

Interim Executive Presbyter, Forrest Palmer, highlighted the work of the newly organized **Relations Committee**. This committee will focus on cluster development and communication throughout the presbytery. Mr. Palmer called on chair, Nancy Tissue who gave an overview of the committee's initial meetings.

Additional written reports included in the presbytery packet were received from the **Vocations Committee** and the **Trustees**.

The Meeting was adjourned with prayer by Moderator Stewart.

Upcoming Events

(Details at www.wvpresbytery.org or call 304-744-7634)

- Presby Prep**, Clifton & Teays Valley Presbyterian Churches, March 15 & 22
- The Children's Spring Fling**, Friends of Bluestone, First Presbyterian Church, South Charleston, March 29
- Festival of Faith** First Presbyterian Church, Charleston, April 5
- Guys Weekend** Bluestone Camp & Conference Center, April 25-27

Next Stated Meeting

Saturday, May 3, 2014 at Harless Community Center, Gilbert

Digest Prepared by Maureen Wright, Stated Clerk

PRESBYTERY STAFF

Forrest Palmer	Interim Executive Presbyter
Maureen Wright.....	Stated Clerk
Lois Coffey	Financial Administrator/Treasurer
Craig Butler	Transitional Associate for Congregational Development
Claire Butler	Interim Hunger Action Enabler and Ministry with Older Adults
Susan Sharp Campbell	Associate for Educational Ministry
Karen Robinson	Resource Center Director
Leslie Curtis	Office Administrator
Mark Miller.....	Director of Bluestone Conference Center

PRESBYTERY OFFICE HOURS

8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday thru Thursday

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Presbytery Digest

Meeting of the Presbytery of West Virginia

February 18, 2014

The Presbytery met at First Presbyterian Church, Parkersburg, WV, with **Moderator** Joan Stewart presiding. The Presbytery was welcomed by Rev. Mike Seely, Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Parkersburg and on behalf of the entire Parkersburg Cluster. The **Stated Clerk** then welcomed new Teaching Elder Laryetta Ellis serving Edgewood Presbyterian Church, Lewisburg. Ruling Elders attending their first Presbytery meeting as a commissioner were also welcomed. John McDonald of Shenandoah Presbytery was seated as a corresponding member for the duration of his service as Interim Pastor to the Marlinton Presbyterian Church. Stated Clerk, Maureen Wright, declared a **quorum** present with 57 Teaching Elders and Ruling Elder Commissioners from 36 churches.

Following the approval of the docket, the **Consent Agenda** was adopted. Items on the consent agenda included the approval of excused absences and the approval of session moderators: Julie Sterling, Sugar Grove Presbyterian, Morgantown; Robin Ray, First Presbyterian, Kingwood. In addition, five Temporary Supply covenants were approved, match and terms of call for Laryetta Ellis were approved, the Honorable Retirement requests for John Riley and Ron Buckalew were granted, and various covenants were renewed.

The **Consent Agenda** also approved the worship offering to go to the Crisis Assistance Grant fund being used to help those affected by the recent chemical spill and economic strain that resulted from purchasing water, sanitizer, and prepared foods or being out of work. These funds are available to churches, food pantries, and Ministerial Associations in the nine county area affected by the spill. The offering totaled \$1,172.

Moderator, Joan Stewart, appointed **Temporary Clerks**: Rev. John Koerner, Rev. Dr. Shelly Barrick Parsons, Ruling Elder Joyce Armentrout, and CRE Bill Dunfee. The Moderator also appointed Leadership Team members present as the **Bills and Overtures Committee**.

Presbytery then **worshipped** together under the leadership of Teaching Elder Elizabeth Campbell-Maleke, who preached, Ruling Elder Donna Kramer as liturgist, and Teaching Elder John Ruehl and CRE Jean Summerfield who presided at the Table. The necrology of Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders for 2013 was

read as part of the liturgy. Worship also included the musical leadership of a joint choir from the Parkersburg Cluster.

The highlight of the morning was a presentation from the **Westminster Foundation**. Shelly Barrick Parsons, campus pastor at WVU, presented *Mission Possible: Ministering to College Students Near and Far*. She was joined by Dana Sutton, campus pastor at Marshall, Kevin Starcher, Benfield Vick Chaplain at Davis and Elkins College, and Tina Vial, Coordinator of Church Relations at Davis and Elkins. Presbyters reflected in small groups on college student ministry “case studies”. The small groups were asked to generate ways congregations could respond to these situations. Following the time of reflection, the groups were asked to share their best ideas with the Presbytery. In closing each presenter challenged churches and individuals to reach out to college students!

The afternoon session began with a hymn and prayer led by Moderator, Joan Stewart. Business began with the **Stated Clerk’s Report**. Maureen Wright, Stated Clerk, presented the **Procedural Matters**. The Presbytery was reminded that our new manual grants the privilege of voice and vote to all Ruling Elder members of the Leadership Team and all Ruling Elder Committee chairs.

The **Bluestone Committee Report** was given by Nellie Howard. Each person present was given a fig bar labeled with an inspirational quote about Bluestone. Presbyters were asked to think of ways to support Bluestone and its programs. Camp registration has begun and churches are encouraged to participate in the *Send-A-Kid-to-Camp* initiative. Presbyters were also invited to participate in Guy’s Weekend, Spring Getaway, the Golf Tournament and the Fall Getaway.

A revised budget was presented by Dave Lee, **Stewardship Committee** chair. The revised budget reflects moving the entire compensation package for the Director of Bluestone Camp and Conference Center from the budget of Bluestone to the budget of the Presbytery of West Virginia, under the Administration Committee. This would replace the PWV’s support of BCCC as found in the covenant with Friends of Bluestone. In addition, the revision would no longer ask BCCC to pay the cost of their property insurance. Finally, donor designated funds would then be reassigned to cover the additional expense of the overall costs to the PWV. The revised budget was approved.

Treasurer Lois Coffey presented the financial reports. Ms. Coffey also provided information about the planned giving efforts of two Presbyters who named the Presbytery in their wills. She encouraged consideration of planned giving by others. In conclusion, information was presented related to the Small Employer Health Care Tax Credit which applies to many churches; churches needing more information should contact Lois Coffey at the Presbytery office.

Kari Preslar presented the **Nurture Committee** report. The committee has created a **Nurturing Faith** list. This list provides one idea or activity for each Sunday of the year. These are meant to encourage faith development in people of all ages. The list was emailed to each congregation and is available online. Youth Council nominations/applications will be sent to churches early in March. There is a particular need for adult male members. Scholarship loan and grant applications will be sent to all churches in mid-March. The deadline for applications is April 30.

The **Leadership Team** report was presented by chair, Pam Ferrell. The team recommended approval of the Presbytery’s concurrence of Overture 029 from the Presbytery of San Francisco *On a two year study to discern how to advocate for effective drug policies*. Ms. Ferrell shared the Leadership Team’s belief that this particular overture addresses a major problem in West Virginia that is arguably the root of most of the crime committed in our communities. Concurrence was approved. **Ruling Elder Commissioner to General Assembly**, Jim Rowe was approved as an advocate on behalf of the Presbytery for this overture.

The **Ministry Committee**, represented by Cinda Harkless, recommended the approval of an undesignated time period for the length of waivers for the rotation of officers. The recommendation was approved. The committee also recommended the adoption of a policy that would allow teaching elders in associate pastor, temporary pastor and interim pastor positions to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor. Following a lively debate, the recommendation was defeated. Presbytery sent the issue back to the committee for further reflection and study.

Jim Robinson, Board Member, shared the history and ministry of **West Virginia Ministry of Advocacy and Workcamps**. Since 2001 WVMAW has offered the opportunity for discipleship by partnering with those in need whose lives have been devastated by natural disasters or by the disaster of poverty throughout West Virginia.

Todd Wright presented the report of the **Missions Committee**. Five regional ministries (David and Elkins College, Davis Stewart, the Shack, Westminster Foundation and WVMAW) were awarded grants totaling \$36,000. In addition, five new grants were made totaling \$13,400. Dr. Wright called on John McKinnon who shared moving reflections from his recent trip to Nicaragua to visit CEPAD.

The **Nominating Committee** presented for election to the Nurture Committee, Class of 2014 Barbara Palmer and the Stewardship Committee, Class of 2016 Carlene Cox. Both were unanimously elected. Commissioner Alternate for the 221st General Assembly was elected: Teaching Elder Charla Waters Koerner. In addition Presbytery elected Michael Stivers, Class of 2015 to serve on Synod’s Self-Development of People committee.