



Presbytery Center
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Together Transforming
Lives, Congregations, Communities, World
Connected to the Synod of the Northeast and Presbyterian Church (USA)

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

January 21, 2010

By Robert N. Burkins, Sr.

I got through my first meeting as Moderator of Newark Presbytery! Hurray! Actually, I enjoyed it.

I want to thank the Revs. Becca Migliore and Larry Bauerband, along with the St. Cloud session, for all the hard work that went into hosting our meeting. I also want to thank each of you, my sisters and brothers in Christ and in creation, for your presence and participation. Twenty-two ministers and forty-two elders representing twenty-three churches of our Presbytery were in attendance with sixty-one members of the Mass Choir representing various churches within the Presbytery.

I sensed an increased flow of energy and optimism in our gathering. If that is the case, I pray that the enthusiasm for our shared ministry will continue to grow. We have wonderful problems and awesome challenges as a Presbytery, but by the grace of God, and in partnership with one another, we shall give birth to meaningful transformation in our Presbytery, churches and the communities we serve.

I want to highlight several exciting things that happened at the Presbytery meeting:

- An offering in the amount of \$ 1,128.21 was received for earthquake disaster relief in Haiti. Sessions have been asked to prayerfully consider receiving an offering for Haiti at least one Sunday this month. The goal is for the churches of the Presbytery of Newark to contribute a minimum of \$25,000 to this effort by the end of this month. Some individuals and congregations have already given through PC (USA) Disaster Assistance, the American Red Cross and other channels. Whether you received an offering and sent it to Presbytery Center, or gave through some other agency, please take a moment to let the Presbytery office know of your contribution so it can be added to our total and your church can receive credit. Thanks for your congregation's generous response to our brothers and sisters in Haiti who have experienced an unimaginable and devastating loss.
- The Presbytery unanimously approved its 2010 budget. Thanks to the Finance Team and the Presbytery staff for going the extra mile to present a budget that represents good stewardship of Presbytery resources and expresses our determination to help increase ministry effectiveness within our 41 congregations. Let's all be diligent in getting our per capita and general mission commitments to the Presbytery office quickly. When we all do our part, we will achieve our ministry objectives.
- The Presbytery approved an overture to the 219th General Assembly (2010) from the Globalization/Middle East Work Team concerning Divestment from Caterpillar, Inc.. The

Presbytery also approved funding for an advocate to the General Assembly to support the overture. The full text of the overture will be posted on the Presbytery's website. Special thanks for the thought, energy and time invested in crafting and presenting this overture to the Presbytery. Thanks to the Rev. Lou Kilgore for a compelling presentation of the overture. Great work!

- The Rev. Mac McArthur, on behalf of the Mission Council's Hunger Work Team, challenged the congregations of the Presbytery to participate in this year's Souper Bowl of Caring on February 7th. Souper Bowl of Caring equips and mobilizes congregations, schools and businesses to positively have an impact on their communities by collecting money or food on or near Super Bowl weekend. 100% of the collections are donated directly to the charity of each group's choice. Be sure to register if you have not already.
- Our General Presbyter, Dr. Kevin Yoho, challenged sessions to consider and celebrate what is happening through their ministries, inviting each session to take a fresh look at its congregation's vitality in 2010. He will be meeting with each session to listen, learn, and provide assessment resources.
- Mr. Nick Wallwork, youth director at the PC Upper Montclair, challenged the churches of our Presbytery to register for this year's Youth Triennium at Purdue University July 20-24. The total cost is \$ 409 and a limited number of partial scholarships are available. Registration form is online. Contact Nick for more information at nick@pcum.org. We also were updated about Camp Johnsonburg from its director, Mr. Mike Socia.
- The West Orange Administrative Commission reported that it is nearing completion of its work on a Plan of Union among Patterson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Ridgeview Community Church and the St. Cloud Presbyterian Church. AC moderator, Elder Connie Cosgrove, said the Plan will come before the Presbytery for action at the March meeting.
- The Human Resource Team's moderator, the Rev. Dr. Paul Leggett, announced the completion of evaluations for our Presbytery staff which was overwhelmingly positive and helpful. Appreciation was expressed for the valuable work the staff does on behalf of the Presbytery.
- The Presbytery approved the Mission Council's proposal for conducting the mandatory evaluation of the Presbytery's structure and its standing rules. Special thanks to the Rev. Dr. Rick Boyer for agreeing to spearhead this effort.

I pray that each of us will make plans to attend the March 20, 2010 presbytery meeting at Bloomfield Presbyterian Church on the Green. It's going to be fun! And, we're going to get out on time.

Thank you for the privilege of serving you. Please keep me in your prayers.

-The Rev. Robert N. Burkins, Sr.