

January 9, 2007

QUICKLINE Westminster Presbyterian Church, Youngstown
A brief summary of the meeting of Eastminster Presbytery

Moderator Peggy Richmond opened the meeting with prayer. Host Pastor David Joachim **welcomed** the presbytery to the Westminster Church.

Family Remembrances included comfort for the family of Rev. Richard Braun with an invitation to the presbytery to a memorial service for Rev. Braun on January 13 at 4:00 p.m. at the Westminster Church, Youngstown; concern for Rev. Alan Hutchison who is awaiting surgery for cancer; and Elder Lucille Clay who is suffering from shingles. Elder Elsie Dursi, Executive Director of the Mahoning Valley Association of Churches, announced that the Poland Presbyterian Church had the most walkers and had raised the most money for the 2006 Youngstown CROP Walk.

Consent Agenda included permission for First Presbyterian Church, Youngstown, to sell a piece of property, renewal of the commission of Elder Pete Macaulay to serve the Allenside Church, Akron, as C.L.P. for 2007, and approval of co-opted members requested by the presbytery's committees and councils.

General Presbyter Dan Schomer reported that, as he begins his fourth year, he is encouraged by signs of hope within the presbytery. Presenting his performance goals for 2007, he indicated that the presbytery has clarified its mission to focus this year on leadership development, congregational transformation, and new church development. Schomer pointed out that the 2007 budget was developed to fund these mission priorities, but that the mission pledges of Eastminster's churches will determine if these funds remain intact in the final budget.

Congregational Resources Committee brought a recommendation and motion prevailed that the *2 Cents A Meal For Hunger* offering be divided among Jubilee Gardens in Youngstown, CEOSS in Egypt, the Hunger Network of Ohio, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Landmine Clearance through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. A moment for peacemaking was provided by a mission work team from the Westminster Church in Boardman who had worked with victims of Hurricane Katrina.

The Presbytery Meeting Coordinating Council presented for second reading and action a resolution presented by seven Eastminster church sessions concerning ordination standards. The resolution proposed declaring all constitutional standards for ordination and installation as essential, permitting no exceptions to the constitutional standards except educational requirements, directing the stated clerk to communicate this action to all sessions, and making the necessary changes to the Manual of Operations. A motion was approved to postpone action on the resolution until no later than the November, 2007, meeting "*when the Mission Visioning Council judges that sufficient discernment through worship, community building, study and collaborative work has been carried out in presbytery in consultation with the Committee on Ministry and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry about ordination standards for and the examination of minister, elders, and deacons*".

General Presbyter Dan Schomer, asking for a moment of personal privilege, reminded the presbytery of the great pain that was being experienced by all within the presbytery and his belief that this shared experience had strengthen the presbytery's sense of community. He asked that presbyters carefully interpreted to their churches what had actually taken place in postponing the action and that postponement had not created winners and losers. Instead, the presbytery now had the responsibility to seek discernment together on a critical matter.

The presbytery turned to a time of **worship**. Epiphany Evening Prayer was led by the Rev. Derek Redwine, pastor of the Westminster Church, Akron. Moderator Peggy Richmond installed new presbytery, committee, and council moderators for 2007 including Presbytery Moderator, Rev. Debby Dockstader, and Vice-Moderator, Elder Robert Gillette.

The presbytery enjoyed a delicious meal served by the church and a period of good fellowship. Following dinner new Moderator Debby Dockstader assumed the chair.

Trustees reported on per capita and mission pay-ups for 2006. Presbyters were reminded that the presbytery books will be closed on January 12 and that payments to be credited to 2006 must be received by that date. Churches were encouraged to provide the Presbytery Office with mission pledge forms for 2007 as soon as possible.

JBM Program Director, Karen Riley, encouraged everyone to pick up their cookie boxes and distribute summer camp brochures. Riley encouraged churches and presbyters to consider supporting the JBM capital campaign.

Communication and Nurture Committee announced that two significant volunteer staff positions had been filled. New webmaster is Kerry Price (Wickliffe Church, Youngstown) and new Evangel editor is Trella Johnson (Vienna).

Resource Center Coordinator Lorraine Jones introduced *Akaloo*, a program of intentional discipleship jointly developed by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Presbyters were informed that two workshops (Feb. 17 in the east area and an undetermined date in March in the west area) are being planned to introduce Akaloo.

Committee on Mission shared the news of the presbytery's work with Dakota Presbytery. The presbytery was informed of 2007 mission project opportunities in Dakota Presbytery and were encouraged to contact Rev. Robert Offerdahl for more information on how to be involved.

Rev. David Joachim, Rev. Elmarie Parker, and Elder Donna McCollum, shared an audio-visual presentation on their visit to Eastminster's **international mission partner**, Levante Presbytery, Spain, in October, 2006. The presbytery was informed that Eastminster Presbytery will be hosting seven visitors from Levante Presbytery February 1-14. The Committee is seeking invitations for housing and for presentations to churches. Interested persons and churches are encouraged to contact Rev. Dave Joachim or the Presbytery Office.

Committee on Ministry informed the presbytery of the following actions of the Committee: the addition of Elder Bill Hostetler to the Subcommittee on Lay Pastors, and approval of the call of the Rev. Elmarie Parker to serve as designated pastor of the Wickliffe Presbyterian Church, Youngstown, effective January 1. Actions of the presbytery included: approval of the commission to install Rev. Elmarie Parker on January 21 at 3:00 p.m. at the Wickliffe Church, dissolution of the pastoral relationship between Rev. Kay Roberts and the Kent Church, and moving Rev. Roberts to the status of honorably retired effective March 1, 2007. Rev. Lynn Thompson Bryant and Elder Jane Stoffer expressed the presbytery's appreciation for Rev. Robert's ministry through the gift of a candle and a song shared by the presbytery.

Nominating Committee presented the following persons for election: Kerry Price (Communication and Nurture), John Shippert and Mary Lou Ramsey (Congregational Resource), Ruth Gerrard-Cole and Rev. Harold Walker (Synod Commissioners), and Lillie Reynolds (JBM).

Communication and Nurture Committee called the presbytery's attention to the registration material for the Presbyterian Youth Triennium held July 17-22 at Purdue University. The deadline for registration is February 15.

Hudson Church Commission reported on the work of the commission. Motion prevailed to add the following additional powers to its duties: to organize gatherings, make arrangements for the pastoral needs, make arrangements for the special worship needs including the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and to establish a designated fund for non-legal expenses related to the true Hudson Presbyterian Church. A clarification was provided that the use of the term "true" is a constitutional one to be used internally by the presbytery and is not intended to construe that those members of the Hudson Church who wish to depart from the PCUSA are no longer sisters and brothers in Christ.

Consulting Commission provided a brief summary of the continuing work of the commission with the Stow Presbyterian Church.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry presented Kristin Stroble to be received as an Inquirer.

Miscellaneous Business included a request by Rev. Harold Walker that the Congregational Resources Committee continue to emphasize the 2 cents a meal program, interpret the work of its recipients, and follow through on representation on the Ohio Hunger Network. Rev. Jan Douglass invited fellow presbyters to remember and celebrate the life of Rev. Richard Braun. Following a period of sharing, a hymn was sung by the presbytery.

The **next meeting of Eastminster Presbytery** will be held at the Northminster Church, Cuyahoga Falls, on March 14, 2007.