

Greetings, To Whom This May Concern,

I am writing this recommendation on behalf of the Reverend Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer and the faith journey I have witnessed—sometimes alongside Kris, and other times from afar—as I have observed his growth and maturing Christian faith, as well as his intentional choice to serve within the PC(USA) denomination.

I first recall Kris as a Triennium delegate, partnered with the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy, while he himself was connected with Missouri Union Presbytery. Later, after Kris spent a summer season working at Montreat in the media department, he discovered a strong interest in outdoor and conference ministry.

Realizing that Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery operated a summer camp program at Mound Ridge, and knowing several of us within the presbytery, Kris reached out—feeling both called and safe—to request an application for a summer camp counselor position. That opportunity led him to work with a wide variety of personalities and age groups, including intergenerational camp and family camp settings. Along the way, he learned many practical aspects of ministry—everything from pastoral care to plunging a toilet alongside Don, the maintenance man (many things pastors must do, but didn't learn in seminary 😊).

Kris showed up energetic, pleasant, and ready to begin. He brought strong technological skills to the summer program, along with creative, conference-style ideas, and was allowed to “run with it.” He was soon affectionately dubbed the “techno preacher.”

Equally important, Kris brought a deep love for sharing the message of the morning theme with scripture and during worship gathering time. You could see his passion for ministering to the campers, sharing the gospel with campers and staff in a very natural and comfortable way. Campers and staff enjoyed Kris; and they LISTENED to his messages and his music when he played his guitar.

Kris also had a positive influence on others' understanding of the PC(USA), particularly in relation to our style of governance we hold true, and the role of the confessions. He shared with the campers and staff his passion to become a Minister of Word and Sacrament.

As Executive Director, I felt it was my calling to give Kris space during his time at camp to explore and test his ideas in a trusting and supportive environment. Later, I was asked to serve as a reference when Kris accepted a position as Youth Director at First United Presbyterian Church in Belleville, Illinois, where he served throughout much of his seminary education at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis.

Over the years, I have watched Kris respond faithfully to calls to different congregations. I have witnessed him marry his wonderful wife and grow his family, all while continuing to deepen his sense of vocation. I am also aware of his strong commitment to creating safe and sacred spaces for worship—both for congregants and for ministers—and of his service to the wider church through committee work, sharing his story, and modeling professionalism. His leadership has consistently sought to create a church where people can worship without fear.

I believe the Reverend Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer would be an excellent Co-Moderator. He brings a deep understanding of who we are as the PC(USA), a clear grasp of what it means to live faithfully as a Christian, and a compelling faith story rooted in grace, peace, and love—qualities modeled for us by our living Lord.

I am confident that Rev. Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer will serve beyond the expectations of the office, honoring his oath with integrity and embodying the guiding principles of leadership in our church: energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. He brings strong people-management skills, deep compassion, spiritual maturity, and a profound faith that will serve the denomination well.

Christy Foster
Executive Director
Mound Ridge Retreat and Mission Center