

The Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois welcomes **the Reverend Ruth Santana Grace, Co-Moderator of the 225th General Assembly (PCUSA)**



Make plans now to join in welcoming her at the **452nd Stated Meeting via Zoom on August 26, 2023, starting at 10am**



Teaching Elders **Shavon Starling-Louis** and **Ruth Santana-Grace** were elected Co-Moderators of the 225th General Assembly (2022) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Rev. Ruth Faith Santana-Grace began serving as Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Philadelphia in February 2014, making her the first woman and person of color to be installed in their more than 300-year history.

Since joining Philadelphia, Ruth has been committed to reinvesting resources back into the local congregation — using proceeds from church closures or tragedies to replant, reinvest or revitalize transformative possibilities in communities faithfully leaning into this moment in time. Soon after arriving, Ruth launched the Ministry and Leadership Incubator — the umbrella equipping arm of the presbytery focused on strengthening congregational leaders and their ministries. She brings a deep conviction that God is creatively at work in our midst.

Prior to pursuing ordained ministry as Minister of Word and Sacrament, Ruth received a Masters in Public Administration and used her gifts as a “bridge builder” for more than 15 years — serving in Washington, D.C., and Rome, Italy. During this season of her life, she brought council members, mayors, governors and other state and municipal leaders together with

their counterparts in Europe to discuss issues of mutual concern such as education, employment and economic development.

After graduation from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1994, she served as Associate Pastor for Adult Discipleship at First Presbyterian Church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where she connected the teachings of Jesus to the challenges and realities of daily life. In 2005, her call to ministry would pivot as she embarked on a new kind of bridge-building, serving as Executive Presbyter of San Gabriel Presbytery in Southern California. She had the privilege of walking alongside 44 churches officially worshipping in 11 languages in the eastern-most region of Los Angeles County.

Ruth has been described as linguistically trilingual (speaking English, Spanish and Italian) and theologically bilingual, embodying a commitment to bringing people together of different cultures and theological perspectives. She serves the larger church on two national boards: Princeton Theological Seminary and The Presbyterian Foundation.

A lover of writing, Ruth is the author of “Spirit Soundings” — regular reflections sent out to the presbytery. She was one of the featured women in Princeton’s published book “Faith of our Mothers, Living Still: Princeton Seminary Women Redefining Ministry.” She has also authored articles for commentaries and is an invited preacher and speaker to conferences and retreats. When Ruth is not working, she can be found swimming in her pool or walking the beach — a spiritual discipline that has sustained her for more than a decade.

She is married to the Rev. Dr. Edward Santana-Grace and they are parents to two sons — Dakota, who works for an international management consulting firm, and David, who works in the fitness industry in Italy. They are grandparents to Mia, 11, and Sophia, 7, who live in Virginia with their mom, Lani; and Talia, 9 months, who lives in Italy with her parents, David and Benedetta.

Source: <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/ga-co-moderators/mod/biography/>. G.A. Co-Moderators: Biography —Meet the Co-Moderators. May 25, 2023.