

Presbytery of Western North Carolina
Presbytery-in-Brief
July 29, 2008

The 77th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina met July 29, 2008, at Third Street Presbyterian Church in Gastonia, North Carolina. The meeting was filled with music, praise, recognition of persons, excitement for mission, and reports celebrating the work of the Presbytery.

William Kantonen, Moderator, convened the meeting with the Prayer of Invocation. Of the 256 persons attending, there were 94 ministers, 84 elders, 4 Directors of Christian Education, 8 Council and Committee Chairs and 66 registered visitors.

Rev. Eddie Deas, Pastor of Third Street, led the Presbytery in a rousing worship service, which included the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Calvin Lewers, a candidate for ordination, preached the sermon entitled "Waiting for God."

The Stated Clerk, James Aydelotte, moved that the Administrative Commission for the Hephzibah Presbyterian Church be dissolved and announced that the church building has been sold to an Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARP), keeping it in the Reformed tradition. Celebration of a difficult job completed.

The Commissioners to the General Assembly, held in San Jose, CA, made reports of that assembly, which can be read on the Presbytery's Web Site: www.presbyterywnc.org, along with the July 2008 Presbytery Packet. The commissioners are Rev. Maggie Lauterer, Elder J. D. Waldrop, Rev. Laura Long, Elder Lois Camp, Rev. Luke Harkey, Elder Kathy Parse.

One of the highlights of the day was the report from the

Associate Presbyterian Search Committee. This committee recommended the calling of Rev. Grace Boyer to become the Associate Presbyterian. Grace was introduced and, following examination, was enthusiastically received into Presbytery. Her Statement of Faith and Biographical Sketch can be found in the Presbytery packet on the web page.

Richard Boyce, reporting for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, introduced Marshall Nord. Following the required examination by Presbytery, Marshall was enrolled as a Candidate for ministry from First Church, Lenoir. Richard also offered an update, by means of the committee report, on the other candidates under Presbytery's care.

Kevin Frederick, chair of the Mission Committee, presented Rachel Brown for commissioning as a Young Adult Volunteer to work in Kenya. Rachel is a member of the Mills River Presbyterian Church. Members of former mission teams came forward to lay hands on Rachel as she knelt for prayer.

The Presbytery warmly welcomed our missionaries who are supported by churches in PWNC. Greeting us, and describing their mission, were Del and Debbie Braaksma, serving in Sudan; Barbara Nagy, a medical missionary to Malawi; and John McCall, who teaches in the Seminary in Taipei, Taiwan. In addition, it was announced that 76% of the churches in this Presbytery are now supporting at least one missionary.

Edyth Pruitt, Co-Chair of the Care of Church Professionals Committee, introduced six ministers who have served in ordained ministry for 50 years and two who have served for 25 years. Those celebrating 50 years of ordination are Hayden Brittain, Robert Meachem, Harry Phillips, Allan Sinclair, O'dell Smith and Graham Wood. Ellen Dozier and Beth Ann Miller were recognized for 25 years in ministry.

A service recognizing the Honorable Retirement from the Ministry of Word and Sacrament was celebrated for J. Hunter Coleman, Ellen H. Dozier, Ira K. Kennerly, and Daniel G. Stitt. They were presented with certificates of appreciation.

Also honored with certificates were the seven graduates of the School for the Laity/Commissioned Lay Pastors program: Sandra Balfour, Ruth Gordon, Mike Stephanides, Gene Carmen, Pete Peterson, Edi Cole and George Ratchford. (It was noted that Gene Carmen has celebrated his 90th birthday!)

Billy Wilson, unofficially known as head of the "Shower Ministry," urged commissioners to see the disaster relief trailer on display in front of the church. The trailer is equipped with hot and cold water, five shower stalls, a washer and dryer, and is to be used when teams are answering calls for help in disaster assistance.

The Presbytery approved the examination of Calvin Lewers and approved his ordination and installation. He will continue to serve Love's Chapel; validated the ministries of Joseph Bennett, Mike Johnston, David Lytle and Robert McCully Jr.; Received the report of the Committee on Ministry regarding stated supplies, interim pastor relationships and transfers of membership.

Participants learned of Hunger Awareness Training Events to be held in six churches in October; that the Peacemaking Offering, received on World Communion Day, will fund Oikocredit, the construction of a Global Village to be housed at Camp Grier, and Border Links.

Attention was called to the rallies and retreats being planned for Middle and High School youth. Scheduled events are found on the Presbytery's web page.

The Resolution and Thanks Committee, chaired by Mike Sears, Olney Church, offered an upbeat resolution of thanks, which reviewed the day's events with eloquence, and the meeting was adjourned with prayer.

*Prepared by Sally Gunn
for the Communications Committee.*