

**140<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery**  
**Keyser Presbyterian Church**  
**Keyser, West Virginia**

Shenandoah Presbytery was called to order at 9:30 am on Tuesday, November 11, 2008 by Moderator, Commissioned Lay Pastor Ron Wilkes, at Keyser Presbyterian Church. The weather was cold and damp, but the greeting inside for food, fellowship and registration was warm and welcoming. Worship was planned and arranged by the Potomac Highlands Mission Community, members of which led the service of worship. The assembled commissioners were treated to two sermons, as Candidates Randall E. Webb and Jonathan Bromhead completed the preaching requirement of their examination for ordination on the floor of Presbytery.

A quorum was determined, temporary clerks were appointed, the minutes of the August 23, 2008 Stated Meeting were approved without correction. Rev. David Witt, Chair of the Church Development Committee presented a piece of New Business, in which the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Martinsburg, WV, requests permission of the Presbytery to contract a mortgage of no more than \$80,000 for the purpose of acquiring property at 224 S. Queen Street, Martinsburg. The docket was then adopted.

The Stated Clerk presented a verbal report, calling attention to the items of information in the handbook and supplement, including reports on cases, counsels and commissions in operation, reports from the General Assembly Fall Polity Conference, addressing issues related to Authoritative Interpretations, actions of the 218<sup>th</sup> GA related to G-6.0106b and G-6.0108, and two items recommended for action: the Presbytery **approved** that the Moderator **appoint two new members** to the Administrative Commission for the Poplar Hill Church to fill vacancies; the Minutes of the Commission to Install the Rev. Elizabeth McCrary at the Augusta Stone Church, the Minutes of the Commission to Install the Rev. Scott A. Conrad at the Glen Kirk Church and the Minutes of the Commission to Ordain and Install the Rev. Melissa L. Harmon at the Monterey Field. The Presbytery then approved the **Omnibus Motion** through which the Presbytery received and entered into the record the auditor's report for the year ending December 31, 2007; approved All Supplemental Reports and verbal reports associated with them, as items of business of the day and all requests for excused absences for this meeting received by the Presbytery Office.

Rev. Jonathan Bunker, Chair of Presbytery Council requested to speak before General Presbyter Tom Hay made his report. Rev. Bunker recognized Rev. Ron Potter, Chair of Council's Personnel Committee. Rev. Potter then announced with regret that Tom Hay had been offered and had accepted a position as Director of Operations and Assistant to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly in Louisville, KY noting that he would be leaving Shenandoah Presbytery effective December 15, 2008. Rev. Fred Holbrook was called forward to lead the Presbytery with guitar and voice in singing a tribute to Tom, which consisted of words composed to the popular tune "Louie, Louie." The words to the refrain were displayed for the attending commissioners by means of a power point presentation. After the singing, Rev. Bunker called Tom Hay up, gave a brief statement of gratitude for his eight years of service to the Presbytery, presented Tom with a certificate especially made for the occasion and led the commissioners in a Litany of Celebration and Blessing for Tom Hay, noting that we are "commissioning" Tom for service in the Office of the General Assembly.

General Presbyter Tom Hay then gave his report to the Presbytery, using a power point presentation, highlighting the eight years of his tenure, and calling attention to the things that were accomplished during that time, including restructuring the Presbytery, trimming back the annual budget and maintaining a lower budget than before, supporting and refurbishing Camp Paddy Run. He also turned Presbytery's attention to things that were not accomplished and which still need the attention of the Presbytery, focusing on evangelism and church growth, and multi-cultural and diversity concerns. Tom concluded his report with an expression of gratitude for the Presbytery and of blessing for our future work. A standing ovation followed.

Resource Coordinator Lisa Hedrick described the display that she had brought including new things for Sunday School and Bible Study teachers, Advent materials and a curriculum called *Just Eating*. Lisa reminded the commissioners to register for the drawing. A copy of *Just Eating* curriculum was included in the bag to be awarded to the one holding the winning ticket.

Moderator Ron Wilkes commented on the sermons preached during worship, recognized guests and first-time Elders, welcoming them to the meeting and expressed his thanks for Tom Hay's years of service, wishing him well in his new work in Louisville. Rev. Ernest Poland, Pastor of the Keyser Church welcomed the commissioners, gave a brief history of the church and communicated his excitement about the ministry there.

As always, the Committee on Ministry report was extensive. Highlights of their report include the following: approved the following Salary Committee recommendation: that the COM approve a range of 4 – 5.6% cost of living adjustment for minister salaries and housing allowance effective January 1, 2009; approved the following Salary Committee recommendation: the Committee recommended that a church should pay an interim what was being paid the previous pastor and in the case where someone is working half-time or three-quarter time, the salary would be adjusted accordingly; approved to recommend to Presbytery the terms of call between the Harrisonburg First Church and Candidate Jonathan A. Bromhead; granted permission to Jonathan A. Bromhead to move on the field at Harrisonburg First and begin serving immediately following the meeting of the congregation on August 24, 2008.

Following a blessing, the Presbytery broke for lunch as we were behind in the docket and the food was ready. After lunch, the Moderator called the Presbytery to order, an Intercessory Prayer was given by the Rev. Ernest Poland, and the report of the Committee on Ministry resumed: following the Committee's recommendation, the Presbytery sustained the examination

of Rev. Betty Jean Young, (transferring from the Presbytery of the Redwoods) the Rev. Philip H. Young, (transferring from the Presbytery of the Redwoods) and the Rev. Forest "Lee" McDermott, (transferring from the Presbytery of West Virginia), following the statement of their Christian experience and questions from the floor and enrolled them as a member of Presbytery as honorably retired following the examination and the signing of the Book of Obligations. The Presbytery then approved the terms of call to the Rev. Forest "Lee" McDermott from the Buckton Church beginning December 1, 2008.

After an examination on the floor, the Presbytery received a brief statement of personal faith and commitment to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, conducted further examination of the candidates' Christian faith and views in theology, sacraments, Bible, and government of this church as deemed necessary (G-14.0402), approved the sermons as required by (G-14.0305j[6]) of Candidates Randall E. Webb (Shenandoah Presbytery) and Jonathan A. Bromhead (National Capital Presbytery). Both candidates' examinations were approved as a whole and they were enrolled as members of Shenandoah Presbytery. Commissions to Ordain and Install along with Terms of Call were approved for both candidates. Bobby Spurgeon was commissioned as lay Pastor of the Parish of the Pastures through December 31, 2011, authorized to perform the functions of the Book of Order G-14.0562 e at the Parish of the Pastures. Following the recommendation of COM, John Haney was appointed as mentor/supervisor of Mr. Spurgeon. Tony Wilson was commissioned as lay pastor of the Ivanhoe and Wardensville churches through December 31, 2011, authorized to perform the functions of the Book of Order G-14.0562 a-e at the Ivanhoe and Wardensville churches. Richard Slider was appointed mentor/supervisor of Mr. Wilson.

Sarah Hill and Dan McCoig gave a brief presentation on the changes proposed by the San Jose General Assembly affecting G-6.0106b. A statement of the current and proposed wording of G-6.0106b was available in the Supplemental Report given to commissioners. The intent of their presentation was to clarify what G-6.0106b would be, should the proposed change be approved by the presbyteries. The Rev. Homer T. Cornish, Chair of the World Wide Missions Committee, read parts of the Committee's written report to Presbytery Council and presented an Elder from Spring Hill Presbyterian Church for commissioning to overseas work. The Presbytery commissioned the Elder and reaffirmed its commitment to spreading the love of Christ around the world.

The Presbytery meeting was suspended briefly, in order to open a meeting of the Shenandoah Presbytery Corporation to receive the financial report to the members of the corporation *July 1, 2007 through JUNE 30, 2008*. A written copy of that report had been made available to commissioners. The report was given by Treasurer B. Randolph Roller with explanation that the actual value of the Presbytery's investments was considerably less than stated in the report, due to the current sharp downturn in the economy. Gratitude was expressed for the service of outgoing President H. Roller Shipplett, Jr. The meeting of the corporation was closed and the Presbytery meeting resumed. A request was made that the report of the Divestment Task Force be delayed until they could return from a brief meeting. The request was granted.

Martin Stokes, reporting for the Communications Committee, informed the commissioners that someone would be sent to churches requesting assistance with the Presbytery webpage and with developing Front Page for the churches. David Witt, reporting for the Church Development Committee, expressed his pleasure with the success of the recent Magnetic Church Conference presented by Andrew Weeks on November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> at the Opequon Church in Winchester. Rev. Witt passed out a written request from First Church, Martinsburg, requesting permission to spend up to \$80,000 to purchase property adjacent to the church. Rev. Rufus Burton, Pastor of the church, responded to questions. The request was approved. Wray Sherman, reporting for the Budget and Finance Committee, presented the proposed Presbytery budget for 2009 for a second reading. Following questions and discussion, the budget was approved.

The Officers of the Corporation returned to the floor of Presbytery and Phil Sommer presented the report of the Divestment Task Force. A written report of the meeting of the task force was made available and the following proposal was put before the Presbytery: ***That Shenandoah Presbytery instruct the Shenandoah Presbytery Corporation Board of Directors to adopt and continue to be guided by the Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Committee of the General Assembly divestment list in the selection of individual securities for inclusion in the portfolio of investments.*** After extensive discussion and an extension of the allotted time, the question was called and the Presbytery approved the Task Force's proposal. Rev. Daniel S. Williams, Pastor of Second Church in Staunton, registered his dissent to the action:

*"I wish to register my dissent to the action of Presbytery regarding divestment policy. MRTI's divestment work is based on policies of the General Assembly regarding Peacemaking and the role of the military which never have been debated or acted upon by Shenandoah Presbytery. If the Presbytery feels that a divestment policy is needed, we should make these decisions locally, where such issues can be fully and fairly debated, not decided by a distant group that is not directly accountable to the Presbytery." Daniel S. Williams, Staunton Second*

Rev. Rufus Burton, Chairperson, presented a written report on behalf of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The Presbytery approved the recommendation that Joan Wilson, member of the Woodstock Church be placed on the roll of inquirers under the care of Shenandoah Presbytery; that Inquirer Emily Miller of the Cooks Creek Church be placed on the roll of candidates under the care of Shenandoah Presbytery; and, following extensive discussion, that Inquirer Jeffrey Hicks of First Church, Harrisonburg, be allowed to present a transcript from a theological institution not accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (G-14.0450c). Barb Johnson, Chairperson of the Nominations Committee presented a slate of nominations to committees that was completed by the Presbytery, acting as a committee of the whole. The slate of nominees was approved. The Presbytery then received a report from the Payday Lending Task Force.

An extensive report was also presented by Rev. Jonathan Bunker for Presbytery Council. A written report, including items for information, communication of actions taken and recommendations were presented in the handbook and supplemental report. The following actions were taken by Council: Approved a document submitted by Treasurer Lucile Gohdes entitled "Memorandum of Understanding" that defined relationships and responsibilities between the Presbytery and The Camp Paddy Run Steering Committee; Referred issues related to the use and upkeep of the Presbytery Office building both short and long term to the Vision and Mission Committee; Approved a recommendation by Budget and Finance to carry over unused 2008 Continuing Education Funds for the Office Coordinator, Cheri Bowman, and the Assistant for Constitution, Kim Stroupe, to the 2009 Budget; Approved the recommendation of Budget and Finance to print the second reading of the 2009 budget in the Presbytery Handbook and present it to the body for their approval; Gave permission to the World Wide Ministries Division to hold a commissioning service of Missionary Gail Smith who will be serving in Tajikistan under the auspices of Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship during the Presbytery meeting.

The following recommendations were made by Presbytery Council and approved by the Presbytery: That the Presbytery's portion of the funds collected in the 2008 Peace Making Offering be redesignated from the Living Waters Project to Hunger Relief and that the funds be distributed by the Funds Administration Committee. This request was brought to Council by Doug Sensabaugh, the Shenandoah Presbytery Hunger Action Enabler, in recognition of the growing shortage in the inventories of Food Pantries throughout the Presbytery that is symptomatic of the greater problem of a growing global food crisis. That unused funds budgeted for Professional Development in 2008 be carried over to 2009 to underwrite a Spirituality Conference being planned for the Fall of 2009; That Barbara Johnson, Pastor of the Romney Presbyterian Church, be elected to serve as Chair of the Presbytery's Nominating Committee; That Lucile Gohdes be elected to serve as the Presbytery's Treasurer for 2009; That Jan Owen be elected to serve as the Presbytery's Stated Clerk for 2009; That the Presbytery approve an appeal to all Sessions and Congregations of the Presbytery from the World Wide Ministry Division to ask every member to donate an extra \$2.00 in 2009 designated for Mission Initiative 2009-2010 that seeks to fund 20 new positions within the mission field; That the Presbytery continue its relationship with the Camp Paddy Run Steering Committee for another six years asking them to report again in 2014.

There were 193 in attendance. Presbytery will meet on Saturday, February 14, 2009, at the Massanutten Presbyterian Church beginning at 9:00 a.m.