



*Owe no one anything, except to love one another;
for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.*
~ Romans 13:8 (NRSV) ~

Dear Friends,

Next week the General Assembly begins meeting, with its committees gathering first virtually, beginning June 25, and then with the whole assembly gathering in-person from June 29 to July 4. The General Assembly is (mostly) made up of commissioners and advisory delegates sent from presbyteries like ours, who gather once every two years to discern the will of Christ for the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Book of Order describes the General Assembly as “the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and councils, to the end that the whole church becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness” (G-3.0501). I have participated in a few General Assembly meetings over the years, and I have been grateful to see how Presbyterians have faithfully lived up to this calling. One committee meeting I observed had nearly gone off the rails, when one of the members asked everyone to pause for prayer, remember the covenant they had made with one another, and begin their work again. By letting go, for a moment, of doing the work they had been assigned, and instead focusing on being a covenant community rooted in God’s love, they had restored a solid foundation to build on.

The Book of Order reminds us that its elaborate system of rules, structures, and procedures for governing the church is “not designed to work without trust and love” (G-1.0102). Being governed by our church’s polity, therefore, requires first and foremost that we attend to our relationships, which are the foundation of everything else.

I invite your prayers for this year’s General Assembly, and especially the commissioners and Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) that you have chosen to represent us: Rev. Dr. Chris Deacon, Elder Lou Durden (Northminster), Elder Mark Eakin (Warner Memorial), Ms. Jackie Hager (Lewinsville), Elder Jesy Littlejohn (Oaklands), Rev. Dean McDonald, and Rev. Bernice Parker-Jones—that God would keep them safe as they travel, and that they would both experience and bear witness to God’s love in Jesus Christ as they carry out their governing responsibilities.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. David A. Baer
Stated Clerk