

## Report to Presbytery on participating in this year's General Assembly

I was honored to participate in this year's GA as an advocate for an Overture from the Presbytery of the Yukon. Last March, the Commission on Reconciliation was asked to support an Overture that was requesting GA to issue an apology and reparations for the closure of a Native American church in Alaska. In 1963, Memorial Church was a vibrant growing congregation led by a native pastor. The national church decided that they should close and unite with the local white Presbyterian Church without consulting the native pastor or congregation. This action was based upon outright racism and colonial thinking that our native brothers and sisters would be better in the white church. The pastor was not offered a position at the white church but given a mission to work with the native people that lived outside the city. Many of the native congregation refused to go to the other church and only recently have renewed their faith due to this overture. COR then presented at our next Gathering and our Presbytery voted to support the overture. I was selected to be our advocate to attend GA. The overture was deliberated in the Racial and Gender Justice Committee. A month before GA, all of the advocates and the Overture originator held three virtual meetings to plan our presentation to the committee. In June, we made our presentation and the committee unanimously voted their support after hearing our evidence. The Race and Gender Justice Committee then presented its report to GA where our overture received unanimous support. Seeing our national church work to right wrongs was a great experience for me. In my current position with the Baltimore Dakota Partnership, I now have a better understanding of my native friends and the ongoing problems that they face.