



Pastor's Pen

Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. –Romans 15:7

Dear Bethel Church family and friends,

I wish you grace and peace this beautiful morning and pray that you have had a refreshing summer break. Unfortunately, the summer recess is quickly drawing to a close for many of our families. And that means a return to our regular church schedule starting on Sunday, August 2, when we kick off the fall with a communion service followed by a fellowship meal. Please make plans to be here so we can get caught up with everyone.

I was blessed to serve as one of your three delegates at the 53rd PCA General Assembly (hereafter, GA) in historic Louisville, KY, at the end of June. When you see them, please thank Chris Wallace and Ross Love for their faithful service to our congregation and denomination. With almost 2,500 commissioners, this was the PCA's second-largest assembly. Indeed, we enjoyed the highest RE registration (almost 34%) in several decades. Sadly, this attendance spike was driven by a docket full of overtures seeking to change the fundamental nature of our denomination. As one commentator noted, *"progressives and feminists in the PCA are showing an increasing discomfort and sending up overtures attempting to restore their lost latitude. Their efforts are not succeeding."*

After a powerful worship service attended by more than six thousand people, the Assembly opened by electing RE Mel Duncan of Calvary Presbytery as our Moderator. With his election to this post, the Duncan family became the second to have two brothers serve as PCA GA Moderators (the other is the Belz family, Mark and Joel). As moderator, RE Duncan repeatedly demonstrated his good humor, quick wit, and a good understanding of the rules of order to keep the Assembly from getting overwhelmed with frustration by "Clickergate."

At the unanimous recommendation of the Administration Committee, the Assembly elected TE Fred Greco from Metro Houston to serve as the 6th PCA Stated Clerk. Since TE Greco assumes his new role following the close of the 53rd GA, RE John Bise, the Provisional Stated Clerk, presented the Clerk's Report to the Assembly. The results for 2025 were encouraging. By God's grace, our denomination continued to grow. We had 5,526 professions of faith by children, 5,713 professions by adults, and 3,225 adult baptisms. Praise the Lord! Let us continue to pray that God would make the PCA faithful stewards of the unique blessings which the Lord has entrusted to us, which cannot be explained or deserved.

The 52nd General Assembly sent thirteen proposed amendments to the BCO to the Presbyteries for

ratification. Of these, ten received the required approval from two-thirds of the 87 Presbyteries. Of those ten, nine BCO amendments were approved by the Assembly. The BCO will be updated accordingly.

The PCA currently has two Ad-interim Study Committees commissioned during the 52nd General Assembly that are working on reports. They are the committee on the Directory for Public Worship and the committee on Christian Nationalism. Both committees gave partial reports to the Assembly, which showcased their efforts so far, and requested one more year to complete their assignments. These requests were granted, so both will report to the 54th GA next June in Milwaukee, WI. In the meantime, I've already forwarded you the pastoral letter and statement of affirmations and denials from the Christian Nationalism committee as recommended by the Assembly.

Unfortunately, because of the continued deficit in operating the General Assembly, the commissioners passed a motion to raise the GA registration fee for both TEs and REs to \$650.00 beginning in 2027.

The PCA declared the Danvers Statement (1987) to be biblically faithful and commended it for study to our Presbyteries and congregations as well as for the PCA Bookstore's distribution. This statement affirms historic, biblical roles for men and women in the church and home.

After hearing reports about the work being done by each of the Standing Committees, the Assembly took up the task of dealing with the 90 overtures submitted by individuals, sessions, and Presbyteries to make changes to our constitution, rules of assembly operation, or general operations. The committee addressed more than 60 of the 90 overtures. The others were referred back to the respective senders for further consideration and possible resubmission. The biggest result was that Overture 37 from Pacific Presbytery to *"amend BCO 9-3 to allow women to serve as ordained deacons"* was overwhelmingly rejected by the commissioners. All other overtures seeking similar laxity in our standards for serving in ordained office were answered in reference to this decision. All of the overtures that passed, which change to the constitution, will be voted on by the Presbyteries this year, and if approved by two-thirds, they will return to the 2027 GA for final voting.

With the Committee of Thanks report presented, the 53rd General Assembly was adjourned following the singing of Psalm 133 and the apostolic benediction. The 54th General Assembly will take place in Milwaukee, WI, June 14-18, 2027.

That's it for this year. If you have any questions or would like additional details, please let me know.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Chris

this week

Sunday's sermon:

Feast of Booths

Nehemiah 8:13-18

events

Young Men's Discipleship Group
7/26 at 5:30 pm

Young Ladies' Discipleship Group
7/26 at TBD

Youth Pool Party
7/26 at 6:00 pm

GriefShare
7/28 at 6:30 pm

Senior Citizens Lunch
7/29 at 12:00 pm

volunteer schedule

Infant Nursery
Harper Harvell
& Lee Coble

Toddler Nursery
Jennifer Forrest &
Lindsay Hoffman

Worship Training
Abby Chidester &
Kristine DeRousse