

## FROM YOUR INTERIM GENERAL PRESBYTER

“For the times they are a’ changin’!” We know Bob Dylan’s words are true. We see and experience this in our world and nation, in our society and in our culture, in our families and relationships, and in certainly in our presidential politics. We see change in our churches, which I need not detail for any of you here, and we see change in our presbyteries.

In recent months, I have learned some interesting facts about the presbyteries in the PCUSA. At the end of the upcoming General Assembly, we will have 170 presbyteries. In the past three years, approximately 100 presbyteries have had a change in the General or Executive Presbyter position. In 21 of those changes, the presbytery eliminated the position altogether; there are now almost 70 of the 170 presbyteries that do not have that position any longer. This is primarily due to money, stemming from decreasing congregations, members and mission money. Of those 100 or so presbyteries, there are some 37 titles for what we in HRP call a “General Presbyter.”

HRP is blessed with resources that most presbyteries can only dream about. Yet those resources are not unlimited and must be utilized well. This time of transition is a blessing as you have the opportunity to dream and determine how best to use these amazing resources to equip HRP and its congregations for the work of ministry in these changin’ times.

Your Transition Team is well aware of all this and they are aware that these times and transitions bring anxiety. The process they are developing to involve all of you to determine HRP’s goals and the focus its resources can be done fast or it can be done well. Your Transition Team and I are committed to doing it well. Given the times of change in which we live and the trends we see in the church, particularly in presbyteries and more particularly in HPR, we know the future of HRP work and witness is at stake.

God bless. Gavin