

Council Minutes
January 10, 2012

Present: J. DeFord, A. Blackwood, K. Gerling, E. Cox-Holmes, W. Netting, S. Harner, N. Best, J. Shuler, J. Hickman, M. Wilson, R. Schmidt, A. Wade, M. Matheson, S. Hammond, E. Martin, R. Young, B. Birch, J. Hoffman

Excused: B Warren, J. Reichert, T. Milligan, W. Hess, C. Blackford, A. Smith, S. Fritz, D. Burkland, N. DeFord, J. Boyett-Shay, S. Fischer, G. Straub

Visitors: J. Shuler

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, the Rev. Jane DeFord, at 6:55 p.m. following a fellowship supper. A quorum was present. Devotions were led by J. DeFord who centered on the Baptism of Jesus in the first chapter of the Gospel of John. Minutes of the November 14, 2011, meeting of Council were approved.

Michael Wilson shared a power point presentation on adaptive change helping us to prepare for the coming work of LEGOS for the Presbytery. He noted that we have had the practice of employing technical change methods using dated knowledge, skills, and tools to resolve situations, whereas we need an adaptive change approach requiring people to make a shift in values, expectations, attitudes and those habits which have led to “a cycle of failure, a flight to authority and a chorus of complaints.” What will be of most help in the future, he said, are persons who convene conversations, especially with those who see things differently and persons who are willing to do a lot of listening.

Kris Gerling led a discussion on how we can get things done in Council. The Presbytery Manual states: “The Presbytery Council is responsible to lead the presbytery in vision, strategy, administration and evaluation of the Presbytery’s mission priorities. It shall consider all matters not clearly falling within the province of the Committees of the Presbytery.” She asked for members of Council to consider a broader, more holistic approach in which we are willing to talk about that which is on our hearts and minds.

Nan Best reported that 8 churches are on board with the Acts 16:5 program and 5 others are probable. The kick off will be held February 2, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. at Chestnut Level Church with Stan Ott as the presenter.

Amy Wade reported that camp brochures/packets will be distributed at the January meeting of Presbytery. She noted that the financial totals for 2011 indicate that the camp will end up in the “black”. The camp committee will be meeting with their consultants the week-end of January 13 to review the camp’s “benchmarks”.

Erin Cox-Holmes reported on the Oromo Fellowship situation. The (largely Anglo) Bethany congregation is “aging out”, with only about 50 members in worship, but it is bearing the expense of maintaining the building which is most used by the Oromo Fellowship. Normally 120 persons participate in the Oromo worship services. She noted that the La Iglesia Church is facing its own issues with the impending retirement of Rev. Nering Huete and the declining of mission dollars available for the church. As to the Resurrection Fellowship, it will be addressing the need to move out of the First Presbyterian Church (Lancaster) by this summer. *Note: Council voted to dissolve the Oromo Administrative Commission and replace it with an Administrative Committee appointed by the Moderator of Council which will enable other than teaching and ruling elders to participate in the guidance of the Fellowship.* She also reported on the Missional Communities research project, which is developing (under the leadership of Revs. Jack Miller and Don Hackett), an idea for the Cherry Street Group at First Church (Lancaster) to divide into 2 groups which would alternate worship and outreach ministry each Sunday. A second part of this research project is developing ideas of how to connect to young adults who have left the church or have had no church experience. It would attempt to gather those persons to talk about “grounding in faith” or how faith can be expressed. Young adults who have been nurtured at Camp Donegal would be used as participants in this conversation. She then reviewed the materials recently sent out to all churches and pastors concerning: 1) developing a Disaster Response Team, 2) discussions of the work of theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 3) LEGOS, 4) SONAR (a group working with less than critical mass church situations), 5) The seminar for COM members and others interested in developing the examination processes for teaching elders and ruling elders conducted Paul Hooker on January 12-13, 2012, 6) a retreat for Donegal Pastors on March 1-2, 2012 featuring Bill Carter and Warren Cooper, 7) a boundary training event for ministers and Christian Education leaders scheduled for March 27, 2012.

Melissa Matheson reported on a planned Presbyterian Women’s Spring Gathering to be held March 31, 2012. *Note: Council voted to approve the celebration of Communion at the Gathering. The Liturgist will be Rev. Carletta Curley.*

Susan Harner, Treasurer of Presbytery, provided the financials as of December 31, 2011. *Note: That report will be found as an Appendix of the January 24, 2012 Presbytery Meeting Minutes.* Council, acting as the Trustees of Presbytery, voted to approve a new lease with High Industries for the Presbytery office rental space. The lease will be for 7 years and the lease will include \$49,000 of improvements to the office space borne by High Industries. *Note: \$20,000 from the sale of the Dilworthtown Church property will be placed in a contingency fund in event of a “worst case buy-out scenario”.* E. Cox-Holmes spoke to the development of the 2013 Presbytery Budget. She would like to have committee recommendations by April, with the first reading of the Per Capita Budget held in June, and the first reading of the Mission Budget held in September.

Andy Blackwood, reporting for the Property and Insurance Committee, noted that a request from the West Grove Church to spend \$20,000 for a new roof, using monies on hand, will be recommended for Presbytery approval. He also called for COM involvement in the West Grove's strategic planning for the future.

Robert Birch reporting for the Peace, Justice, and Care of Creation Department, noted that a brochure is being developed which would share what the churches of the presbytery are doing in the areas of PJCC concerns. He also noted the need for sharing of leadership responsibilities in the areas being handled by our Restoring Creation Enabler, Barb Warren.

Rick Schmidt, our Hunger Action Enabler, reported that the General Assembly stipend for his position is being reduced this year because of budget constraints, and will probably be phased out completely in the year 2013. He still wishes to continue as our Action Enabler.

Leah Johnson reported on our current Discernment Teams for those churches considering dismissal from the PC (USA). Currently there are 3 teams: Fairview (composed of David Willerup-Chair, Don Lincoln, Carolyn Willey-Ruling Elder at First Presbyterian Church [West Chester], and Marcia Woodruff), Round Hill (Ray Meute-Chair) and Guinston (Leah Johnson-Chair). Orientations for the teams will be held later this month. E. Cox-Holmes reported that the Session of Central Presbyterian Church invited Michael Wilson and herself to come and hear their concerns. The Session asked that the 75% figure of those church members voting for dismissal be reduced, but Council was of the opinion that this figure should not be changed. Leah Johnson also reported that the Presbytery team working out the financial settlement of Kennett Square's departure will be comprised of Diane Burkland and a person to be named. The team will meet with representatives of the Kennett Square Church on January 23, 2012.

Erin Cox-Holmes reported that Michael Wilson and she will be attending the Fellowship Gathering in Orlando, FL January 19-21, 2012.

Kris Gerling reviewed the docket for the January 24, 2012 Meeting of Presbytery. It will include the election of General Assembly Commissioners and the YAAD representative. There will also be consideration of an Overture from Union Presbyterian Church and 2nd readings for the 2012 Mission Budget and the Provisional Presbytery Manual. There will also be the presentation of a Manual for Clerks of Session for 1st reading and the examination of a Candidate for Ordination who has received a call to become the Pastor of Stewartstown Presbyterian Church. The Worship Service will include the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, Installation of our new Presbytery Moderator and Vice-Moderator and the 2011 Necrology Report. There will be 4 workshops available (each commissioner may choose one). *Note: Council voted to approve the docket as recommended.*

Plans for the March 17, 2012 Meeting of Presbytery were discussed. It will be a multi-cultural event, together with a Mission Fair, and a minimum of business. There will be Poster Sessions available for continued education. A proposal for the Camp Donegal board will be reviewed.

Kris Gerling, on behalf of Council, thanked Ed Martin and Jean Hickman for their service to Council over the years. A motion to adjourn was approved and the Council adjourned with prayer by Kris Gerling at 10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

William J. Netting, Secretary

Next meeting, Tuesday, March 6, 2012