



A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

THE JEREMIAH JOURNAL

## October 2017

Welcome to this month's Jeremiah Journal. I'm Jerry Iamurri, standing in for Jeff this month.

October 7th marked one year in a Turkish prison for Pastor Andrew Brunson. The outpouring of support from our churches and so many members who observed this sad day by fasting and praying has been overwhelming. Thank you for making this an important part of your worship services last weekend.

Our commitment to Andrew represents still another expression of the rich spiritual connection that defines who we are—the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

The value and nature of our connection is something we've thought a lot about since our General Assembly in June. You've heard Jeff remind us that the essence of our connection is ultimately spiritual and relational, and is founded on the "one anothers" of the New Testament: Welcome one another. Accept one another. Encourage, pray for, admonish, bear the burdens of one another. Forgive one another. And of course, love one another.

That connection also expresses itself in the way we're organized to pursue the mission and vision of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the national level of the EPC, we're all aware of the fact that if we're not serving, resourcing, and encouraging our churches and presbyteries, we're not doing our job—we are off-task and out of focus.

But fall is a time when the Office of the General Assembly is very much on-focus.

At the offices in Orlando, we're hosting a variety of gatherings over the next several weeks that are designed specifically to help the ministry of our presbyteries and churches. These include:

- Hosting church development, planting, and revitalization leaders from across the United States. Their focus is establishing new congregations and working for greater health and vitality of all our churches;
- Next week, the chairs of our Ministerial and Candidates Committees will meet to discuss the best ways to prepare, equip, and deploy those in pastoral ministry;
- After that, the Stated Clerks of our soon-to-be 14 presbyteries will gather to share the best practices for ordering the work of each presbytery.



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- And then, for the first time, we're convening a meeting of all our Presbytery Moderators.
- Later this fall, we'll also host an annual retreat for church planters in Colorado.

The purpose of all these meetings is to network key presbytery leaders, to share best practices, to problem-solve, and to help them more effectively do their work in serving you.

The feedback we continually receive is that these meetings are of high value and high impact.

Another example of how our connection has been on display this fall is the incredible outpouring of financial support for our churches and members affected by hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. As of today (October 10th), more than half a million dollars—almost \$550,000—has been contributed to these three funds.

Thank you very much for this “above-and-beyond giving” that is making a difference in the lives of those who have suffered—and still suffer—in the aftermath of these storms. The money you've given is being distributed to our churches as quickly as possible. We're also helping many of our churches explore the possibility of sending work teams to serve hurting people whose communities have been impacted by these disasters.

Certainly, in this effort we're not (as we like to say) “better together.” We are “much better together” as we act on the connection we enjoy and cherish in the EPC.

It's important to note that these significant events and activities that represent our connection in the EPC don't just happen. They require an investment of time, energy, and money.

When you support EPC Per Member Asking, you're helping to fund these high-value efforts that improve our ministry effectiveness, and further our mission and vision for the gospel and for the Kingdom of God.

We do this together, believing we're better together—much better together—than if we go it alone. Thank you for your commitment and your support.

God bless you and remember, Christ is risen!