



# On the Road

to the 227th General Assembly



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## Two pastors are first to announce they will stand for election as co-moderators

The Rev. Dr. Kristopher D. Schondelmeyer and the Rev. Marta Pumroy-Cordero have announced that they will stand for election as co-moderators during the upcoming 227th General Assembly in Milwaukee. They are the first to announce such intentions. Historically, moderators/

co-moderators have been elected at the beginning of each Assembly and begun their moderating work immediately after. Action taken during the last General Assembly shifted the election to the end of each Assembly. Whoever is elected at the end of this summer's Assembly will officiate the 228th Assembly in 2028.



The Rev. Marta Pumroy-Cordero and the Rev. Dr. Kristopher D. Schondelmeyer will stand for Co-Moderators of the 227th General Assembly (contributed photo)

Pumroy-Cordero is border ministry coordinator for the [Tres Rios Border Foundation](#) in [Tres Rios Presbytery](#). Schondelmeyer is pastor and head of staff at [First Presbyterian Church of Davenport](#), Iowa, and moderator of the [Presbytery of East Iowa](#). Both have been endorsed in their call to stand by their respective presbyteries.

"Our call emerges from the lived reality of our ministries: churches and communities carrying wounds of division, fear, and exhaustion, yet overflowing with creativity, compassion and courageous hope," the two wrote in a letter announcing their intention to stand. "Rooted in [the vision of Revelation 22](#), we believe the church in this time is being invited to 'Be the Leaves' for the healing and flourishing of every congregation and community we are called to serve."

[Read more about Pumroy-Cordero and Schondelmeyer on Presbyterian News Service.](#) 

## Dates to Know

**Spring 2026**  
Business deadlines  
[Available here](#)

**June 22-24, 2026**  
GA Committees meet online

**June 27, 2026**  
Community Day - service and education opportunities, ministry fair, and community gatherings

**June 28, 2026**  
Worship in local congregations and convening of plenary

**June 29-July 2, 2026**  
GA Plenary



## ***'Why This Matters' from a former GA commissioner and veteran volunteer***

*by the Rev. Daniel Van Beek*

General Assembly sometimes feels worlds away from our congregations, especially our smaller churches and those in remote locations, like where I serve in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. How does all of this big production affect the people in the pews? That's the real question, isn't it?

At times, the overtures and business done at GA deal with important theological issues or how the denomination as a whole relates with and witnesses to the world. This is usually the most controversial part of GA, as the outcomes don't always align with what individual Presbyterians believe or value.

At other times, outcomes from the conversations and deep study of the Assembly directly benefit individual congregations, their members, and their pastors. This can include funding for ministry in our communities or resources that help our education programs or provide support to the work we're doing already.

Overall, when we have practiced connecting ourselves to other congregations, our mid councils, and our denomination, we see the Holy Spirit at work within all of us more clearly. We seek out how other churches are handling similar challenges. What can we learn from GA, and perhaps more importantly, what can GA learn from us, as small, rural congregations?

I first attended GA in 2016 as a ruling elder commissioner, both completely overwhelmed and in awe of the experience. I was hooked! I've served in some capacity at every GA since. I'm passionate about helping our presbyteries and congregations participate more fully in this experience, and not only every couple of years but also strengthening the fabric of our Presbyterian family every day. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

*The Rev. Daniel Van Beek serves as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Escanaba, Michigan. He is currently serving as a backstage business consultant for the upcoming General Assembly and has been involved with the past six Assemblies in various roles.*

## ***Commission Member talks about balancing history with current needs in unification process***

Teaching Elder Deb Avery has served on various national committees since 2014 and sees her work on the Unification Commission as an opportunity to "see to fulfillment" the work that began years ago. Part of her role, she believes, is bringing that history into the work of the commission while also discerning what is needed now. Avery wants the church to understand how fluid this process



of unification really is, explaining how the full commission meets in person every other month, but its various committees meet weekly, and the process evolves in each of those conversations. Watch the video to learn more about her insights into the Unification Commission. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

# What's it like to be 'behind the scenes' at GA?

by the Rev. Teresa Larson



Like all things in ministry, being backstage (and specifically on the business management team) is best understood through the popular "watchwords" of our ordination vows:

**Energy:** You're always on your toes backstage, even in the slower moments. You never know when a motion will come through, a question will pop into the queue or a call for the vote will be made. Even through lengthy plenary sessions, one thing is for certain: You will never be bored.

**Intelligence:** Backstage is where everything you know about polity, technology, process and production collides. Fewer things can make you feel smarter than knowing what to do when a substitute motion comes through!

**Imagination:** Good process is wrapped in the work of the Holy Spirit. Our job backstage is to help make the way for the Spirit to speak.

**Love:** In every person working backstage, you'll find love for this work and for the people we do it with; and more importantly, you'll find love for the Church and for the God who calls it into being.

The first GA I attended in 2012 as a Young Adult Advisory Delegate completely changed the trajectory I thought my life was taking, and since then, serving the Assembly has become a biennial touchstone in my ministry. I am grateful to give back to a body that has given so much to me and sparks my assurance in God's work through the PC(USA). I look forward to welcoming GA to Milwaukee and continuing to serve the Assembly with energy, intelligence, imagination and love! 🇺🇸



*The Rev. Teresa Larson serves as an associate pastor at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee and as a backstage business consultant for the upcoming General Assembly. This GA will be her fourth Assembly on the backstage business management team.*





## Milwaukee church gets creative with arts and science ministry

At Tippecanoe Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee, it is a season of creativity and connection. Their arts and science literacy camp helps learning loss through hands-on, nature-inspired learning in a welcoming space designed for diverse and neurodivergent students alike.

Beyond the classroom, Tippecanoe has opened its doors for over 15 years to Divine Intervention, a warm shelter offering dignity and care to neighbors experiencing houselessness.

Rooted in a commitment to community, Tippecanoe creatively uses its space to meet real needs and create meaningful impact. 🏡



## Survey on anti-racism work released by PHS in response to GA Mandate

In June 2022, the 225th General Assembly passed item [RGJ-12](#), directing “the Presbyterian Historical Society to create an online historical self-study tool for congregations and mid councils to investigate their own history” to better equip more churches to undertake this work. To this end, the Presbyterian Historical Society is in the process of developing a resource and/or training to help churches research and write their own histories through an anti-racist lens. We want to hear directly from churches and mid councils about the resources and guidance that would be most useful to them as they engage in anti-racism work, regardless of where they are in this process.

Please share this survey with your congregations: [surveymonkey.com/r/SNPM69N](https://surveymonkey.com/r/SNPM69N)

You can read more about this project, view examples from other congregations, and learn how to submit your own research products on this webpage: [pcusa.org/historical-society/collections/what-we-collect/products-pcusa-self-studies-racism](https://pcusa.org/historical-society/collections/what-we-collect/products-pcusa-self-studies-racism). 🏡

# Help us help you.

PHS is developing a resource and/or training to help churches research and write their own histories through an anti-racist lens.

What kinds of guidance, tools, and resources do you wish you had access to while doing this work?