

## Presbytery of Baltimore named online host for the 224th General Assembly

Committee on the Office of the General Assembly sets plans for online events



 May 8, 2020  Rick Jones | Office of the General Assembly

The 224<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may not be held in Baltimore this year, but the city and its Presbyterian leaders are still hosting. In its weekly Zoom call, the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) recognized the Presbytery of Baltimore for its work in preparation for the event.

“We want to offer our deep thanks for the work you’ve been doing the last three years and express our grief that the work has taken on a completely different look for you,” said COGA Moderator Barbara Gaddis. “We are very thankful for your work and disappointed at the same time.”

Julia Henderson, interim director of assembly operations for OGA, said her team has been working with the presbytery to look at how they could host an online assembly.

“There are some significant pieces to this, and it begins with the General Assembly seal and Baltimore will remain in the seal,” she said. “We are creating a special page on the website to host presbytery-related items. It will also highlight opportunities for congregations to attend Baltimore-area churches virtually on the Sunday of General Assembly. That’s an accommodation we can make.”

erson said the planning committee has done a great job shifting gears from an onsite assembly to online.

“What a generous spirit they have. They’ve worked so hard to be host and do something in Baltimore and be willing to shift everything and continue on,” she said. “I’m impressed with their resiliency and desire to move forward as the first presbytery to host an online assembly.”

General Presbyter Jackie Taylor spoke to the group saying it’s been a great opportunity, regardless of the outcome.

“Sometimes it’s been like herding cats and other times it’s meant being a visionary for General Assembly hosting,” she said. “Since we don’t know how long COVID-19 will keep us separated, this is an opportunity for the church to be the PC(USA) in a new normal. I’m hoping we can support all of the new ways that we’re being the body of Christ in this way and hopefully, we won’t lose that.”

The Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PC(USA), says the Presbytery of Baltimore is on the pinnacle of history once again with the church. He referred to the work of Eugene Carson Blake in the city and the movement that led to the March on Washington in 1963.

“We are finding new ways to have General Assembly and new possibilities for the future as well as a creative moment for us to see what God has placed before us,” he said. “This will be the Baltimore Assembly and that says a lot about the history of transition and change as compared to the last time we met there.”

COGA also approved a recommendation from OGA staff related to the exhibitors who were scheduled to be present in Baltimore. The proposal calls for OGA staff to provide a listing of exhibitors, including brief descriptions of their work and a link to their website or other materials to commissioners and other participants.

COGA also approved a comment from COGA members and OGA staff on Overture OVT-006 regarding the creation of a mid council commission. The comment offers an alternate path for passage of the item that provides COGA with limited commission powers to deal with mid council boundary issues before the 225th General Assembly, rather than forming a separate commission to handle those issues.

COGA has been meeting weekly to consider critical and core business to recommend to the General Assembly. Two weeks ago, the group voted for an abbreviated online assembly to take place over three days: June 19, 26, and 27.

Nelson told the group the decisions made about the assembly will impact other denominations in how they conduct their conferences and meetings in the future.

“The internal transformation this institution has had to make, the 21<sup>st</sup> century demands it,” he said. “We’ve been chosen for such a time as this. I think it was spiritual, not happenstance. It was the selection God has made and a calling to faith and discipleship.”



You may freely reuse and distribute this article in its entirety for non-commercial purposes in any medium. Please include author attribution, photography credits, and a link to the original article. This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](#).

---

## Related Stories





September 28, 2026

**Mike Ferguson**

Walking wisely in these days

[READ MORE ►](#)



September 28, 2026

**Layton Williams Berkes**

PC(USA) Co-Moderators offer church-wide online series on politics and public witness

[READ MORE ►](#)

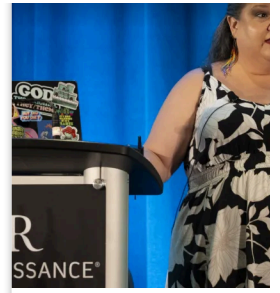


September 28, 2026

**Mike Ferguson**

For World Communion Sunday, a hymn assures that 'we're global, connected, and shape...

[READ MORE ►](#)



September 28, 2026

**Nancy Crowe for the**

At Stewardship Kaleidoscope, the 'TikTok Pastor' talks about trust and to

[READ MORE ►](#)

