

January 2026

Dear Friends,

This letter is to express my strongest support for the Rev. Marta Pumroy-Cordero, border coordinator of the Tres Rios Border Foundation, who is standing for co-moderator of the General Assembly PCUSA, alongside the Rev. Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Davenport, IA.

Marta was a high school senior when I was called to serve as the pastor of her home church in Marion, IA, over 30 years ago. Since that time, it has been a great joy to watch the way the Spirit of God has been at work in her life transforming her into the wise and capable church leader she is today. At the beginning, she went through some very difficult challenges that for many would have been too much to bear. But Marta's faith brought her through and created a strength and resolve within her that has become the courage and compassion she has needed to serve God in her special way.

For many years, Marta was a very successful Spanish teacher in the Cedar Rapids area. Her students loved her warm-hearted enthusiasm and delight in their progress. But her avocation was the life and ministry of our congregation. Our mission statement was "Internally nurturing, Externally serving" and Marta was the epitome of those words. Within the walls of the church, she played key roles in our Christian Education programs, teaching and for a few years as our youth coordinator. She served on our session and various committees, delighting in leading worship whenever possible. Externally, out beyond our walls, Marta became very involved in a number of social justice and equality issues, and became key in helping the congregation serve those who need the light of God's love the most.

Watching the enthusiasm Marta had within her and doing all I could be an encouragement, I was absolutely thrilled when she began to sense the Spirit's call to full-time ministry. After her daughter left for college, Marta took the opportunity to explore this path further and was accepted at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. I cannot describe the pride I felt to be a part of Marta's ordination service on September 22, 2024. Since then the work she has been doing in El Paso, has been heroic and critical in these difficult times.

There is absolutely no question that Marta Pumroy-Cordero would make an outstanding co-moderator of the General Assembly PCUSA. She is wise, skilled, strong, loving and brave. Our denomination would be richly blessed by her leadership.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Howard B. Chapman
Honorable Retired