www.pcaac.org/dashboard>. In addition, two amendments to the *Rules of Assembly Operations* were passed and took immediate effect (one to require church planter assessment data in MNA's report and one to authorize GA committees and commissions to hold electronic meetings).

Two new Presbyteries were erected. Arkansas Presbytery, consisting of most of Arkansas, came into existence on July 1, 2026. The Smoky Mountain Presbytery, consisting of 19 counties in eastern Tennessee, will come into existence on January 1, 2027. The Assembly added Alaska, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington to the bounds of Korean Northwest Presbytery. Additionally, at the request of Pittsburgh Presbytery and Ohio Presbytery, all the counties in Ohio that were part of Pittsburgh Presbytery were transferred to the Ohio Presbytery.

Other overtures that passed saw the Assembly offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the adult professions of faith reported in our churches in 2025 and declare the Danvers Statement from the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood as a biblically faithful declaration. The Assembly expressed its desire that wine should be offered in addition to other alternatives (*e.g.*, grape juice and non-alcoholic wine) in the celebration of the Lord's Supper at the Assembly. Additionally,

the Assembly encouraged all congregations in the PCA to give thanks to the Lord for the United States of America as we approach the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding.

Relations with Other Churches

The PCA has formal relations with 19 other denominations. These include US-based denominations such as the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) and the Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC), as well as denominations around the world such as the Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB) and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico. The Assembly established new relations with the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Australia, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Central and Eastern Europe, and the International Presbyterian Church, which has churches in the UK, Europe, and South Korea. We also expanded our relations with the Free Church of Scotland.

Conclusion

The 53rd General Assembly offered a compelling picture of a Church at work—thoughtful in its decisions, committed to its mission, and grounded in its faith. From the detailed work of committees of commissioners to the encouragement of Committee & Agency reports, and from moments of joyful worship to moments of solemn reflection, the week displayed the full life of the Church.

The highlights from each Committee and Agency reveal a denomination actively pursuing faithfulness in doctrine, practice, and mission. The broader tone of the Assembly points forward with hope, unity, and confidence in God's ongoing work. At the Assembly, the Church bore witness to the comfort and strength found in Christ, reminding all who participated that the Assembly's work is ultimately rooted in something far greater than itself.

As the Assembly concluded, it did so not only with completed business but with a renewed sense of purpose, ready to continue the work of ministry in the year ahead.

Fred Greco is Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church in America.