

Business as [un]Usual

Notes from the Stated Clerk about the business of the presbytery during such an unusual time as this.

Are you like me ~ a self-professed GA Junkie? A Presby-nerd? Did you log-on and observe some of the Assembly sessions? Or, like me, did you log-on and watch the Assembly from “gavel to gavel”? And, during this most unusual of times, this was a most unusual General Assembly. Here are some examples:

- The Assembly met entirely on-line, with Commissioners, Advisory Delegates and other participants joining the Assembly remotely.
- Extremely Abbreviated; the Assembly met over four days, instead of the more typical 10 day period.
- Only “critical business” (as defined by the Committee on the General Assembly) was addressed.
- There were no committees working on Overtures, Issues, and Statements during the Assembly.
- In fact, there were no Overtures considered by this Assembly, and all Overtures submitted to this Assembly were referred to the 225th GA.
- All actions taken by the 224th General Assembly must be ratified by the 225th General Assembly because, “technically speaking,” this Assembly was not “constitutional.” For more information about this, read Stated Clerk J. Herbert Nelson’s Advisory Opinion, which addresses meetings of councils (sessions, presbyteries are expressly identified, but the same rationale applies to meetings of the General Assembly).

https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/32420_final_edited_advisory_opinion_church_in_an_emergency_or_pandemic.pdf

My Personal Highlight: PTCA Commissioner, Ruling Elder Elona Street-Stewart and the Rev. Gregory Bentley of Huntsville, Alabama were elected as Co-Moderators of the 224th General Assembly ***on the first ballot!!***

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Our presbytery's GA delegation (Commissioners Brian Entz, Lisa Johnson, Marian Michaels and Elona Street-Stewart; YAAD Will Parker; Alternate Commissioners Brenda Alexander, Doug Mitchell, Jean Emmons and John Zwier) will be making an "official" report to the Presbytery soon. **Spoiler Alert** ... Our delegation's report may look very different from past reports; whether you are a GA Junkie or a GA Newby, you will want to watch for this report!

But if you just can't wait for our delegation's report, there are a number of articles about this GA that you can read right now:

To see how our new Co-Moderators were greeted upon their arrival at The Presbyterian Center, read:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/a-visual-reminder-of-how-hearts-are-joined/>

For a summary of "what happened" at GA read "GA 224 is in the Books."

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/6/29/historic-224th-general-assembly-2020-presbyterian-/>

For a summary of the "Lessons Learned" from the perspective of COGA, read:

<https://pres-outlook.org/2020/06/general-assembly-committee-asks-what-are-the-lessons-of-the-2020-ga/>

8 minutes, 46 Seconds of silence was observed by the Assembly as its last item of business. Read about it here:

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/6/27/eight-minutes-46-seconds-silence/>

The Assembly repeatedly and urgently called for more leadership on issues of Social Justice, as described in these articles:

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/6/27/racial-injustice-covid-19-support-native-americans/>

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/committee-members-call-on-pcusa-to-start-leading-on-justice-issues/>

There was controversy (it was GA, after all). To learn how one issue was managed, read the Co-Moderators' joint statement urging resolution of differences between COTE and Univ. of Redlands Graduate School of Theology/San Francisco Theological Seminary.

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/6/27/commissioners-address-issues-related-theological-e/>

Upon his re-election as Stated Clerk, the Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson reminded us that we are in the midst of a transformation; reforming into the church God wants us to be.

<https://www.pcusa.org/news/2020/6/27/just-keep-stirring/>

While these articles can't fully describe *everything* that happened (or didn't happen) during the 224th General Assembly, they are informative.

I wonder... Are your own GA observations and experiences reflected in these reports? I would love to hear your impressions of the 224th General Assembly. Email me, Let's Talk!