



Reflections on the early church

To the pastors and congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),

Grace and peace to you in the name of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

We are in Eastertide, that most glorious time of the liturgical year when we celebrate God's raising of Jesus from the dead. What an amazing story Mary Magdalene shared with the disciples that first Easter morning: "I have seen the Lord" (John 20:18).

Later, in Acts, the apostle Peter says to the crowd, "This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses" (2:32). And with that, the early church took root and spread like wildfire.

Life among the believers in the early church must have been something to behold. The goodwill they garnered from all! The generosity they showed, apparently both beyond and within their community of faith! It was certainly the work of the Spirit—through more than a little labor on the part of those early believers.

As we move ever closer to the convening of the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) from June 30–July 7, we find ourselves reflecting on that first community of faith. What might be carried over from first-century Jerusalem to this summer in Pittsburgh? Two areas come to mind:

Effective leadership – Moderators and vice moderators for GA committees have been **named**. These are proven leaders across the church, who are already in prayerful preparation for their roles in Pittsburgh.

Glad and generous hearts – Throughout the work of the assembly will be plentiful opportunities for worship and fellowship. By week's end, we trust that the light and wind of the Holy Spirit will have woven all gathered into a deeper community of faith.

Please join us in praying for the leaders and the thousands of Presbyterians who will be

attending GA. Those unable to be in Pittsburgh can [access all GA business online](#) through PC-biz and watch live streaming of plenary sessions.

In and through all, we pray for “a new openness to the sovereign activity of God in the Church and in the world, to a more radical obedience to Christ, and to a more joyous celebration in worship and work” (*Book of Order*, F-1.0404).

Faithfully yours in the journey toward Pittsburgh,

Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

Linda Valentine, Executive Director of the General Assembly Mission Council