



*For everything there is a season
and a time for every matter under heaven.*

— Ecclesiastes 3:1, NRSVUE -

Dear Friends,

As the only member of my family *not* in an official relationship with the public schools, I am nonetheless keenly aware of the impending end of summer vacation, as our rhythms begin to shift toward new fall routines. I hope your own summer season has brought time for rest, travel, or visits with friends and family, and I wanted to offer a preview of what is coming in our presbytery this fall.

We will gather for an **in-person stated meeting of the presbytery on September 23** at National Presbyterian Church. Please remember that while this meeting will be live-streamed, members of the presbytery and session commissioners will be able to participate in deliberations and exercise the privileges of voice and vote *only* if they are physically present. At this stated meeting we will:

- worship God together, hearing the proclamation of the Word by our outgoing Moderator, Elder Lou Durden, partaking in the Lord's Supper, and installing our new Moderator (Elder Jesy Littlejohn) and Vice Moderator (Rev. Rachel Vaagenes);
- commission one or more ruling elders to pastoral service; and
- welcome new members of our community and reconnect with old friends.

In addition, I will be offering an **orientation for new commissioners** prior to the business meeting. Please stay tuned for more information about this gathering, which will bring you up to speed on the people and committees we see front-and-center at our meetings (COM, ACCP, LC—what's all that about?), and how to serve as an effective commissioner before, during, and after the meeting.

I also wanted to draw your attention to the **new Book of Order (2025-2027)**, which took effect on July 4. The interactive digital edition is available at <https://pcusa.org/resource/book-order-2025-2027-interactive-version>, and the softcover print edition can be ordered from the [PCUSA Store](#). All of the amendments proposed by last year's General Assembly received affirmative votes from a majority of the presbyteries in the PCUSA, and they have therefore been adopted. The new text is highlighted in **boldface** in both digital and print editions. While all the amendments may still be found in the [booklet released last fall](#), the following changes may be of particular interest to our congregations:

- The session's examination of officer candidates (i.e. newly elected elders and deacons) must now address "the Historic Principles of Church Order (F-3.01) and ... the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403" (new text of G-2.0104b). There are no mandated questions or expected answers, and it remains the responsibility of the session to evaluate each candidate individually, guided by the Scriptures and the confessions, but these topics must be included. A task force of the presbytery's Commission on Ministry is revising our own examination procedure for ministers, and will also prepare some guidelines for sessions.

- Temporary pastoral relationships (e.g. Interim Pastor, Stated Supply) may be approved for up to thirty-six months at a time, rather than twelve (G-2.0504b). Our pastors and congregations in long-term stated supply relationships may appreciate this added flexibility.
- Nondisclosure agreements are now prohibited when temporary or installed pastoral relationships end (G-2.0504b, G-2.0901). Discussion of this amendment at the General Assembly centered on the perception that such agreements may be coercive, and that the church as a whole would be better served by openness and transparency.
- Protection policies will need to be revised to include “adults with vulnerabilities,” in addition to children and youth (G-3.0106).

May God bless what remains of summer and any transitions that the fall may bring!

Grace and Peace,
Rev. David Baer, Stated Clerk