



*Youth Advisory Delegates*

**manual**



# manual

**218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2008)**

**June 21–28, 2008**

**San Jose, California**

This manual will be updated every two years prior to the General Assembly. It will then be posted on the General Assembly website so that it is available for YADs who need access to this information as well as for those connected with YADs (parents, youth workers, educators, presbytery staff, pastors, etc.) who would like to gain a greater understanding of the YAD program.

## Welcome!

Congratulations on your election as an advisory delegate to the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

This gathering holds the promise of being an exciting and important event in the life of our church. Your participation is highly valued and I look forward to meeting you in San Jose, California.

As the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, I have the overall responsibility for the arrangements for the General Assembly meeting. Staff of the Office of the General Assembly, (the OGA), assisted by volunteers from across the church, are involved in planning for the upcoming activities in San Jose. Our primary goal in all these arrangements is to enable commissioners and advisory delegates to carry out their responsibilities in the highest governing body of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Staff from the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of Ministries with Youth has collaborated in developing this manual for Youth Advisory Delegates. It is intended to help you to understand your role, and to assist you as you prepare for the assembly.

This manual will answer some practical questions that you may have about preparing for the assembly, as well as providing more substantive information about the General Assembly and what you can expect during your week in San Jose.

Please read through it carefully, along with other materials that you are receiving from the Office of the General Assembly and the Office of Ministries With Youth.

If you have additional questions, there are resources to help you. Staff in the Office of the General Assembly can assist you with your advance arrangements and answer other questions; contact them at 888-728-7228, ext. 2417, or [gameetingservice@pcusa.org](mailto:gameetingservice@pcusa.org).

I have appointed four volunteer assembly assistants who will be in San Jose to help coordinate special activities for youth advisory delegates and to provide assistance on-site. You'll get to know these advisory colleagues much better in June.

I look forward to our time together in San Jose. God's blessings be with you as you prepare for your service there.

Sincerely,

Clifton Kirkpatrick  
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

## Grace and Peace to You in Jesus Christ!

You have been chosen to serve as a Youth Advisory Delegate to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Not everyone will be able to have this experience and you are among the few. Your attendance and participation will be shared with many others and will also be uniquely your own.

You will be in the midst of a group of people that is extremely diverse—from all over the country, all kinds of backgrounds, a wide range of ethnicities and cultures, different theological understandings, and varieties of opinions. Just as you are, everyone is a beloved child of a living God and all are at the General Assembly to serve.

We are looking forward to working with you.

### **YAD Advisors/Assembly Assistants:**

Mary Kohlsdorf

Joanna Jew Dunn

Joe Genau

Jorge Gonzales

### **General Assembly Council Staff:**

Gina Yeager-Buckley

Adrian McMullen

### **Office of the General Assembly Staff:**

Deb Davies

Kerry Rice

Audrey Cotten

Linda Spence

## The Role and Function of a Youth Advisory Delegate

The Standing Rules of the assembly establish that “advisory delegates are . . . selected to attend the meeting of the General Assembly in an advisory role so that the assembly may be assured of hearing and taking cognizance of their special viewpoints.” (Standing Rule B.2.a).

Advisory delegates advise commissioners in a variety of ways throughout the assembly. The General Assembly recognizes that few young people are likely to be elected as commissioners. Therefore, the category of Youth Advisory Delegate was created in 1970 so that those voices can be heard. The General Assembly is open to having young people in its midst and encourages the voice of Youth Advisory Delegates in its deliberations.

The basic role and function of a Youth Advisory Delegate (YAD) is to make the Assembly aware of issues and ideas they might not otherwise come to know.

This Manual will help you to plan for the best ways to accomplish this important task.

## The Structure of General Assembly

The General Assembly is the highest governing body of this church and is representative of the unity of synods, presbyteries, and sessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Until 2004, the General Assembly met annually. Now it meets biennially in even years, so this is only the second biennial assembly, and the first using the formula in the Book of Order (section G.13) that allows for more commissioners. There will be a total of 752 commissioners, with equal numbers of elders and ministers from each presbytery. There will also be 221 Advisory delegates.

The General Assembly is the most inclusive governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and is its court of final appeal. Decisions reached at a given assembly are final until another assembly changes them. Although policy made by one assembly cannot be altered until the next meeting, individual Presbyterians are free to accept, implement, or reject any policy statements made by a General Assembly, which directly affects them.

## The Moderator and Stated Clerk

The elected officers of the General Assembly are the Moderator and the Stated Clerk. The Moderator is either an ordained Minister of the Word and Sacrament or an ordained elder, and is elected from among the commissioners at each assembly. Information on the commissioners who will be nominated is at [www.pcusa.org/ga218](http://www.pcusa.org/ga218); the election is scheduled for Saturday evening, June 21. The Moderator presides over the assembly that elects him or her, and, when the Moderator presides at the assembly, it is to be a sign of the bond of unity, community, and mission in the life of the church. During the period between assemblies, the Moderator serves as an ambassador of the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, telling the story of the church's life and upholding the people of God through prayer. The Moderator and Vice Moderator receive no compensation for their service.

The Stated Clerk is elected to a four-year term and directs the Office of the General Assembly, working full time and receiving a salary. The Stated Clerk interprets Presbyterian law and

Assembly actions both during and between assemblies. The Stated Clerk keeps records of each General Assembly and supervises the publishing of the Minutes. She or he exercises continuing leadership in the church and oversees all arrangements for meetings of the General Assembly and has considerable authority in the areas of General Assembly planning and program, relations with other churches, and Presbyterian witness to the government and society.

Clifton Kirkpatrick is the current Stated Clerk; his term ends after the upcoming assembly. As he has chosen not to stand for another term, this assembly will elect a new Stated Clerk, whose term will begin after this assembly. Gradye Parsons is the nominee of the Stated Clerk Nomination Committee. See [www.pcusa.org/ga218](http://www.pcusa.org/ga218) for more information on this process.

## General Assembly Participants

Many people participate in the various aspects of the General Assembly. There are a number of categories that help to sort and identify the different functions that folks have. The following is a list and a brief description of the major categories or groups of folks you may encounter.

### **Commissioners**

Commissioners are clergy and elders elected by their presbyteries. They may speak on the floor of the assembly, introduce motions, vote, and they have voice and vote in the assembly committees.

### **Advisory Delegates**

There are four categories of advisory delegates. These persons are given the right to speak in Assembly meetings in order to present views not usually represented among commissioners. They may not present motions or vote in meetings of the General Assembly, but they are polled before commissioners vote on most items of business. They have voice and vote in meetings of the assembly committees. The different types of advisory delegates include:

#### **Youth Advisory Delegates**

These are persons who are members of the PC (USA), between the ages of 17–23. Each of the 173 presbyteries elects a Youth Advisory Delegate.

#### **Theological Student Advisory Delegates**

These are persons who are enrolled in and chosen from the ten PC (USA) theological institutions and from other institutions with a large population of PC (USA) students. There are 25 theological student advisory delegates.

#### **Missionary Advisory Delegates**

These are individuals who serve as personnel (paid staff) serving areas where our church is engaged in mission work. There are 8 Missionary Advisory Delegates.

#### **Ecumenical Advisory Delegates**

These are individuals appointed by the highest ecclesiastical authority of their denominations to represent them at General Assembly. They are received by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the General Assembly Council. There are 15 ecumenical advisory delegates.

## Corresponding Members

This category refers to key staff and elected members of the entities that report to the General Assembly, such as the General Assembly Council and its program divisions, the Office of the General Assembly, other G.A. agencies, and several permanent and special committees. Former assembly moderators, executives of the 16 synods, and the presidents of the 10 PC (USA) seminaries are also corresponding members. They may speak on matters related to the work of the body they represent, but they may not vote. You might be interested to know that there are two youth who are corresponding members; these are the two Presbyterian Youth Connection co-moderators. They have reserved seats among fellow corresponding members and will be observing YAD caucus, serving in the exhibit hall as well as participating in committees. The PYC Co Moderators currently serving are Casey Leach and Nancy Cooper.

## Assembly Assistants

The Stated Clerk invites approximately fifty Presbyterians to come to the assembly and carry out various functions on a volunteer basis. They assist with assembly operations, serve on the Communication Center staff, help committees run smoothly, and carry out a variety of other tasks. Four of the assembly assistants are assigned to assist YADs.

## Staff and Elected Members

This group includes people who are employed by assembly agencies, and ministers, elders and others who are elected to the assembly level councils and committees. They work as support staff and resource people at the assembly.

Most of the synods and presbyteries are represented at the assembly by one or more of their staff (in addition to their elected commissioners); some of the executives and stated clerks of these "middle governing bodies" (MGB) also assist the Office of the General Assembly in such roles as parliamentary assistants.

## Guests/Observers

Many individuals come to observe the assembly, but are not responsible for specific tasks of the General Assembly. These persons may speak only in open hearings of the Assembly committees.

## Color-Coding

The General Assembly uses color coded name badge holders to identify the different categories of GA participants. This makes it easier to control access to particular areas (such as the commissioner/advisory delegate seating area) and to identify staff who should be able to provide particular assistance.

Commissioners	BLUE
Advisory Delegates	NAVY
Staff (OGA&GAC)	RED
Elected Members (of GA committees)	GRAY
Middle Governing Body Staff (Also ecumenical reps, guests, worship)	BLACK
Observers	BROWN
Exhibitors	ORANGE
Press	GREEN

## General Assembly Committees

The assembly will consider and act on reports and recommendations from various assembly agencies, and on proposals (overtures) from the presbyteries and synods. This is a considerable volume of material, on a wide range of topics. Some of it is routine; other recommendations will require more interpretation and discussion as the assembly seeks to discern the will of Christ.

In order to manage the volume of business effectively and provide for adequate deliberation, most business of the General Assembly goes through its committees. The Stated Clerk recommends the structure of assembly committees, and the referral of business to each committee. All assembly committees will begin meeting Sunday evening, and may continue through Tuesday or until they have completed consideration of all the items of business referred to them.

Committee 01, Business Referrals, consists of moderators and vice-moderators of all of the other assembly committees. This committee meets only once prior to the assembly to refer business to the other committees. Each commissioner and delegate is assigned to one of the other committees through a random selection process outlined in the Manual of the General Assembly. You should have already received a letter with your committee assignment.

*Advisory delegates have **full voice and vote in committee***: this is the time where they can have the most impact. You should read as much of the reports and recommendations at PC-biz as possible, but be sure to pay particular attention to those that will be before your committee. Start well in advance of the assembly.

### **Assembly Committees of the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly are as follows:**

01. Business Referrals
02. Bills and Overtures
03. General Assembly Procedures
04. Church Polity
05. Church Orders and Ministry
06. Form of Government Revision
07. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
08. Mission Coordination and Budgets
09. Social Justice Issues
10. Health Issues
11. Peacemaking and International Issues
12. Church Growth and Christian Education
13. Theological Issues and Institutions
14. Review of GA Permanent Committees
15. Board of Pensions, Presbyterian Foundation and Presbyterian Publishing
16. Worship and Spiritual Renewal
17. Youth

The committees begin meeting Sunday evening, and will complete their work by Tuesday. Tuesday is a free evening in the assembly schedule, and on that evening the Committee on Local Arrangements is hosting a special YAD event. All YADS are expected to attend this event; which for the 218<sup>th</sup> assembly is an evening at the Santa Cruz Pier. The YAD event is the official dinner option for YADS as well.

The assembly docket includes free time on Wednesday morning so that commissioners and advisory delegates can begin to read the recommendations of the assembly committees at PC-biz, and prepare for the plenary meetings that will begin that afternoon.

## General Assembly Business Meetings

When the assembly comes together in plenary all commissioners and advisory delegates have assigned seats. YADs and TSADs are seated with the commissioners from their presbyteries. All recommendations coming from the assembly committees to the business meeting must be acted on by the assembly. This can go very quickly for many non-controversial items of business. The assembly will deliberate others for extended periods.

It is important for Advisory Delegates to be prepared for plenary. Be sure that you have read the various reports coming to the assembly from the committees. Make sure you know where the Advisory Delegate microphones are located. If you do feel called to speak be prepared. Speak clearly and carefully. Don't read speeches that others write for you. Do not speak too often. This can have an adverse effect upon how you are heard and how YADs are perceived (see <http://www.pcusa.org/ga218/commissioners/tips-for-speaking.htm> for more help).

Advisory delegates do not vote, but they are polled before electronic votes, and the results are displayed on-screen, so this is another way (in addition to the debate) to make your views known before commissioners vote.

## YAD Caucus

Each evening YADs and YAD advisors will gather for a time of discernment, business and worship. The specific times are included in the YAD schedule which follows this section in the manual. YAD caucus is a time for Advisory delegates to note important items that have surfaced in each committee, to hear and see brief presentations given by various entities and groups within the church, and to worship God – returning the work to God at the end of each day. This is also a time for YADs to enjoy fellowship and fun with each other, to debrief the day and to find release in a setting that is “friendly” to youth and young adults.

The YAD Caucus will be moderated by two YADs who are elected by the other YADs. The YAD advisors and GAC staff will also help facilitate the caucus time. Most of the caucus times are “open meetings” meaning anyone can attend and observe. Observers must sit in the observer section. They are not allowed voice or vote during YAD business. Many of the observers are people who care deeply about young people and want to be present. Some of the observers are representatives from church entities or special interest groups who want to engage YADs in conversation about their particular area of mission. Observers will have a chance to be introduced each night so that the YADs might be aware of their presence. Several of the YAD

caucus times are closed. Generally this is when an election is taking place such as the YAD co moderators or during a special party/concert.

So, in a nutshell, what you'll be expected to do as a Youth Advisory Delegate is to:

- Be a full part of the Assembly committee on which you serve. Study your papers, ask questions, share your concern and opinions, listen to others, and vote. Get to know the commissioners—eat with them, ask them questions, and make suggestions.
- Actively participate in the deliberations of the plenary by, claiming your right to speak in debate. Remember you represent only YOUR OWN view rather than a group consensus.
- Express preferences on issues in the plenary sessions of the General Assembly by voting when the advisory delegates are instructed to vote.
- Participate in other assembly activities such as services of worship, special events and presentations, and other assembly functions.

Make the most of your time here. Be active—in your listening and in your speaking. Be responsible and ask questions when you need clarification. Be patient in your listening; patient as people with similar and different views share their thoughts. Be prayerful. Begin, infuse and end your day in conversation with God – seeking God's direction and inspiration for yourself and for the Assembly. Consult with those around you and be sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit as you contribute to the work of the church in this unique and special opportunity.

## Practical Matters

The bulk of this manual will be concerned with how the assembly works and how advisory delegates participate in it. But other logistical matters are also important and do have an impact upon how you experience your time at the Assembly. So, read carefully!

By accepting the election to be an advisory delegate to the assembly, you have made a commitment to spend a little over a week in San Jose, California from June 19–28, 2008, and you need to take responsibility for making the arrangements for your travel and housing. This should only take you a few minutes if you use the assistance the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) provides, so *do not put this off*.

### Registration Packet

You should have already received your registration packet from the GA Meeting Service of the OGA. If not, contact them at 888-728-7228, ext. 2417, or [gameetingservice@pcusa.org](mailto:gameetingservice@pcusa.org).

The packet includes information on arranging your travel, reserving a hotel room, and other logistics, and your user name and password to facilitate on-line registration. It also includes a detailed schedule of the assembly. If you haven't already looked at these, please do so now. Be sure to read all the information in that packet carefully BEFORE you make your travel plans or register.

Register for General Assembly at:  
**[www.pcusa.org/ga218](http://www.pcusa.org/ga218)**  
 Click on the "REGISTER" button at the top of the page.  
 Use your user id and password (provided in your registration packet)

**Travel and Expense Policies**

You will want to read carefully about this in order to avoid any misunderstandings related to how the assembly will cover your assembly expenses. These could be costly for you and/or the church.

**Mark Your Calendar for Pre Assembly YAD Activities**

The 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2008) will convene at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 21st at the San Jose Convention Center in downtown San Jose, California. But YADs should plan their travel to arrive in time for the special orientation for YADs that begins with dinner on Thursday, June 19th.

Thursday, June 19	7:00pm – 10:00pm	YAD Orientation & Dinner
Friday, June 20	8:00am – 2:30pm	YAD Orientation
	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Introduction to Anti Racism Training
	6:30pm	YAD Dinner
	8:00pm	YAD Caucus and Evening Prayer
Saturday, June 21	8:30am	YAD Breakfast and Photograph
	10:00am	218 <sup>th</sup> General Assembly convenes

The assembly will end by noon on Saturday, June 28; most years it wraps up by 11:00 a.m. In order to be able to stay through the end of the closing session, book your return flight for 1:00 p.m. or later.

You are expected to be present for all business sessions. If you have other commitments that would require you to arrive in San Jose late, or to leave before the end of the assembly, be sure to discuss this with your presbytery stated clerk. Your presbytery is counting on being represented for the full assembly, and should be informed if you are not able to meet that expectation.

## **Arrange Your Travel to San Jose**

You are responsible for making your travel arrangements to San Jose. The assembly's official travel agency will assist you.

To make airline reservations, contact the Travel Authority (the official assembly travel agency) at **877-868-4023** (8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., EDT), or email the Travel Authority at **presga@thetravelauthority.com** (providing the correct spelling of your name, your home airport, and the dates/times you wish to travel). Tell the agent that you are an advisory delegate. The agent will help you find the best schedule and fare from your home or school, and charge the cost of the ticket to the assembly. Be sure to read the expense reimbursement policies in the Special Information for Commissioners and Delegates flyer (from your registration packet) before you finalize your travel plans, so you can comply with those guidelines. Note especially that *you will not be reimbursed if you make your travel arrangements with another travel agency, directly with the airline, or through an on-line service.*

Sometimes student participants will want to book a ticket that allows them to depart from their school and return to their home—or vice versa. The travel agent can arrange this, but if the ticket costs more than the lowest available round trip fare from either location, you will be expected to pay the difference. The agent will let you know the amount of the additional fare when you book the ticket, and the Office of the General Assembly will invoice you for that amount.

Make your airline reservations TODAY—or as soon as you are sure of your travel dates. The most convenient flights and best fares sell out quickly. If possible, select flights that arrive by 6:00 pm on Thursday, June 19, and depart after 1:00pm on Saturday, June 28.

## **Reserve Your Hotel Room**

The Office of the General Assembly has blocked rooms at hotels in San Jose for assembly participants, but *you must complete the registration process in order to be assigned a room.*

It will only take a few minutes to fill in your arrival and departure dates and the roommate information. Go to **[www.pcusa.org/ga218](http://www.pcusa.org/ga218)**

We have designated the Crowne Plaza and the Hilton for YADs to make it easier for you to attend caucus meetings and other special activities. These hotels are located very close to the convention center. See the map located at the back of this manual.

You will receive a registration and housing confirmation notice from the GA Meeting Service a few weeks after you send in your completed form. Contact the GA Meeting Service if you don't receive your confirmation within about a month.

## **You Need a Roommate**

All commissioners and advisory delegates are expected to share a "double" (two-bedded) room at the Assembly. If you do not want to have a roommate, you may request a single room but you will be required to pay for the other half of the room charges, which will total over \$565.

If you have already made arrangements with another participant to be your roommate, list his or her name when you register. Make sure your roommate lists you as his/her roommate and completes his/her registration quickly, as the room cannot be reserved until both registrations are complete.

Most YADs do not know other participants with whom they can share a room, so the GA Meeting Service will help match you with a roommate. Fill in the information about yourself in that section of the housing screen, and complete your registration as soon as possible. YADs are matched with YADs. But, please do not wait until the last minute.

### **Saturday Night Stay Over (Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup>)**

If your return travel has you heading home on Sunday, June 29<sup>th</sup> then you will be happy to know that there is a dinner plan! YAD Advisors will ask for those who wish to join in the group outing to sign up. This sign up will take place during one of the YAD Caucus gatherings. The Advisors will post a meeting time and spot and you, as a group, will walk to the dinner location. You will be responsible for covering the cost of this dinner.

### **Hotel Payment**

The assembly will cover your shared housing costs, but NOT charges for hotel “incidentals,” such as telephone calls, meals charged to your room, parking, laundry, pay movies, etc. If you charge any of these items to your hotel room, you will be expected to pay for them. You will need to have a credit card or cash deposit when you check in as a guarantee for incidental charges you incur during your stay. If you do not have a major credit card to cover this deposit, bring additional cash or travelers' checks (at least \$250) to cover this.

Remember that if you request a single room, you will pay the other half of the room charge. The hotel will expect you to have a credit card or the funds (about \$600) to pay this when you check in.

### **Ordering Tickets**

The General Assembly website ([www.pcusa.org/ga218](http://www.pcusa.org/ga218)) includes a detailed schedule of the assembly, and descriptions of a number of optional events that are sponsored by various agencies and organizations. You may find that some of these sound interesting but remember *that your primary responsibilities are to participate in the assembly business meetings, committee meetings, and all scheduled YAD activities.*

Some of the optional events conflict with those sessions. If you decide you want to attend some of the optional events that do not conflict with official meetings, you should order those tickets in advance. You may order those on-line at [pcusa.org/ga218](http://pcusa.org/ga218), or download and complete a ticket order. You will pay for the tickets you want with a personal credit card or cash. Advance ticket sales close on May 19.

## Meals During Assembly

There will be several group meals for commissioners and advisory delegates, and a few additional planned meals for YADs.

Thursday, June 19	Dinner / YAD Orientation	Crowne Plaza
Friday, June 20	Breakfast and Lunch / YAD Orientation YAD Dinner	Crowne Plaza
Saturday, June 21	YAD Breakfast YAD Lunch	Crowne Plaza Crowne Plaza
Sunday, June 22	Group Dinner (commissioners and advisory delegates)	
Monday, June 23	GA Breakfast (David LaMotte Concert) Group Dinner (commissioners and advisory delegates)	
Tuesday, June 24	YAD Event / Dinner included	
Wednesday, June 25	YAD Lunch	Parkside
Thursday, June 26	Group Lunch (commissioners and advisory delegates)	
Friday, June 27	Group Dinner (commissioners and advisory delegates)	

Your assembly badge will admit you to the group meals listed above, including the GA Breakfast on Monday.

You are "on your own" for other meals, but the assembly covers those costs with a meal per diem of \$45. It is calculated at \$12 for breakfast and lunch and \$21 for dinner, and when a meal is provided (the group meals and other meals for YADs in the schedule above), the per diem amount for that meal is deducted from the \$45.

So that you can limit spending your own money for these meals, the assembly is providing Declining Balance Credit Cards for all advisory delegates and commissioners. The credit limit for most YADs will be \$195.00. **This is to cover the meals that are not Group Meals or special YAD meals.** It is assumed in the GA budget that you will be a part of these pre-determined meals. Therefore, it is important in your planning that you not expect to use your credit card for substitute meals during these schedules times. You will receive your card when you register in SanJose, and it is always a good idea to have some cash for emergencies when you are traveling. The credit card can be used on your way home. It will expire after June 29th.

You will need to watch your food expenses carefully or manage the overage from your own pocket, as you'll find that \$45/day won't go as far as you might think.

Though all of the assembly hotels have restaurants, they tend to be expensive, and you are likely to run out of money if you eat most of your meals there. There are many less expensive restaurants and fast food outlets near the convention center, as well as concession stands in the convention center, so you will be able to find places for those "on-your own" meals where you can stay within the per diem funds. We suggest you grab a few YADs, committee members or commissioners and invite them to walk with you to one of these nearby establishments. Not only will you have a great meal – but you'll get to know new people at the same time.

## **Other expenses**

If you have other allowable expenses (such as ground transportation to your home airport), you may request an expense voucher from the Treasurer's desk in the GA Office at the convention center. Staff from the Treasurer's Office will be on site to answer questions about allowable expenses and help you complete your voucher.

## **Preparation for the Assembly Business**

Please do not wait until you arrive in San Jose to begin preparing for the business at the Assembly. There are several things you can do in advance that will help make you more aware of what is coming before the Assembly. First you will want to read the reports and recommendations at PC-biz. There is quite a bit – you can see why it's not wise to wait until you arrive in San Jose! Second—attend a GA Orientation. You can attend in the presbytery where your school is located, if you can't go to the one in your home presbytery. Take time to watch the orientation videos posted at [www.pcusa.org/ga218](http://www.pcusa.org/ga218). And finally—let G.A. Meeting Service know immediately if you need the assembly to provide a laptop for your use at GA.

## **What to Pack**

- Bring clothes for all occasions, both informal and what you would wear to worship. Commissioners and staff will be wearing everything from business clothes (suits, ties, dresses) to casual (walking shorts, polo shirts, sneakers, sandals). Remember that the assembly is a business meeting, so please dress appropriately. Short shorts, revealing tops (belly shirts, etc.), old jeans, and faded t-shirts are NOT appropriate for the assembly. Baggy pants that show boxers, spaghetti strap tanks that show bra straps, or low-rise pants that reveal undergarments or too much flesh, are also NOT appropriate for any part of the assembly.
- Bring comfortable walking shoes, light clothing, and a swimsuit.
- Bring a sweater or jacket, as it can be very difficult to maintain a comfortable temperature in all of the convention center. Historically—it is freezing!
- Bring your Bible.
- Bring ALL materials sent to you by the General Assembly as well as extra paper, pens, highlighter markers, and pencils.
- Be sure to register on PC-biz in order to read the reports online ([www.pc-biz.org](http://www.pc-biz.org)).
- Bring your laptop and power chord, and a locking cable.
- Bring your prescription medicines, toiletries, over the counter meds and ALL medical insurance information.

You will receive an official assembly tote bag when you register, but some participants bring their own backpacks to carry all their papers and books.

### **Arriving in San Jose**

If you come by air, look for the volunteers from the Committee on Local Arrangements (COLA) in the airport baggage claim area for help in getting ground transportation to your hotel. There will be assembly-sponsored shuttles to the hotels on Thursday and Friday.

When you check in at the hotel, there will be more volunteers from the COLA to greet you and answer questions about San Jose and give directions to the Convention Center. You will pick up your YAD packet/registration information at the YAD Check in located in the lobby of the Crowne Plaza hotel.

YAD check in begins on Thursday afternoon at 4pm in the Plaza A Room on the ground floor of the Crowne Plaza Hotel. YADs who are assigned to the Hilton will check in at the hotel registration desk for their hotel room, and walk across the street to the Crowne Plaza. The hotels are very close to each other and to the convention center.

### **Other Advice**

This comes from veteran advisory delegates. The hours at the General Assembly will be long. Lack of sleep is a chronic problem for all people at the assembly. The assembly starts promptly each morning and you are expected to be there. Use the alarm clock in your hotel room and go to sleep at a decent hour. You need enough rest/sleep to function faithfully!

*Sleep • Read • Eat well • Listen • Pray*

## 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly YAD Schedule

<b>Thursday, June 19</b>	<b>4:00pm</b>	YAD Check In Table Opens, Crowne Plaza A
	<b>7:00pm</b>	YAD Dinner with PC(USA) Seminaries, Crowne Plaza, Plaza BC
	<b>8:15pm</b>	YAD Orientation, Crowne Plaza A Session 1 Review YAD Documents and YAD Schedule
	<b>9:15pm</b>	Evening Prayer
<b>Friday, June 20</b>		<b>YAD ORIENTATION continues</b> (Crowne Plaza)
	<b>8:00am</b>	YAD Breakfast, Crowne Plaza, Plaza BC Late Arrivals Orientation (This group will meet at a designated table during breakfast)
	<b>8:45am</b>	Welcome and Introduction of YAD Advisors and GAC Staff
	<b>8:50am</b>	Community Building
	<b>9:30am</b>	Bible Study and Prayer
	<b>10:15am</b>	Break w/ snacks
	<b>10:30am</b>	Session 2 Anatomy of a YAD (Gina) (20 minutes) Role of the YAD (Gina) (20 minutes) YAD / GA Schedule (YAD Advisors) YAD Caucus (What, Where, Leadership, Purpose, Open Meeting)
	<b>11:45am</b>	Session 3 (Deb Davies and Kerry Rice) Rotation Groups (YAD Advisors) (Parkside)
	<b>12:45pm</b>	Lunch
	<b>1:30pm</b>	Worship (Adrian and PSST)
	<b>3:00pm</b>	Introduction to Anti Racism Training, Convention Center, Ballroom A *mandatory for YADs
	<b>6:30pm</b>	YAD Dinner, Crowne Plaza, Plaza BC
	<b>8:00pm</b>	YAD Caucus, Crowne Plaza, Plaza A Mission Presentations (Moderated by Advisors) Agency Entities
	<b>9:45pm</b>	Committee Community Building (16 committees) YAD Co Moderator Speeches
<b>10:45pm</b>	Evening Prayers	

<b>Saturday, June 21</b>	<b>8:30am</b>	YAD BREAKFAST AND PHOTOGRAPH	
	<b>10:00am</b>	GA Convenes (Business Meeting I)	
	<b>12:00noon</b>	Group Lunch—YADs eat together	
	<b>1:30pm</b>	G.A Business Meeting 2	
	<b>5:00pm</b>	YAD Council Dinner and Co Moderator Election (Location TBA) YAD Advisors and 16 YAD Committee Reps (24 people)	
	<b>7:00pm</b>	G.A. Business Meeting 3 (Election of the Moderator and Vice Moderator)	
	<b>10:00pm</b>	YAD Caucus (Crowne Plaza) YAD Co Moderators Announced Mission Presentations	
	<b>10:45pm</b>	Worship	
<b>Sunday, June 22</b>	<b>10:00am</b>	Opening Worship (two locations—see registration materials)	
	<b>1:30pm</b>	Moderator's Reception (see registration materials)	
	<b>2:00pm</b>	Bills and Overtures Committee convenes	
	<b>3:30pm</b>	Form of Government Presentation (FOG)	
	<b>5:00pm</b>	GA Business Meeting 4 (Report of the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee)	
	<b>6:00pm</b>	Group dinner	
	<b>7:30pm</b>	Committee Meetings	
	<b>9:45pm</b>	YAD Caucus	
	<b>10:00pm</b>	Mission Presentations Committee Caucus What are you excited about? Anxious about? Need to research or study tonight? Anything the whole YAD community needs to know? Committee reps give 1 – minute reports	
		<b>10:45pm</b>	Worship
		<b>11:30pm</b>	Dismiss
<b>Monday, June 23</b>	<b>7:00am</b>	G.A. Breakfast (David LaMotte Concert)	
	<b>9:30am–Noon</b>	Committee Meetings	
	<b>1:30pm–5:30pm</b>	Committee Meetings	
	<b>5:30pm</b>	Group Dinner	
	<b>6:45pm</b>	Assembly Worship	
	<b>8:00pm–9:30pm</b>	Committee Meetings	
	<b>9:45pm</b>	YAD Caucus Gathering	

**10:00pm** Committee Caucus  
 Need to research or study tonight?  
 What do all YADS need to know/study?  
 Highlights?  
 Committee reps give 2-minute reports  
 Time for questions for each committee  
 NO MISSION PRESENTATIONS TONIGHT

**11:00pm** Evening Prayers

**11:15pm** Dismiss

**Tuesday, June 24**

**8:30am** Assembly Worship

**9:30am–Noon** Committee Meetings

**1:30pm–5:30pm** Committee Meetings

**YAD Event at Santa Cruz Pier (Travel by bus)**  
 Load buses in shifts as committees end  
 Bus circle in front of Convention Center Entrance  
 Please board as early a shift as you can in order to insure your place!

**4:30pm** Shift #1

**5:00pm** Shift #2

**5:30pm** Shift #3

The YAD Event is the YAD Dinner option for Tuesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>  
 NO YAD CAUCUS TONIGHT

**Wednesday, June 25**

**8:30am** Assembly Worship

**12:00pm** YAD Lunch (Group Meal Location)  
 \*This YAD lunch is scheduled at the same time as many of the seminary lunches. If you choose to go to a seminary lunch you will need to purchase a meal ticket using your own funds. Many seminaries will offer complimentary lunch tickets to YADs—it might be worth asking if you are interested in attending one of the seminary lunches.

**1:30pm** Mission Presentations  
 (YAD Room at Crowne)

**2:00pm** Prayer – Dismiss

**2:30pm** GA Business Meeting 5

**7:30pm–9:30pm** GA Business Meeting 6  
 Exhibit Hall closes

**9:45pm** YAD Gathering

**10:00pm** Worship

**10:30pm** Committee Caucuses  
 Need to research or study tonight?  
 What do all YADS need to know/study?  
 Highlights?

**11:00pm** Prayer - Dismiss

<b>Thursday, June 26</b>	<b>8:30am–Noon</b>	GA Business Meeting 7
	<b>12:00n</b>	Group Lunch
	<b>1:30pm</b>	Assembly Worship
	<b>2:30pm–6:00pm</b>	GA Business Meeting 8
	<b>7:30pm–9:30pm</b>	GA Business Meeting 9
	<b>10:00pm</b>	YAD CAUCUS Announcements Snacks (Coffeehouse)
	<b>10:30pm</b>	Concert by The Muckrackers (For YADS)
	<b>12:00 midnight</b>	Dismiss

<b>Friday, June 27</b>	<b>8:30am–12:00pm</b>	GA Business Meeting 10
	<b>1:30pm–2:15pm</b>	Assembly Worship
	<b>2:30pm–6:00pm</b>	GA Business Meeting 11
	<b>6:00pm</b>	Group Dinner
	<b>7:30pm–9:30pm</b>	GA Business Meeting 12
	<b>10:00pm</b>	YAD Caucus Committee Caucus Committee Presentations
	<b>10:45pm</b>	Final Worship
	<b>11:30pm</b>	Dismiss

<b>Saturday, June 28</b>	<b>8:30am</b>	Assembly Worship
	<b>9:30am–12:00pm</b>	GA Business Meeting
	<b>6:00pm</b>	YADs staying over meet advisors for dinner

\*\* This schedule is tentative and likely to be revised several times prior to the Assembly. YADS will receive a final schedule during YAD Orientation.

## Sharing My Experience at Home

Many of you will be requested to interpret the actions of the General Assembly when you return to your home presbytery, congregation, youth group, etc. For your presentation to be an effective and interesting one, plan before the assembly to document information and events that will help people at home understand what the Assembly is about and some of the critical issues that were addressed. Advisory delegates to previous General Assemblies have suggested the following ideas:

- Keep a journal of your perceptions of the Assembly each day. If you have the means to do so, set up a separate blog and record your daily journal.
- Bring a camera. Take photos as if you were trying to explain to someone what the meeting was all about. Upload photos in your blog, or create a PowerPoint presentation with them, or put together a montage of images. Be creative.
- Collect issues of the *General Assembly News*, official newspaper of the Assembly. The articles are succinct summaries of the actions of the Assembly and will be helpful in your interpretation of the facts.
- Spend some time in the exhibit area. This is usually an extraordinary collection of information about the various agencies, offices, and programs of the denomination. Much of the information is free and includes buttons, stickers, and pamphlets.
- Finally, be BOLD and ASSERTIVE in meeting people. There are leaders of Christ's church from around the country and the world all gathered together in one space and time. Take the time to meet other commissioners, advisory delegates, and observers and talk with them about issues and concerns. What a great opportunity!

More ideas can be found on the final orientation video entitled "What can I do after the assembly?" located at <http://www.pcusa.org/ga218/commissioners/orientation.htm>

## What Else is Expected of Me?

All commissioners and advisory delegates are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is reflective of their faith in Jesus Christ, and consistent with the honor and responsibility of being elected by their theological schools and presbyteries.

At the 201<sup>st</sup> (1989) General Assembly the Assembly adopted the following resolution:

*That the Youth Advisory Delegate Manual be revised to include a word of caution about the use of drugs and alcohol while in attendance at General Assembly and at any related event occurring during its meeting. This revision should also include the legal drinking age of the state hosting the meeting of the General Assembly.*

The legal drinking age is 21 years old.

## Anything Else?

You are about to embark on an extraordinary experience. You are about to see the church at work for its two and a half million members. You are invited to PARTICIPATE fully; to experience the moments of frustration and satisfaction.

The General Assembly is, in many respects, a political gathering where people with various views and agendas work to get their ideas enacted. Advocacy groups may especially target Advisory Delegates with lobbying pressures, often hiding their agendas by calling their resources “educational and informative” materials rather than ones that try to persuade you to a particular point of view. Presbyterians value an open exchange of ideas and dialogue. Allowing advocacy groups to address the YAD Caucus or making a space for them to talk with YADs after caucus is a part of the assembly process.

But the assembly is also a family reunion of sorts. It is an opportunity for the family to gather, celebrate, remember, and look toward the future. Be sure and take the time to share stories, learn from one another, and pray with and for one another!

Keep this manual handy and get to know those people who will be advising you. They, along with the commissioners and resource people from your presbytery and synod, can form a dynamic support team for you. Other sources of assistance include the Office of the General Assembly, Committee on Local Arrangements, and the GA Information Center.

Take special note of the worship services at the Assembly. These are not optional times but rather moments that the assembly pauses to worship and praise God together.

Take the time to pray that God will give you the energy to be attentive, to speak out, and to listen. Pray that God will give you wisdom to make decisions, to take stands, to ask questions. Pray that God will move the people of the assembly to be faithful to the call of the Gospel in word, work, and action.

Keep up to date with PC Biz articles, committee resources and updates. Pay attention to mailings. Follow instructions given for arrangements. Communicate with your fellow presbytery GA attendees. You are one of the thousands of people working at the General Assembly. Don't be frightened by that, but be aware.

Thank you for sacrificing work, vacation, graduation ceremonies, and other summer activities to be a part of the larger church. It is time to dive into this church, to wade through all the business, and to discover the gifts the Holy Spirit has prepared for you. Enjoy!

## Acronyms

It won't take you long to notice that Presbyterians speak in acronyms. Some jokingly refer to it as 'Presbyterian alphabet soup.' We are famous for slinging our acronyms at each other. Don't be intimidated. If a reference is made which confuses you, ask for clarification. The following is a listing of some of the most common acronyms and programs with a brief definition or explanation. By no means is this a complete list. You might want to keep notes and continue to extend this list as you discover more.

<b>ACC</b>	Advisory Committee on the Constitution	Elected by the General Assembly, a group of people who prepare recommendations and advice on constitutional amendments. Work closely with the Stated Clerk.
<b>APCE</b>	Association of Professional Church Educators	Professional organization for church educators.
<b>BOP</b>	Board of Pensions	Governing board of Pension Plan for the Presbyterian Church (USA). Board members are elected by the General Assembly.
<b>BPC</b>	Black Presbyterian Caucus	Coalition of predominantly African-American congregations. One of the five racial ethnic constituency groups in the church.
<b>CE</b>	Christian Education	All education that takes place in the church and outside the church that builds our faith in Jesus Christ.
<b>CovNet</b>	Covenant Network	Special interest group, which advocates a particular agenda set by their board and membership.
<b>COHE</b>	Committee on Higher Education	Related body reporting directly to the General Assembly. Elected by the General Assembly. Students and others involved in higher education. Set policy and programs for higher education for related institutions.
<b>COGA</b>	Committee on the Office of the General Assembly	Committee elected by the General Assembly to oversee the work of the Office of the General Assembly and to advise the Stated Clerk.
<b>COLA</b>	Committee on Local Arrangements	Committee of the host presbytery formed on site for each General Assembly. They work with the OGA to plan the Assembly meeting.
<b>COM</b>	Committee on Ministry	Committees formed in the presbytery responsible for relating to sessions and pastors around issues of ministry in congregations.

<b>COR</b>	Committee on Representation	Committees formed in presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly it ensure racial ethnic, gender, age, and persons with disabilities representation.
<b>DCE</b>	Director of Christian Education	Title for a person employed in a congregation to work with the educational program.
<b>EAD</b>	Ecumenical Advisory Delegate	
<b>GA</b>	General Assembly	You are part of it!
<b>GAC</b>	General Assembly Council	Coordinating body of the missions programs of the General Assembly. An executive director serves it. Members are elected by the General Assembly.
<b>GANC</b>	General Assembly Nominating Committee	Appointed by the Moderator, a group of sixteen people, one from each synod, to nominate persons to fill vacancies in General Assembly level committees, boards, and councils.
<b>LA RAZA</b>	Hispanic Presbyterian Caucus	Coalition of predominantly Hispanic congregations and leaders. One of the five racial ethnic constituency groups.
<b>MAD</b>	Missionary Advisory Delegate	
<b>MLP</b>	More Light Presbyterians	Special interest group, which advocates a particular agenda, set by their board and membership.
<b>NACC</b>	Native American Consulting Committee	Coalition of predominantly Native American congregations. One of the five racial ethnic constituency groups in the church.
<b>NAPC</b>	National Asian Presbyterian Council	Coalition of predominantly Asian-American congregations. One of the five racial ethnic constituency groups in the church.
<b>NCC/NCCC</b>	National Council of Churches of Christ (USA)	National ecumenical council of churches. Comprised of 35 member communions, of which PCUSA is one.
<b>NISBCO</b>	National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors Agency	Based in Washington DC, this group advocates for the rights of conscientious objectors.
<b>OGA</b>	Office of the General Assembly—Stated Clerk's Office	Plans General Assembly meetings. Provides constitutional services and relates to ecumenical agencies.

<b>OGHS</b>	One Great Hour of Sharing	One of the four special offerings. Funds hunger program and provides funds to combat famine and for natural disasters.
<b>PCUSA</b>	Presbyterian Church (USA)	
<b>PFR</b>	Presbyterians For Renewal	Special interest group, which advocates a personal agenda, set by their board and membership.
<b>PHEWA</b>	Presbyterians Health, Education, and Welfare Association	Related body to the General Assembly Council. Composed of several groups carrying out the policy decisions of the General Assembly to related health, education, and welfare.
<b>PILP</b>	Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program	One of the four related corporations affiliated with the PCUSA.
<b>PJC</b>	Permanent Judicial Commission	Acts under the Rule of Discipline on disciplinary and remedial cases brought before it by appeal and conducts trials. PJs exist in each presbytery, synod, and at the General Assembly.
<b>PLGC</b>	Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns	Special interest group, which advocates for a particular agenda set by their board and membership.
<b>PLC</b>	Presbyterian Lay Committee	Special interest group, which advocates for a particular agenda set by their board and membership.
<b>PL</b>	Presbyterian Layman	Publication of the Presbyterian Lay Committee.
<b>PM</b>	Presbyterian Men	Denominational men's organization.
<b>PPC</b>	Presbyterian Publishing Corporation	Independent publishing corporation for Westminster/John Knox Press, Geneva Press, ecumenical church school curriculum, and other Christian education resources.
<b>PPL</b>	Presbyterians Pro-Life	Special interest group lobbying the General Assembly to change its stance on abortion and reproductive rights.
<b>PW</b>	Presbyterian Women	Denominational women's organization.
<b>RGAs</b>	Reports to the General Assembly	The reports and recommendation from various entities that you are receiving in advance, and that you will deliberate and act on during assembly.
<b>SDOP</b>	Self-Development of People	General Assembly Council program, which provides grants to individuals and groups both domestically and internationally to help persons out of poverty.

<b>SR</b>	Standing Rules	Rules of the General Assembly meeting.
<b>TAMFS</b>	That All May Freely Serve	Special interest group, which advocates a particular agenda set by their board and membership.
<b>TSAD</b>	Theological Student Advisory Delegate	
<b>UMHE</b>	United Ministries of Higher Education	An ecumenical coalition of churches who support Protestant campus ministries.
<b>VIM</b>	Volunteer in Mission	An individual who serves in the USA or internationally as a mission volunteer. There are a number of categories of volunteers.
<b>VISM</b>	Volunteers in Shared Ministry	The program designed to attract more volunteers to give their time in mission.
<b>WARC</b>	World Alliance of Reformed Churches	Ecumenical international body of Reformed denominations. PCUSA is an important partner. Headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland.
<b>WCC</b>	World Council of Churches	Ecumenical international body of churches including protestant, orthodox, and others. Largest single council of Christians in the world. Headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland.
<b>WS</b>	Witherspoon Society	Special interest group, which advocates a particular agenda set by their board and membership.
<b>YAD</b>	Youth Advisory Delegate	

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