



## Summary of the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the PCA

June 23-26, 2025 in Chattanooga, TN

by RE Tim Anderson

### Overall

This year's Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) General Assembly (GA) was good. We had reports from all the permanent committees and agencies. We reviewed the actions taken by the presbyteries and ruled on the overtures brought to the Assembly for consideration and possible actions. Even though there were numerous things that we debated, those debates were handled with grace and respect. I walked away with a sense of unity among the members of the Assembly around Biblical fidelity. All that was very encouraging.

Just prior to the Assembly the stated clerk of the PCA, Dr Bryan Chappell, stepped down in the midst of the controversy over comments made during an interview earlier in the year. The Administrative Committee appointed an interim stated clerk, RE John Bise, until they can find a new one and he can be approved by next year's Assembly.

You can find an excellent full recap in byFaith (the PCA online magazine) here:

<https://byfaithonline.com/general-assembly-full-recap/>

Here is my summary of the major discussions and actions I think would be of interest:

### Major Discussions

#### Mission to North America (MNA)

There was a large amount of discussion about MNA. MNA is a permanent committee of the PCA that is responsible for church planting and vitalization (i.e. establishing new churches and helping keep existing churches intact and growing). There were concerns over a large budget shortfall, things posted to their website, and some leadership decisions. All of these issues were discussed at length. The staff and permanent committee provided a plan this year to change the course of MNA which the assembly accepted.

#### Administration and distribution of the Lord's Supper

There was a long discussion about the distribution of the elements of the Lord's Supper (who should be giving them to the congregants) and whether or not the BCO should be more specific regarding the distribution. In the end, it was decided to leave things for now as they are without more specifics.

#### Structure of the Administration Committee



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The current structure of the Administrative Committee (AC) was debated at length. There was a recommendation to make a significant change. In the end, it was decided to not make a change and allow for refinement.

### Major Actions

#### Committee on the Directory of Public Worship

Our current Directory of Worship is contained in the Book of Church Order (BCO). It is part 3 and consists of chapters 47-63. Even though it is part of the BCO which is part of our constitution as the PCA, part 3 does not have constitutional authority, this was established by the 3<sup>rd</sup> GA of the PCA. The only exception to that right now are chapters 56 (Baptism), 57 (membership), and 58 (the Lord's Supper) as well as section 59-3 (marriage – one man, one woman). Those parts were given constitutional authority by later GA's. We are the only denomination in NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council) that does not have a Directory of Public Worship that is constitutional. The assembly directed the formation of an Ad Interim Committee to revise the Directory of Worship for authoritative use.

#### Study Committee on Christian Nationalism

There are a lot of churches in the PCA that are being impacted by the Christian Nationalist movement. It is affecting many young men coming under care or for ordination. The assembly decided to form an Ad Interim Study Committee to look at Christian Nationalism (what is it, what beliefs it holds, and how Biblical are those views) and report back to the Assembly to help elders shepherd well in light of this issue.

#### Statement on Christian Citizenship

In addition to the study committee on Christian Nationalism, the Assembly agreed that there was a benefit to making a pastoral statement condemning very serious errors that are known parts of that movement. Both the ARP and RPCNA (both fellow members of NAPARC) made the same statement this year. Here is the statement made by our Assembly:

*That the 52nd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America does hereby join with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (221st General Synod) and with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (193rd Synod) in condemning without distinction any theological or political teaching which posits a superiority of race or ethnic identity born of immutable human characteristics, and does call to repentance any who would promote or associate themselves with such teaching, either by commission or omission.*