

**144<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery**  
**Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church**  
**Fishersville, Virginia**

Shenandoah Presbytery was **called to order** at 9:00 am on Tuesday, November 10, 2009 by Moderator, Rev. Ann Held., at Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church. The weather was moderate and pleasant; and, the greeting inside for food, fellowship and registration was warm and welcoming. Worship was planned and arranged by the Highland-Augusta Mission Community, members of which led the service of worship. The assembled commissioners were treated to two sermons, as Candidates Stan Farthing and George Chapman completed the preaching requirement of their examination for ordination on the floor of Presbytery.

A quorum was determined, Rev. Held welcomed the commissioners, and the Rev. David McKee, Executive/Stated Clerk of the Synod of Mid-Atlantic was seated as a corresponding member. The Rev. Jason Whitener, identifying himself as the 21<sup>st</sup> Pastor of the church, presented a history highlight of the church's 271 years, referring to John McCue, who served the church for 21 years during the 1700s and whose pastorate ended when he fell from his horse and died. Rev. Whitener welcomed the commissioners and encouraged them to visit the church's museum. Temporary clerks (Elder Debbie Garrett, Revs. Beth Pyles, Charles Reed and Christina Tutterow) were appointed and the minutes of the August 22, 2009 Stated Meeting were approved without correction.

The Rev. Ron Potter, chair of the **Office and Personnel Committee** reminded the commissioners that the Stated Clerk and Treasurer needed to be reelected for another year of service and requested that this recommendation be added to the Omnibus motion. The docket was adopted with this amendment. The Rev. Jan Owen, presented the report of the **Stated Clerk**, calling the commissioners attention to the written report in the handbook and supplement. The **Omnibus Motion** was approved and Jan Owen and Lucille Gohdes were reelected Stated Clerk and Treasurer, respectively, for another year. The Presbytery approved Presbytery Council's recommendation that beginning in 2010, the vice-chair of Council serve as chair of the Presbytery Planning Committee that Elders Scott Hammer and Rachel Sterrett, Class of 2011; Rev. Clark DeSarro-Raynal, Elder Pat Klumpp, and Elder Ann Grisdale, Class of 2012 be approved to serve on the Nominations Committee; that Elder Richard Johnson serve as chair and Rev. John McDonald serve as vice-chair.

**Interim General Presbyter** Sally Hinchman made two presentations: a box of candy to Charles Reed, Pastor of Warm Springs Church, for giving the first mission pledge and a Level 2 certificate to Cheri Bowman from the Administrative Personnel Association. She thanked the Presbytery for the welcome and invitations, encouraged the commissioners to pray for a special blessing this season of Thanksgiving and thanked all who completed their terms of service on Presbytery Committees. Resource Coordinator, Lisa Hedrick, called attention to the center's display, new leadership and advent resources and asked the gathering not to forget the drawing. Doug Sensabaugh, Communications and Hunger Action Coordinator, called attention to the "parade of church photos" on the website for the past two years, asking the commissioners to visit the Enough for Everyone Hunger Program web pages for ideas on how to live faithfully according to God's word.

Elder Paul Dana reported for the **Committee on Ministry**, pointing to the written report in the handbook containing actions taken and information. COM recommended and the Presbytery approve the sermon by Stan Farthing and received a brief statement of personal faith and commitment to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Upon recommendation, Presbytery conducted further examination of Mr. Farthing's Christian faith and views in theology, sacraments, Bible and government and approved his examination as a whole. Upon signing the Book of Obligations, Mr. Farthing was enrolled as a member of Shenandoah Presbytery. The terms of call of the contract between Mr. Farthing and the Zetta church were approved, along with a Commission to Ordain him as a tentmaker on February 14, 2010. Similarly, upon recommendation, the Presbytery approved the sermon preached by Candidate George Chapman, received a brief statement of personal faith and commitment, examined Mr. Chapman on his faith and views in theology, sacraments, Bible, and government and approved his examination as a whole. Upon signing the Book of Obligations he was enrolled as a member of Shenandoah Presbytery. The terms of Call from the Buena Vista Church to Mr. Chapman were approved, beginning November 23, 2009. It was noted that Mr. Chapman is to be ordained by the Presbytery of Charlotte

Mr. Dana introduced the Rev. H. Donald LaRue, Pastor-elect of Finley Memorial Church, sustained his examination following questions from the floor regarding his statement of Christian faith. Upon signing the Book of Obligations, Mr. LaRue was enrolled as a member of Shenandoah Presbytery. The terms of Call and a Commission to Install H. Donald LaRue at the Finley Memorial Church on December 13, 2010 were approved.

COM recommended and Presbytery approved the re-commissioning of the following Elders as Lay Pastors. Tom Forbes to Kearneysville Church; Paul R. Wolverton to the Tomahawk Church; Ronald Wilkes to the Bloomingery Church and Alvin Russell to the Halltown Church. Each were commissioned through December 31, 2012 and were authorized to perform the functions of the Book of Order G-14.0562 a-e. Their current mentors would continue to serve.

Kerry Foster, noting that he is the “face of **Shenandoah 2010**,” encouraged the commissioners to “learn who we are.” He made a power point presentation, which took a look at the Presbytery in comparison with our neighbors. He presented statistics which indicated the percentage of the population of Virginia and West Virginia who are members in the Presbytery. Calling attention to Luke 5:1-11, he encouraged those in attendance to “get into the boat” with Jesus and the disciples and to engaged in conversation with the Sessions concerning the future of the Presbytery.

Don Allen reported for **the Moffett Fund**, noting that it “helps us define who we are” and to “become servants,” as a central part of our identity. Rev. Reed Hopkins reported on the uses of the funds received by the Loch Willow Church, specifically two Baja trips during which the young people “built a house and a relationship” and “learned about God’s love and growing in faith.” Their participation was made possible by the Moffett Fund. Henry Moffett, nephew of Rev. Lyle Moore Moffett, whose estate provided the original funds, read a prepared statement entitled “Remembering Lyle Moore Moffett.” Noting that “Lyle Moffett’s mission was evangelism” with “passion for the youth in the church and for the unchurched.”

Kathleen Haines reported that there continues to be **Campus Ministry** at James Madison University and that it is “100% Presbyterian.” Noting that as “the funding has changed, that the ministry has changed,” Young Adult, Erin Bender of the Opequon Church and fourth-year student at JMU, announced a Winter College Conference to be held at Montreat, to which five students are going at a cost of \$110 each. She closed the report with a call for prayers and expressed the hope that college students will go to church in growing numbers.

David Witt, Ann Ross, and John Haney spoke about **the Rehoboth Project**, holding the various groups up as “opportunities for Pastors, Educators and CPEs to study and gain competence in central practices of ministry” and drawing on their individual experiences as members of the project. Noting that the grant from the Lilly Foundation runs out in December 2009, the Steering Committee has asked “how do we sustain Rehoboth?” Molly Ramkey reported on her desire to find a way to honor her parents. She told a story of “peeling peaches and parsing parables” and pointed to the Ramkey Fund, one third of which is being endowed by the family, another third of which is coming from other churches, and a final third which she called the Presbytery to provide.

Noting that the Ethiopian Partnership was established in 1989 through a covenant between the Illubabor Bethel Synod and Shenandoah Presbytery, Flo Boggs reminded us of the National Missions Committee goal to involve every congregation, every Pastor and every ministry in mission. Three members of the delegation from Ethiopia were introduced and spoke briefly about the partnership and what it has meant to them. Rev. Yadetta Kiritta shared statistics with the Presbytery: In 1989 the Ethiopian Synod had a membership of 30,000 which has grown to 349,000 today. Similarly, the number of congregations has increased over that period of time from 65 to 372 and the number of Pastors has grown from 4 to 235. Each of the speakers expressed their gratitude that teachers have been sent, urging the Presbytery to “continue to pray and work with us.” The conversation concluded with the presentation of a beautiful Ethiopian cross situated on a pole, with Christ’s cross in the center, surrounded by the 12 Apostles and doves, the symbol of peace and the presence of God’s Spirit.

Following a delicious **lunch**, tagged the “**Order of the day**,” Rev. Merle Fisher led the Presbytery in **Prayers of Intercession**, making specific reference to persons for whom prayers had been requested. The meeting of the Presbytery was paused, upon motion, and the meeting of the **Shenandoah Presbytery Corporation** was called to order with prayer. A motion to dispense of the reading the minutes of the last meeting was seconded and approved. Noting that the delegates to the corporation are those assembled commissioners of the Presbytery, the President explained the function of the corporation. Following comments on the current financial crisis, it was noted that the net income yield was similar to previous years, although actual income checks had reduced. It was reported that we have a “high quality, diversified portfolio of stocks (44%), bonds (40%), and real estate (4%) and that we “maintain a “long-term focus.” The members of the corporation received a financial report, July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 which was referred to throughout the presentation. The corporation meeting was adjourned and the meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery was resumed with prayer.

Charlotte Hott reported for Presbytery Council, calling the commissioners attention to Council’s written report of their meeting on October 13, 2009, which included the reception of reports on the work within the mission communities, work from the Treasurer, Lucille Gohdes that due to increasing fees with Wachovia bank, a new

checking account will be established with BB&T as well as a money market account with the Presbytery Investment and Loan Program, and recommended that the Corporation's annual audit for the period of July 1 – June 30 of each fiscal year be in the form of a compilation statement rather than a full audited statement unless there are triggering factors. It was noted that a proposed 3.15 percent increase for staff salaries would be reconsidered.

The report of the **Nominations Committee** involved an extended discussion of the candidates proposed to attend the 2010 General Assembly meeting, the process involved in receiving candidates, and the Book of Order requirements and presbytery manual guidelines which govern that process. The slate of nominations to serve on committees and those nominated to serve as moderators was approved. Barb Johnson, Chairperson of the **Nominations Committee**, thanked the chairs of committees who are stepping down and those who have agreed to be vice-chairs and then presented a revised slate of recommendations for YAAD, Elder and Minister Commissioners to GA. She then resigned as Chair and member of the Nominations Committee. Vice-chairperson John McDonald took over the presentation of the report and addressed the processes used by the committee, noting that the committee had followed the guidelines in presbytery's manual. Significant discussion followed focused on issues concerning representation. Fred Holbrook, Parliamentarian, and Moderator Held guided the Presbytery through the procedures which followed. An amendment to the revised slate of Elder and Minister Commissioners as well as respective alternates, was proposed and passed by a single vote. The Presbytery voted to have Council review the way we nominate Commissioners.

Homer Cornish referred Presbytery to the written report of **World Wide Ministries** and urged those congregations who do not currently support missions through our denomination to do so. He held up the Hedgesville Church as an example of a small church which makes a significant contribution to world-wide missions. Wray Sherman presented the **Budget and Finance Committee** report which included a second-reading of the proposed 2010 budget, an independent auditor's report, and statements of cash receipts and disbursements with notes. He explained the formula and rationale behind the new "askings" form which had been sent to the congregations, identifying congregation size, per capita, and needs of the Presbytery as significant elements. Ron Potter was asked to speak to the staff salary figures in the proposed budget, which are to be reconfigured. Chair Sherman asked the Presbytery to approve all of the budget with the exception if the staff salary figures, which will continue at the current level until the February 2010 meeting. The Presbytery approved this recommendation.

Rufus Burton reported for the **Boy Scouts of America**, referring the commissioners to the National Association of Presbyterian Scouters and the God and Country Program. He noted that 2010 will mark the centennial celebration of the Boy Scouts of America and that February 7, 2010 is designated as Scouts Sunday. He encouraged the congregations to become involved with the BSA, noting that "this is an easy, cheap and well-known way to do ministry in the community." Rev. Burton then gave the report of the **Committee on Preparation for Ministry**, recommending that the Presbytery adopt the Advisory Handbook, published by the Office of Preparation for Ministry and Examination Services of the General Assembly. The recommendation was approved. Inquirer Joan Wilson was presented Joan Wilson as a Candidate for Ministry. Following an examination by the Presbytery, the constitutional questions were asked by the Moderator and Lisa Webb, Pastor of Ms. Wilson's home church, charged the candidate and offered a prayer.

After explaining the **Church Development Committee's** charge and responsibilities, David Witt recognized Skip Hastings who reported on the Committee's newest venture, seminary interns for congregations in Shenandoah Presbytery. He encouraged small membership churches to consider hiring a seminary intern, noting that the CCD has funds available through grants for small-membership churches.

Lisa Hedrick, Resource Coordinator, announced the winner of the drawing for "Beatrice's goat." The Presbytery meeting was adjourned with prayer by Moderator Ann Held at 3:20 p.m.

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Shenandoah will be Saturday, February 13, 2010, at the Spring Hill Church in Staunton, Virginia, beginning at 9:30 a.m.