



*Dear friends –*

What an exciting few months it's been here in the Presbytery of Philadelphia! As we begin to cautiously re-emerge from the isolation of pandemic, we have begun the process of installing a multitude of pastors, some of whom had been waiting two years to celebrate this sacred moment between pastor and people. It's been one of my deepest joys to participate in these worship services. Each has been holy and unique in its own way, and it's been wonderful to see what our congregations are faithfully doing as they lean into their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I almost have the installation and ordination questions memorized at this point!

When last we met, it was at the beautiful and serene Kirkwood Camp. I left feeling deeply moved by the recognition of that sacred space, having seen how much the camp has impacted many of you. Notwithstanding the bitter sweet reality of saying goodbye to a place we cherished, it was good to be together, to share a meal, to sing and worship and feel a bit of normalcy. The energy and hope we embodied together was a gift.

It is in the spirit of that gathering, I write to invite you to our next meeting at Doylestown Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, November 16th at 1pm. Elder Isaac Baah will be examined for ordination, and I look forward to the energy and love that the United Ghanaian Community Church will bring. We'll also be electing our new Moderator and Vice Moderator, as well as our commissioners to the General Assembly. As part of our meeting, we will pause to thank several saints who have labored on our behalf – our presbytery attorney Elder William Bradbury as he leans into retirement after almost 25 years of service, and Elder Betsi Moise – our presbytery staff creative genius as we recognize her ten years of service. We will also recognize our outgoing Transitional Synod Executive, the Rev. Susan Wonderland for her faithful service to the Synod of the Trinity.

There will also be two pre-presbytery conversations prior to our meeting – please see docket for details. They will gather at noon. Our time will end with a reverse Tenebrae Service of Light, featuring 7 voices to center our spirits as we embark on the gratitude and hope of the Thanksgiving and Advent seasons. I often visit Doylestown when seeking a new tattoo or a steaming bowl of ramen, but those aren't on the agenda for November 16th. Instead, my heart will be tattooed by your faithfulness and commitment to reflect hope throughout the past nineteen months.

In addition to all that, you'll hear updates about our Lilly Grant Initiative – Cultivating Enough in the Care of Clergy cohorts as well as our newly formed Presbytery Disaster Response Team – birthed in response to Hurricane Ida.

I'm looking forward to our time together and the chance we have to renew one another's spirits. Thank you for your resilience, your compassion, and your faithfulness to the One who has called you into our mutual life together.

*Peace and see you soon –*

Rev. Ashley B. Rossi, Moderator of the Presbytery of Philadelphia