The Standing Rules state that, “During the period between assemblies, the Moderator [or Moderators] 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” (Manual of the General Assembly, Standing Rule H.1.a.(5). Reflect on the importance of that role to the church and how you would live that out as a Moderator or Co-moderator.

GREGORY SAYS:
1 Timothy 4:12 admonishes us to set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. As co-moderators, Elona and I believe it is a perfect platform to live out the cooperation, communication, and collaboration between ruling elders and teaching elders that is articulated in our polity. We aim to demonstrate in how we relate to one another what a healthy and fruitful relationship between Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders can look like in every council of the church from session to presbytery to synod to general assembly.

Also, we want to be a source of encouragement and inspiration for the body to remind us that God is still with us and is calling us to join God in God’s redemptive and transformative work in the world. To remind the church that if we want to save our lives, we have to give them up for Christ’s sake.

Although institutional maintenance and management is critical for effective ministry, we cannot let our investment in the well-being of the institution supersede our investment in promoting the rule and reign of God. Sometimes we must be reminded that unless a head of grain falls to the earth and dies, it, and we, cannot bear fruit.

ELONA SAYS:
As Co-Moderators, we will always recognize the relationship that endures between Indigenous people and their traditional land wherever we travel.

Additionally, we will acknowledge and give honor to the gifts and ministries of former moderators elected to this office. Collectively, they embodied the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. Through times of celebration, distress, reunion, relocation, and rightsizing, they visited small and large churches, countless meetings, numerous potlucks, lifted up prayers for the people and shared amazing stories of grace and gratitude.

Together, rooted in the faith of our ancestors and profoundly committed to the future of the church, the two of us will exemplify an understanding of how much the church needs to be a place for all people. We know the hardships and challenges of being in the church, but not always included in church history. Our message will be to rekindle the gifts of God already within the church for the world to see.

We recognize the Co-Moderators are called to serve in the most visible role of the church and uphold spiritual solidarity with the people of God through prayer. Right now, we pray for churches working toward the promise of Matthew 25 as they reprioritize resources, innovate worship experiences and navigate the digital divide. We know the people in our churches are strong and resilient and we will survive this crisis by adapting to what we need just as others did before us.

Each day we see the good that comes when we stand together, a ruling elder and teaching elder, modeling the foundation of fair and just representation, and highlighting equity and inclusion. We also commit to lead with cultural
humility, accepting our limitations and learning from those we meet.

We bring an inclusive message to the role of co-moderator shaped by our personal histories. Our experiences in voting rights, housing and food solutions, public witness, and community development prepared us for such a time as this, able to address the uncertainties of the immediate challenges.