

Highlights

of the 131st Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Southern New England November 17, 2007

Noroton Presbyterian Church, Darien, CT

There were 46 ministers, 61 elder commissioners, and 7 Council members present and voting. Twenty-one of the Presbytery's 35 sessions were represented. There were 3 corresponding members and 17 observers at the meeting.

Trustees

- Presbytery **VOTED** to approve the Church Use Agreement / Fall River (MA): Calvary with Annunciation Orthodox Church of Jerusalem of Bristol County (MA) for use of space within the church for worship and other related religious activities for one year,
- Presbytery **VOTED** to approve the Church Use Agreement / Fairfield (CT): **First** with Grace Korean Methodist church for use of space within the church for worship and other related religious activities for one year,
- Presbytery **VOTED** to approve the recommended apportionment of General Mission giving received by this Presbytery in 2008 as follows:
 - Presbytery 70% (up from 58% in 2007);
 - Synod of the Northeast 10% (down from 12% in 2007); and
 - General Assembly 20% (down from 30% in 2007).
- Several churches continue to be in **non-compliance** with Presbytery's mandated action in May 2006 that all churches of the Presbytery secure both sexual misconduct and directors' & officers' liability insurance coverage no later than December 31, 2006.

Stewardship & Mission

The 2007 allocations totaling \$13,800 were made at the Stewardship and Mission Committee meeting as reported by Elder Shirley Dudley.

Monies for these allocations came from several sources: the regular Stewardship and Mission budget, donations from churches for Gulf Coast Mission trips, and a grant from the Synod Higher Education Committee for campus ministries.

Dora Roberts, Director of the MLK Community Center, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the many programs and activities at the Community Center.

Were You There ...?

- **Were you there** ... when we worshipped "around the lights" and Rev. Connie Jordan-Haas presented her sermon "Of Hidden Windows"?
- **Were you there** ... when Dana Lindsley presented "**A Process for Clarifying the Vision and Mission of the Presbytery**"?
- **Were you there** ... when Dana Lindsley asked if God's mission for us Presbyterians in Southern New England, might be the two mandates from Christ?
 - The first is from Matthew 28 commonly known as the Great Commission: "*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.*"
 - And the second is from Matthew 25 that calls us to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned... because in doing so we are serving Christ himself.
- **Were you there** ... when the Immigration Task Force announced their next meeting and Service of Solidarity will be held on Dec. 1st at Christ Is Life Presbyterian Church, Fall River, MA?

If you weren't there ... you missed a lot!

Elections

- Personnel Committee: **Rev. Joan Withers Priest**, as Chair of the Personnel Committee, Class of 2008
- Committee on Youth: **Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird**, Class of 2010
- Commissioner to the Synod of the Northeast: **Elder Ann Thomas**, Brookfield: Valley, class 2009.
- Permanent Judicial Commission: **Elder Vance Hancock**, Fairfield: First, class of 2011

Council

- Presbytery **VOTED** to approve the Executive Presbyter's Terms of Call for 2008 that increases the effective salary to \$57,806 which is a 3.2% increase from last year.
- The Review Team reported their recommendations regarding Simsbury: Covenant for a first reading. Open hearings regarding the report will be held on:
 - Saturday, January 5th, 10:30 am at Babcock Presbyterian Church, 25 Maxon Street, Ashaway, RI
 - Thursday, January 24th, 7:00 pm at First Presbyterian Church, 2475 Easton Turnpike, Fairfield, CT
 - Thursday, January 31st, 7:00 pm at Calvary Presbyterian Church, Enfield, CT

Reservations are required for each of these open hearings - 860-388-0874.

- The recommendations will be voted on at the February 9th Presbytery meeting.

Ecclesiastical Relations

Rev. Doug Forsberg reported on the proposed revision of our Form of Government (FOG). The revision is now complete and available to the denomination for study and comment. The best place to find this revision and many supporting documents is at:

<http://www.pcusa.org/formofgovernment>

Along with the revision, side-by-side comparisons of our current and the proposed Form of Government are available at this website. Given the length and complexity of the documents and changes involved in this rewrite, presbyteries and sessions are encouraged to study these documents and offer comments to the FOG Task Force through a link at the website listed above.

The next Stated Meeting of Presbytery

**will be held on February 9, 2008 at
Christ is Life Presbyterian Church
Fall River, MA**

Committee on Ministry

- Presbytery **VOTED** to receive **Rev. Susan Arner** into membership as Designated Part-time Associate Pastor at Greenwich: First, if the way be clear, upon her dismissal by the Presbytery of Southern Kansas
- **Presbytery VOTED to concur** with the request by Rev. Gary Wilburn that his pastoral relationship with New Canaan: First be dissolved and that he be placed on disability effective December 23, 2007, if the way be clear upon the vote of the New Canaan: First congregational meeting. The Presbytery acknowledged Rev. Wilburn's service to the Presbytery with a standing ovation.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

On October 23rd, the committee met with:

- **Jenny Davis** for her annual consultation. Jenny is a first year student at Yale Divinity School. The committee voted to continue her as an inquirer.
- **David Martinez's** church, New Canaan: First, recommended that he begin the process of preparing for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. David completed his M. Div at Austin Seminary in 2006. The committee voted to enroll him as an Inquirer.
- **Kathleen Davies.** Kathleen was certified ready for examination in May 2005. In order to maintain communication and continuing care, we met with her by video conference. She lives in Houston TX and is active in the life of First Presbyterian there.

Our September 25th stated meeting was a committee retreat.

Presbyterian Women

A spiritual retreat for women is planned for February 1st and 2nd, 2008 and will be led by Rev. Anne Marie Meyerhoffer, Pastor of the United Presbyterian Church, Milford, CT.

The Retreat will run from Friday night, 5:30 pm until Saturday afternoon 3 pm and will be held at the Immaculate Conception Convent, 600 Liberty Highway Putnam, CT 06260