

Report on the 223<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly (2018)  
St. Louis, Missouri

A new wind is blowing in the PC(USA), I believe, and it can be experienced in a variety of ways. We are learning more about how to talk with each other, even in times of disagreement. While I did not agree with all decisions made by the GA this year (I never do, frankly), I could sense a deep conviction for the welfare of the church and its members, the creation and the world in which we live.

Some exciting things are happening- the face of the church is changing – we are seeing more diversity. Not just in race, although that continues to grow- in addition to an African American Stated Clerk, we now have an African American Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency and an African American seminary president (Louisville). One of our co-moderators is a Puerto Rican American. We are seeing a new generation of leaders emerging (I remember when I was the NEW Generation of Leaders! Yikes!). This generation is moving us to be the church and engage with the world in all kinds of ways and at all levels of the church. We are seeing more diversity in gender identity and sexual orientation and are enriched by the gifts and graces they bring to the table.

I served (as Vice Moderator) on the “Alphabet Committee”- for the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP), the Presbyterian Foundation (PF), the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation (PPC) and the Board of Pensions (BoP). Some good things coming from these groups include:

- More concern for small churches and new pastors- The Board of Pensions offers Pathways to Renewal – a dues reduction program for churches or ministry initiatives under 150 members who call a new pastor under the age of 40
- Living By the Gospel- A Guide to Structuring Terms of Call- also from the Board of Pensions address the gender gap in wages
- The Board also offers small sabbatical grants for small church pastors
- The Presbyterian Foundation is providing opportunities to invest in positive ways in Israel and Palestine.
- The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation has started a children’s book publishing line called Flyaway Books – already have a number of titles out and more in the next months.
- The Publishing Corporation has put out a new confirmation curriculum focused on the questions posed to confirmands and a new more interactive Sunday School curriculum
- They are also starting to not only translate from English to Korean and Spanish (which they have been doing) but now they will be offering resources that are translated from Spanish and Korean into English, giving the Church the opportunity to hear the voices of these brothers and sisters in Christ!

I thank the Presbytery for the opportunity to serve you as one of your commissioners. It was a privilege to do so. If you have questions about any of the above items or other actions of the Assembly, feel free to be in touch. As able, I would also be glad to come to local congregations to talk as well.

Serving Christ with you,  
Kathy Barlow Westmoreland  
Minister Commissioner, Rio Rancho Presbyterian Church