

Presbytery of Western North Carolina
Presbytery in Brief
July 28, 2009 Meeting

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina met for its 81st Stated Meeting on July 28, 2009, at Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk. Moderator *Luke Harkey* presided. The meeting was opened with a unison prayer of John Calvin to celebrate the 500th anniversary of his birth. President *Scott Colley* of Lees-McRae College gave a welcome to presbyters.

Following the usual opening procedures, *James Aydelotte*, the Stated Clerk, presented his report. The **Omnibus Motion** was approved by voice vote, as were the reports of Administrative Commissions for Marion and Duncan's Creek Churches. The reports of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and the Evangelism Committee were received as information. The clerk pointed out that there were still nine churches whose Session minutes for 2008 have not been reviewed.

Attendees participated in a **Service of Worship** led by Pastors Joseph Washburn and Tee Gatewood with Synod Executive David McKee preaching the sermon, "Is the Lord with Us, or Not?" The service concluded with communion distributed by Elders from the Banner Elk and Arbor Dale Churches.

Don Scofield presented a report on the process of nominating a new Stated Clerk to replace James Aydelotte who is retiring July 31, 2009. The election of *William A. (Bert) Sigmon* as Stated Clerk was unanimous. The search committee had been comprised of *Don Scofield* chair, *Patricia Clark*, *Pat Green*, *Calvin Lewers*, *Mary V. Atkinson*, *Ike Kennerly* and *Otis Wilson*. The thanks of the Presbytery were extended to *Margaret Aydelotte*, James' spouse, as well as to outgoing Stated Clerk *James Aydelotte*. *Bert Sigmon* was then installed as Stated Clerk of Western North Carolina Presbytery. Reactivation of his status as a Commissioned Lay Pastor was also approved.

James Bernhardt, who chairs the **Committee on Ministry** (COM), introduced *Daria L. Ragan*, candidate for Associate Pastor at the Belmont Church, who preached a sermon. On the recommendation

of COM, she was approved for ordination and installation. General Presbyter *Bobbi White* then presented her with a stole from Guatemala.

COM recommended adoption of a slightly re-worded procedure for ***The Examination of Candidates and Transferring Ministers*** (postponed from the April meeting). Following a period of discussion, the recommendation was approved.

After the lunch break, Vice-Moderator *J. D. Waldrop* presided. A number of persons presented information during a "speak out" period. This was followed by a period of **Hearing the Good News** from selected churches. These included *John Stanley* from Robinson Memorial in Gastonia, *Alyce Kelly* from Dulatown in Lenoir, and *John Lindsay* from Waynesville. Following this good news, *Cynthia Strickler* led attendees in a period of **intercessory prayer**.

Attendees were introduced to new pastors coming into the Presbytery, who have been approved by COM: *Alex McLean* – Swannanoa, *Chris Wingard* – Riceville, *Dent Davis* – Tryon, *Carol N. Seaman* – Interim at FPC Hickory and *David McKee* – Executive of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.

Lees-McRae President *Scott Colley* shared information about the founding and history of the college and again welcomed the Presbytery for its meeting there. The college became four-year in 1990. Enrollment for the fall of 2009 is over seven hundred students.

A list of validated ministries was approved.

John McCall shared with presbyters his vision for multi-cultural ministry in PWNC. The establishment of a task force to report to the Presbytery at its October meeting was approved.

Beth Gunn led a presentation on the "Let's Celebrate" event on August 22nd. She also shared information about events in which Presbytery youth are encouraged to participate.

Bill Kantonen, who chairs the **Coordinating Council**, presented four recommendations. All four were approved by voice vote. They included (1) Exploration of the multi-cultural mission in PWNC, envisioned by John McCall, (2) 25% of Peacemaking Offering support to go to that effort, (3) October in 2009, 2010, 2011 to be designated as "College Student Awareness Month" to foster relationship of students with PCUSA churches on or near their

campuses, and (4) James Aydelotte serve as Moderator of PWNC in 2011, which also approved a job description for that position.

Meeting dates for PWNC in 2011 are: January 19 (need a place), April 26 (Montreat), July 26 (need a place), October 21-22 (Lake Junaluska).

Mae Weed spoke of Campus Mission work in PWNC. She is the Director of Church Relations for Lees McRae College. Ideas for churches on congregational support of college students should be sent weedm@imc.edu.

General Presbyter Bobbi White shared information about the importance of churches in the Presbytery reaching out to potential members, and seeing the potential “out there.” She reported that *Barbara Nagy* is back from Malawi, along with her recently adopted daughter, *Happy*. Bobbi expressed excitement about where this Presbytery is going under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Charles Sellers presented a report from the **Budget and Finance Committee**. With contributions 11% less than last year, the financial situation is serious. Each church was asked to pray for the Presbytery of Western North Carolina and to continue to contribute where possible.

Helen Locklear and *Kevin Garvey* from the **Board of Pensions** spoke of improvements to the coverage for health and medical care. Rehab services are now available for dependents. A dependent waiver is also available, although the cost will not drop. Dues are up some (based on median salary of clergy). Also shared was information about grants that are available – for retiree housing, for example. The 2008 Christmas Joy Offering was unfortunately “way down.” They asked for prayer, continuation of the Christmas Joy Offering, and for churches to ask retired ministers to speak about how the BOP has helped them.

Don Cooper reported on behalf of the **Nominating Committee**. There are five nominees (whose election was approved by Presbytery by voice vote), seven remaining vacancies and the Class of 2012 yet to be determined.

Edyth Pruitt, on behalf of the **Committee on Care of Church Professionals**, highlighted individuals who have served in ministry for 25 years, for 50 years, and six ministers who are becoming “honorably

retired.” Certificates of retirement were presented to: *Jim Cockerham*, *Jim Hornsby*, *Wallace Johnson*, *David Morgan*, and *Bill Serjak*. A brief Service of Worship was held to celebrate the service of these individuals.

Joe Gernoske presented certificates to recent graduates of the **School for the Laity**. Included were: Fred Brown, Ann Dietz, Jane Hansel, Steve Hansel, Janet Jolly, Bobby Justus, Charlie Nelson, and Bill Wuehrmann.

A full report from the **Strategic Goals Committee** will be available at the October Presbytery meeting, according to *Mark Stanley*.

Christmas Elf *Jane Hansel*, on behalf of the **Hunger Committee**, reported that we must ***re-claim Christmas!*** To do this, churches need to seriously ***do service*** and ***support Missions***.

Terry Alexander of the **Peace and Justice Committee** shared some of the foci of their efforts: to improve pay equity, and health care, fight human trafficking, and support Mission Response through Investing.

Allen Huff of the **Missions Committee** gave brief reports on Rebecca Young (in Jakarta, Indonesia), the mission trip to Malawi, and Rachel Brown, who will personally report on her life in Kenya at the October meeting of PWNC.

Mae Weed shared that the **Resource Center** at the PWNC office will be online soon!

Following the presentation of a ***resolution of thanks***, prepared by Pete Petersen and Bonnie Sanford, Moderator Luke Harkey declared the meeting adjourned and closed with a blessing by Stated Clerk James Aydelotte.

Respectfully submitted by Carolyn H. (Cardy) White