

Moderator and Vice Moderator issue letter on marriage amendment

Dear members and friends of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Presbyteries have been engaged in conversation, discernment, and prayer concerning the recommendations from the 221st General Assembly (2014) in the nine months since Detroit, Michigan. Today, Amendment 14F (On Amending W-4.9000 Marriage) received the required majority from the presbyteries.

The approved amendment to the *Book of Order* lifts up the sanctity of marriage and the commitment of loving couples within the church. It also allows teaching elders to exercise their pastoral discretion in officiating weddings and in doing so "... the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service."

Though we know that this amendment received the necessary majority for approval, we encourage the congregations, presbyteries, and synods of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to continue to be in conversation about marriage and family. We hope that such "up/down" voting does not mark the end, but the continuation of our desire to live in community; a partnership that requires prayer, the study of Scripture, listening to and with one another, and a dedication to partnership in the midst of our diversity of opinion.

We trust that God whose Word brought Creation into being is also the same Word that speaks to us today. With confidence, we believe that God calls the Church into living as a transformative community that embraces the call to be God's beloved community in the world.



Ruling Elder Heath K. Rada
Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014)



The Reverend Larissa Kwong Abazia
Vice Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014)