

May 12, 2009

QUICKLINE *North Springfield Presbyterian Church, Akron*
A brief summary of the meeting of Eastminster Presbytery

Eastminster Presbytery comprised of 85 ministers, elders, and guests, held its stated meeting at the North Springfield Presbyterian Church in Akron at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was convened with prayer by Moderator Scott Parker. The Rev. Janet Lowery, host pastor, welcomed the Presbytery.

The Consent Agenda included the following actions:

Election of Elder Ruth Cole as a reader for standard ordination exams; reception of a first reading for a change to the Manual of Operations to increase the Committee on Ministry from 14 to 20 members; approval of the extension of the covenant contract between CLP Pete Macaulay and the Akron Allenside Church; approval of the minutes and records of Eastminster churches; and a change to the Personnel Policies and Procedures relating to retirement benefits.

Family Remembrances and Celebrations: General Presbyter Dan Schomer shared the following concerns: Prayers of healing for Elder Tom Flowers, spouse of Rev. Pam Flowers (cancer); Elder Trella Johnson (treatment for orbital cavity tumor); Rev. Howard Newman (brain surgery), and Rev. Bob Offerdahl (angioplasty). Later in the meeting the presbytery was informed that Rev. Mark Phillips' father had had a stroke. Prayers for traveling mercies were also extended on behalf of the 11 Spain travelers from Eastminster Presbytery.

The Presbytery worshipped Almighty God under the leadership of Rev. Janet Lowery and Rev. Derek Starr Redwine. Rev. Mark Phillips served as the organist. Those traveling to Spain to visit with international mission partner Levante Presbytery were commissioned.

General Presbyter Dan Schomer reported that the Mission Visioning Council had continued the presbytery's membership with Percept to provide demographic information for the presbytery and its 54 congregations. Thanks to a Synod contribution of ½ the cost, the presbytery is able to make these services available to all its congregations for \$675. Congregations were invited to provide contributions of \$50 or less to cover the cost of this non-budgeted item. Dan shared with the presbytery that the Pastors' Retreat with Eric Hoey was most productive. A follow-up to the event is being provided through a Facebook group, "Eastminster Presbytery—Grow Christ's Church Deep and Wide," developed by the General Presbyter. Information will go out soon to inform ministers, lay pastors, and Christian educators as to how to join the group.

Trustees made a motion to approve the refinancing of a loan by the Northminster Church, Cuyahoga Falls, with the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program. Treasurer Colin Miller presented a comprehensive financial report for 2008.

Resource Center Coordinator Lorraine Jones shared two new audio-visual resources available in the Resource Center. They are "Simply Christian" featuring biblical scholar N.T. Wright and "The Gospel of John" on DVD. Lorraine also shared about a new section in the Resource Center on e-ministry providing books on building websites, blogging, and using Facebook for churches. The presbytery was encouraged to visit the Resource Center on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The Presbytery adjourned for a delicious dinner served by young people from Open M ministry.

Mission Committee invited two churches to tell their mission stories.

- Rev. Henry Pearce told how First Church, Niles, adopted an apartment complex, cleaning up the grounds and repairing broken playground equipment, and leading a Vacation Bible School. Subsequently, the church has adopted a mobile home park, providing gift bags to the residents, and restoring a playground. Other ministries followed including used clothing and food distributions. Some residents of the mobile home park have become church participants and one has become an ordained officer. Henry shared that this was not a pastor-driven ministry. People from the congregation went to where people in need were living and the Holy Spirit brought the ministry to life.

- **Ryan Lawrence, Director of Youth Ministry at First Presbyterian Church in Akron, shared stories about the wide variety of ministries to the community that are provided by the congregation. They include a food distribution twice per week, a weekly walk-in meal that was initiated by the youth group and continues with cooperation from the Westminster and Oak Hill Churches, Summer's Best Two Weeks, and a very active youth group that includes both youth from the church and from the community. Ryan told several serious disciple-making stories about youth whose lives have been transformed and are now active followers of Jesus Christ.**
- **Rev. David Joachim asked the presbytery to donate old (but not ancient) Books of Order to be taken by Rev. Bob Offerdahl to Dakota Presbytery.**
- **Rev. Debby Dockstader invited churches of Eastminster Presbytery to join together for a low-cost mission trip to Oil City, Pa., on June 21-27. Interested persons should contact Rev. Dockstader for more details.**

Theological Education Fund representative Rev. Sue Tinker shared a Powerpoint presentation on the importance of TEF and indicated that there would be a special TEF presentation at the July meeting.

Committee on Ministry reported the appointment of Rev. David Black as mentor to Rev. Matt Medford; approval of Rev. Sheldon Hastings as Parish Associate at the Barberton Church; triennial dialogues with the Kinsman, Barberton, and Goodyear Heights Churches; and six month dialogues with Rev. Amy Starr Redwine & Firestone Park Session and Rev. Stephanie Crossland & the Northminster Cuyahoga Falls Session. Action was taken to approve the installation commission for Rev. Matt Medford at the Hubbard Church on June 7 at 7:00 p.m.; extend the contract of Rev. Bob Offerdahl as temporary supply at the Gibson Heights and Coitsville Churches, transfer the credentials of Rev. Nick Cammarata to Mackinac Presbytery; approve the covenant contract between Rev. Bruce Ballentine and the Pleasant Grove Church for interim pastoral services; and approve the Sabbatical Policy for Parish Ministries in Eastminster Presbytery.

CLP Subcommittee reported on the annual retreat for Lay Pastors and encouraged the whole presbytery to consider attending in order to hear some outstanding speakers on timely topics.

JBM Committee introduced Camp Director Doug Hoffman to the presbytery. Elder Marilyn Stroble shared with the presbytery that it was Doug's birthday. Doug shared his vision for the camp. He encouraged churches to enroll their children and youth in summer camps and consider providing camp scholarships.

Synod Commissioner Rev. Joe Atkins introduced Elder Jona Rohrer to share how the Firestone Park Church benefited from a Synod Peacemaking Grant. Jona told of their Parkfest '07, the purchase of a video projector and screen, and family friendly outdoor movies that have drawn many people from the neighborhood.

Self Development of People Committee Moderator Rev. Jim Ray updated the presbytery on the Karen people of Akron who previously received a \$5,000 grant through Eastminster Presbytery from SDOP. Jim shared that \$14,650 is available to Eastminster's SDOP Committee this year and that 2 grants are pending.

<p>The next stated meeting of Eastminster Presbytery will be held on July 14, 2009. The location is still pending.</p>
