

November 24, 2025

Grace and peace to you.

I write with deep joy and unwavering conviction to endorse Rev. Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer as a candidate for Co-Moderator of the 227th General Assembly.

I first met Kris in 2020 when he participated in an antiracism training where I served as his coach. From the very beginning, Kris brought humility, curiosity, and courageous self-reflection to the work. Even when conversations pressed into difficult truths, Kris stayed present. Even when the work demanded vulnerability, he leaned into transformation rather than retreat. Over time, that initial encounter grew into a trusted colleagueship grounded in a shared commitment to justice, healing, and liberative leadership within our Church.

Kris leads with a posture of compassionate justice—justice that is embodied, relational, and rooted in honoring the image of God in every person. I have witnessed him fight for dignity and equity not as abstract values, but as daily practices that shape his ministry, his leadership, and his witness. He believes deeply that everyone at the table deserves to be met in their full humanity, and he works tirelessly to ensure that is so.

I have also watched Kris love this denomination—even when it has not always loved him back. And still he remains. He continues to preach, to pastor, to advocate, and to call the PC(USA) toward its best and most faithful self. His ministry at First Presbyterian Church of Davenport reflects his pastoral depth, his theological integrity, and his commitment to building

communities where justice and compassion are not competing values but shared commitments. I had the honor and privilege to offer his charge when he was installed a few years ago.

Kris is a leader who understands the complexities of this moment in the Church. He listens deeply. He tells the truth with clarity and grace. He honors the stories of those who have been marginalized. And he brings a steady, courageous presence to rooms where decisions about our future will be made.

For such a time as this, we need leaders who hold both love and accountability. Leaders who can imagine a Church where repair, liberation, and dignity are central to our life together. Leaders who believe we can become what the Gospel calls us to be. Kris is that kind of leader.

With gratitude and hope for the Church we are called to become, I wholeheartedly endorse Rev. Dr. Kris Schondelmeyer for Co-Moderator of the 227th General Assembly.

In faith,

Shani E. McIlwain

Elder Shani E. McIlwain
Faith Presbyterian Church
National Capital Presbytery