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To: Commissioners, Presbyters, Stated Clerks, Synod Related Groups, Staff, Guests and Friends

From: Warren J. Lesane, Jr., Executive and Stated Clerk

Ref: Welcome to the 242nd Synod Assembly

Date: August 16, 2018

Earlier today, the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin, went home to be with the Lord. Just days ago, the Celebration of Life for the Rev. Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon was held in Charlotte. Cannon's news came shortly after the Celebration of Life for the Rev. Eddie Deas III who served the synod in multiple positions and was pastor of Third Street PC, Gastonia NC. These are sobering times that we live, but scripture reminds us that whether we live or whether we die, we belong to God. So we celebrate life!

As these gifted Children of God impacted our lives, it urges the synod to be more focused on its impact. How will the synod increase making a difference to its presbyteries and congregations across the region and throughout the PCUSA? You are invited to join the discussion and discernment. The 242nd Synod Assembly meets in Richmond VA September 10-11, 2018. Join us for worship, fellowship, tough conversations and celebration from whence God has brought it!

Moderator Richard Claterbaugh is continuing the Ezekiel 37:1-6 theme. Major surgery next week will prevent Richard from being present so Vice Moderator Susanne Taylor will guide us flawlessly through the docket as Richard recuperates. Prepare to engage in generative discussions on Race and Reconciliation, The Next Generation Initiative and Reclaiming the Name of Jesus. Our discussion and interaction will mirror topics engaged during the 223rd General Assembly of the PCUSA. Business will include the State of the Synod, a rationale for full-time reinstatement of the Executive and Stated Clerk position and funding planning. A number of policies will be presented for amendment and the 2019 Operating Budget will be presented for adoption.

The Synod is reaping investments from four years of intentional work. Its vision and purpose is coming into clearer focus. Commissioner Cindy Privette is offering orientation for new commissioners and all needing a refresher. She will invite you to a Zoom Orientation prior to the Assembly. Persons unable to attend the Zoom Orientation are invited to arrive the day of the Assembly by 8:30am.

Presbyters and Stated Clerks are corresponding members with voice and we hope you choose to attend. Online Registration opens August 27, 2018. Use the synod webpage www.synatlantic.org. Register ASAP, review, download and print material to bring with you. We are striving to be a reduced paper work environment so you are invited to bring your electronic devices. Wi-Fi is available for accessing the web during assembly. In addition, nearly all of the work will be projected on a large screen for viewing.

Let us know how we might assist you in preparing for the Assembly that meets at Ginter Park PC, 3601 Seminary Drive, Richmond VA 23227. We plan **to pause and participate via live stream** in the Memorial Service for Dr. Katie Cannon on Monday at 11:00am from Union Presbyterian Seminary.

Peace, blessings and safe travels!