

It is my great honor to commend the Rev. Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer for the office of Co-Moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

I have known and worked with Dr. Schondelmeyer for just under a decade as his Pastoral Counselor and Professional Consultant. During that time, my respect for Kris has deepened as I have walked with him through his continued recovery from the abuse he endured in his youth from a Presbyterian clergyman entrusted with the care of minors at a national PC(USA) youth conference. From the beginning, Kris has placed a high value on his own well-being as an essential dimension of his professional responsibilities as a pastor. Kris has used his experience of abuse with courage and integrity to help the PC(USA) become a safer church for children and youth, serving in prominent positions of the General Assembly to advance this calling.

Over time, our work has remained grounded in what has always guided him most deeply: his ongoing development and leadership as a pastor. His doctoral project centered on the process of peacemaking, in which he developed a highly effective program to help individuals and communities engage in compassion-based civil discourse, even in contexts where people are experiencing strained and polarized relationships. He will bring to the denomination a wealth of experience and deep insight in areas that are urgently needed for the church's continued growth and faithful witness.

I have watched Kris grow in grace and leadership as he has served both as a solo pastor and now as the pastor/head-of-staff of a multi-staff congregation, and I have been deeply impressed by the skill, wisdom, and steadiness he brings to every setting of ministry. I have also listened as he thoughtfully reflected on the opportunities and responsibilities that have shaped his service as Moderator of the Presbytery of East Iowa. In that capacity, he has served with faithfulness and creativity, offering innovative ideas that have strengthened the ministry of that ecclesiastical body.

I believe that Kris has a profound sense of call—not only to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament and to service across the church, but uniquely to this Spirit-led call to serve the denomination as Co-Moderator. I am confident that Kris has opened himself to God's call out of deep love for the PC(USA) and a sincere commitment to serve the church at this crucial moment in its history. He will bring exceptional leadership, a lifelong devotion to peacemaking, and an impressive mastery of the Book of Order to this role. He and his Co-Moderator nominee, Marta Pumroy-Cordero, will offer the denomination personal and professional experiences that will serve as a beacon of hope in our troubled and polarized times.

Rev. Dr. David Dickey
PC(USA) Pastor, Pastoral Counselor