



The Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Reverend Dr. James Herbert Nelson, II, serves as the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). In this capacity, he serves as the chief ecclesial officer of the denomination and speaks on behalf of the denomination regarding ecclesial, judicial, ecumenical, inter faith, and spiritual matters. As the highest-ranking officer of the PC(USA,) Nelson is setting a new tone for the direction of the denomination. He is calling the denomination to explore deeper spiritual and communal relationships while engaging a world that is rapidly changing.

Dr. Nelson is calling the denomination back to its historic justice advocacy roots. Having served as the director of the PC(USA) Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C., for six years, he is acutely aware of the need for the whole church to become engaged in the pursuit of justice for all. At the biennial meeting of the PC(USA) [the 223rd General Assembly (2018) Nelson led the call to recess in order to protest the exploitive cash bail system that preys upon the poor while criminalizing persons for misdemeanor crimes. General Assembly commissioners and other participants (including St. Louis residents and activists) filed into the streets to protest together. The PC(USA) presented a check for \$65,000 to free the captives. He is now organizing the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, Kentucky, to organize an on-going effort to eradicate the cash bail system in both the State of Kentucky and the City of Louisville.

J. Herbert, as he is commonly known, is a pastor at heart. He served two congregations in his twenty-four years in parish ministry: St. James Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, North Carolina, and Liberation Community Presbyterian Church in Memphis, Tennessee, a New Church Development evangelizing the poor to the PC(USA).

Nelson is a pastor's kid and third generation Presbyterian pastor. A native of Orangeburg, South Carolina, he credits his parents' call to serve the Lord as the basis of this zeal to serve the "Kingdom of God."

Dr. Nelson received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina; Master of Divinity from Johnson C. Smith Presbyterian Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia; and Doctor of Ministry from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

On May 18, 2019, Dr. Nelson was bestowed the honor of receiving a honoris causa Doctor of Divinity degree from New Brunswick Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in America.