

GROUNDING COGA'S WORK
AN OPENNESS TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
F-1.04

Continuity and Change (E)

The church seeks "not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, so we may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2)

- Looking back to remember God's faithfulness and looking forward to where Christ is calling
- No longer the church of 3 years ago, much less decades.
- The Church is called to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of its life. (F-1.0301)

Stated Clerk's Vision:

The Stated Clerk has called the PC(USA) to live into the fullness of being the church in the 21st century. This means identifying those values integral to our identity, as well as embracing creativity and openness in order to be more fully inclusive, flexible, and faithful.

As the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continues moving through the first few decades of the 21st century, like all church leaders, the members of COGA and the staff of OGA have been increasingly aware of the need for change. In terms of practices and meetings of the General Assembly, the areas of concern that rise to the top include fiscal responsibility, earth stewardship, the reality of declining membership, technological advances, a fresh passion for long standing values such as equity, inclusion, and accessibility, and reclaiming the meaning of the Church.

Ecumenicity (D)

"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:37-38)

- Our system of government, established in light of Scripture, is not regarded as essential for the existence of the church nor required of all Christians.
- We are part of something much bigger than ourselves and we do not do this work alone

Stated Clerk's Vision:

We are a church that aspires to connect and collaborate more than simply through a biannual meeting : cultivating two year General Assembly Commissioner commitment, impacting the surrounding community in a lasting way beyond the economic impact of a large gathering, incubating innovative and creative ministries

Unity in Diversity (E)

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, you are Abraham’s offspring, he is according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:27-29)

- Commitment to DEI in all our work (choice points and prime equity)
- Though our responsibility as elected members is to the work of the Office of General Assembly, we are committed to support and encourage the whole church.
- We are committed to remaining engaged, despite differences and even disagreements, confident that the Holy Spirit will lead us as one body.
- We will not shy away from difficult conversations.

Stated Clerk’s Vision:

We are a church that aspires to empower all voices and privileges none : seeking consensus whenever possible while providing space for mutual discernment and practice, exploring revisions to the Book of Order and Standing Rules, supporting minority participation in every way from technical support to leadership development

We are a church that sparks radical reconciliation : acknowledging our past, seeking community partners across the denomination, offering easily accessible and effective resources for all Presbyterians especially Teaching and Ruling Elders

Openness (D)

“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” (Isaiah 43:19)

- A commitment to being open to God’s sovereign activity in the church and the world
- A commitment to the fullness of who God may be calling to serve
- A commitment to seeing the possibilities and challenges of how the institution can serve God’s activities in the world
- A commitment to being open to the continuing reformation of the church.

Stated Clerk’s Vision:

We are a church that values relationship building : among commissioners, within committees, in communities throughout the denomination, and with ecumenical and interfaith partners

We are a church that upholds a faithful theology and practice of stewardship : care of the earth/sustainable gatherings, health and safety of all in light of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, financial realities while providing space and freeing funds for innovative ministry rather than convention-style gatherings, and enlivening an expansive public theology that speaks to the world with a distinctive Reformed-Presbyterian voice

We are a church that better serves the 21 st century PC(USA): agile decision making, leaner and more flexible national structure that clarifies institutional leadership and roles, more technically and interactively proficient, clear, current, and compelling communications to the denomination and throughout the world.