**2024 Report of Presbytery’s Nominee**

**to the Board of Corporators**

**of Geneva College**

Dear brothers:

I am reporting to you again as your nominee to Synod to serve on the Board of Corporators of Geneva College. I continue to serve with two other Corporators from our Presbytery, elected by Synod: Dr. Kenneth de Jong of our Bloomington congregation and Session, and Mr. Scott Reynolds, also of our Bloomington congregation. Both men also serve as Trustees. The current Chair of the Corporators’ Board of Trustees is Mr. Joel Silverman of our Southside congregation. Dr. de Jong is the Vice Chair.

To refresh you, the Board of Corporators has twelve members, all elected by Synod. Each of the North American Presbyteries have nominees to Synod, with Synod’s Nominating Committee nominating the others. All must be members in good standing in the RPCNA. We each serve four-year terms. The Corporators are the legal owners of the College. They are the members of the Corporation chartered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Corporators’ main tasks, under the Bylaws it originates, are to govern the College through a Board of Trustees it has created and whose members it elects, to elect a President of the College, to steward the Bylaws, and maintain a strong connection to the Synod of the RPCNA. The Board does its governing through the Trustees, who operate the College on the Corporators’ behalf. Half of the Corporators serve as Trustees, as well, maintaining liaison between the Boards and allowing Synod, in effect, to have direct placement of some Trustees. Dr. de Jong and Mr. Reynolds are examples of this.

Since the last stated meeting of Presbytery, the Board of Corporators has met twice: once on October 6 at Geneva, and a special meeting on November at Geneva.

To remind you, the website for the College is at [www.geneva.edu](http://www.geneva.edu). Much information is there on all sorts of matters pertaining to the College.

There continues to be concern about enrollment. Since Geneva has a relatively small endowment, its finances are heavily tuition-dependent. The birthrate is going down all over the country, including the main area from which prospective Geneva College students come, and there is a seeming cultural change in seeing the desirability of higher education. Nonetheless, due to prayer and fine work from the Admissions department, we are thankful that the incoming classes have been growing in size slightly over the past two years. Further, the growth in freshman enrollment is better than the majority of both Christian and secular private schools are experiencing and that it aligns with a strategic enrollment plan, part of the larger strategic plan that the Board of Trustees has approved.

In Bible Department matters, the funding for preparing Rutledge Etheridge for work as a professor has come through, and he is nearly done with his doctoral studies at Westminster. Byron Curtis plans to retire in May, and Jonathan Watt is moving to the English department. The College has recently secured the Rev. Zach Kail to be the new head of the Bible Department. He has formerly been the minister of the Broomall congregation near Philadelphia, and more recently, a minister in the Greek Evangelical Church of Cyprus. We, as a Presbytery, need to be praying for God to raise up men for this vital mission of our church. Relevant to this is the ongoing chapel situation. It continues to go well. Sermons are now about 20 minutes and a testimony time is included. Both are appreciated by the students. Further, a Sabbath evening prayer and praise time has become popular. It is at 9 PM so as not to compete with local church evening services.

There are other faculty and staff positions open at the College that you can find at geneva.edu/employment. Please pray for God’s provision of these needed people.

Many of you may have heard about the valuable property along the banks of the Beaver River, partly contiguous with College property, that has been donated to Geneva. There seems to be much optimism about the new property’s usefulness to the College’s mission.

Capital campaigns continue to do well, but the finances of the College continue to be a concern, mainly due to the aforementioned enrollment situation. However, there is no long-term debt. Giving is strong to the annual fund, and the campaign is progressing well.

One new development, announced at the beginning of this academic year, was the “Geneva Tuition Promise”. The College launched the Geneva Tuition Promise: a continued commitment to the affordability and accessibility of quality independent Christian higher education. The Geneva Tuition Promise is a future commitment to students, beginning with the incoming freshman class of 2024, that all eligible Pennsylvania students from families with income less than $70,000 annually will pay no undergraduate tuition at Geneva College. Specific details and eligibility requirements can be found on the [Geneva Tuition Promise page](https://www.geneva.edu/promise). There is need for prayer for this initiative, as much depends on a prompt publishing of the new FAFSA forms. Without their publication by the federal government, this program cannot be implemented. The sooner that the new forms can be available, the sooner the risk of losing students to Grove City or to Hillsdale is reduced.

Another development is the Center for Faith and Life. You can learn further about it at <https://www.geneva.edu/cfl/>. To quote College Provost Dr. Melinda Stephens, “The Center for Faith and Life will allow us to strengthen and share the work that has long been a foundation of our academic program to prepare our students for vocations that honor God and neighbor." The new Strategic Plan is guiding the College well. There are many professedly Christian colleges and universities that claim to integrate faith with their academic disciplines and campus life, but few truly do. Most, at best, have Christianity in conjunction with academia. Geneva seeks better and better actually to integrate.

Finally, in the June meeting, the Board elected Trustees. This recent meeting took time to discuss possible candidates for new members of both Trustees and Corporators, as well as incumbents whose terms are about to expire – like me.

Synod reelected me to this Board this past year, from your nomination, so that I have nearly four years left in this latest term. I have served our Presbytery, our Synod, and our College this way since 1998, and I thank Presbytery for its nominations. I again thank you for your confidence in me. I continue blessed in serving you in this way.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip H. Pockras