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STONY POINT CHURCH
PRAISE & PRAYER



Dear Church Family,

Every year our denomination (the Presbyterian Church in America) meets to discuss the national business of the church. This year we are blessed to have the General Assembly of the PCA in Richmond. It will take place from Tuesday to Friday, June 11-14, at the Richmond Convention Center. You, as a member of or regular attender at a PCA church, are warmly invited to attend the General Assembly and go to its meetings.

What is a General Assembly and how does it fit into the Presbyterian form of church government? Our brand of Presbyterianism follows a grass-roots, from-the-bottom-upwards, structure of church government. Our local church is led by a group of elders called the Session. Our Session sends delegates three times a year to a regional gathering of the elders in our Presbytery (the James River Presbytery). Our Presbytery sends official delegates to the annual General Assembly. All of our ministers [known officially as Teaching Elders] have the right to attend and vote, as do a number of our local church elders [known officially as Ruling Elders].

What does the General Assembly discuss and how does this differ from what a local church or a Presbytery will discuss? The General Assembly, because we are a grass-roots organization, will discuss matters which have arisen at a local level in the Presbyteries, and have been proposed for discussion at the national level. Some of these proposed 'overtures' are chosen for their relevance for the whole denomination, and the General Assembly spends its time discussing these. These issues might include proposed

amendments to our Book of Church Order or reactions to a report on some aspect of theology or national cultural relevance (climate change or sexuality). The Assembly does involve a lot of people talking, but it is also the occasion for excellent and very large gatherings of people worshiping together. Well-known preachers preach and very helpful speakers speak to issues of practical concern in break-out seminars. The whole thing is supported with robust child care, places to sit down and meet over coffee, and book tables; basically, what you would expect at a denomination's national convention: [Home - General Assembly \(pcaga.org\)](#).

The elders and I encourage you to take advantage of this unusual opportunity you have to go to a General Assembly and see what makes our denomination tick. Please be in prayer for the final stages of its organization and give particular thanks for Lori Schantz who is organizing the nursery for the Assembly. There are also opportunities for you to get involved and serve at the Assembly: [GA 2024 Host Committee | James River Presbytery \(jrp-pca.org\)](#).

Our part of the global Church of Jesus Christ is far from perfect and can and should be learning from other parts of the Church, but it has many strengths and I believe you will see those in action at our General Assembly.

Every blessing,
Steve Constable



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