

Eastminster Presbytery met at the Firestone Park Presbyterian Church in Akron. Rev. John Gruneich, Moderator, convened the meeting with prayer. A welcome was provided by interim pastor Lynn Thompson Bryant.

Family Remembrances – Prayers concerns included the Rev. Peter Lawson (pastor of Brownlee Woods Church, Army reserve chaplain stationed in Iraq), the Rev. Kay Roberts (pastor of Kent Church, severe back pain), Goldie Burrier (President of PW, serious health problems), and the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Congratulations were extend to the Rev. Debby Dockstader (listed in “Who’s Who In American Women”), a bicentennial celebration (Aug. 28) by the Liberty Church, a bicentennial celebration (Oct. 1-2) by the Vienna Church, and a 50 year anniversary celebration (Nov. 5) by the Wickliffe Church. Commissioners to the Synod Assembly were recognized: Rev. Rein Krone, Rev. Larry Stewart, Rev. Todd Allen, Elder Charlotte Floyd, Elder Lynn Doyle, Elder Ruth Cole (excused).

Consent Agenda – Included were the designation of the offering to the Peacemaking Offering, the election of the Rev. Carolyn Griffeth to the Congregational Resources Committee, the approval of the commission to install the Rev. John Besore as pastor of the Salem, First Church on September 18 at 3:00 p.m., a first reading of a proposed change to the Manual of Operations to add a vice-president to the Trustees, approve change in dates for the December Committee night (to Dec. 6) and the meetings of the Councils (to Dec. 15), approved enrolling Timothy Slager (Hudson Church) as an inquirer for ministry, and the approval of the Ethiopia Education Endowment Fund becoming an extra commitment opportunity of Eastminster Presbytery.

General Presbyter’s Report – Rev. Dan Schomer introduced two new pastors to the presbytery—the Rev. John Besore (Salem, First) and the Rev. J. Christy Ramsey (Akron, Goodyear Heights). A motion was approved to authorize the Coordinating Council, in consultation with the Theological Reflection Group conveners and the General Presbyter, to plan area events to reflect upon and discuss the final report of the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity, and Purity.

Congregational Resources—Rev. Tom Niccolls reported on the change of dates for the visit of the international peacemaker and informed the presbytery that the report of the survey on peacemaking within Eastminster Presbytery was being distributed.

Common Ground—Rev. Steve Fortenberry shared news on the progress relating to the purchase of the former Mellinger’s Nursery property. Motion prevailed to call a special meeting of Eastminster Presbytery on November 13 at 3:00 p.m. for the purpose of carrying out all business relating to the chartering of Common Ground.

Trustees – Rev. Jim Henkel reported on mission and per capita pay-up in 2005 and shared the welcome news that mission dollars to General Assembly are paid up through July. Motion prevailed to approve the 2006 Askings Budget for a total of \$444,908.30.

Evangelism and Church Growth—Rev. Richard Ferris reminded the presbytery of the Acts 16:5 two-day event coming up November 11-12 at Warren, First Church.

Committee on Ministry—The Rev. Nick Mager reported. The following actions were taken by the COM—approved the extension of the interim contract of the Rev. Condie Watters as interim pastor of the Wickliffe Church through Dec. 31, 2005; approved the half-time interim pastor covenant between the Rev. Lynn Thompson Bryant and the Akron, Firestone Park Church; approved the call of the Rev. J.

Christy Ramsey as pastor of the Akron, Goodyear Heights Church; approved the temporary supply relationship between Elder Sue Reynolds, lay pastor, and the East Palestine, First Church; urged personnel committees, sessions, and congregations to consider a 3% increase in 2006 for all pastoral and non-pastoral staff; and approved a revised “Guidelines for Honorarium and Expense Reimbursement.” Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Ministry, Eastminster Presbytery took the following actions: Approved the commissioning of Elder Sue Reynolds as Commissioned Lay Pastor at the First United Presbyterian Church of East Palestine and Elder Bill Hostetler as Commissioned Lay Pastor at the Oak Hill Presbyterian Church, Akron; voted to increase the minimum effective salary for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament in Eastminster Presbytery from \$35,000 to \$36,050; approved the installation service for the Rev. J. Christy Ramsey to be installed as pastor of the Akron, Goodyear Heights Church on October 16, 2005, at 4:00 p.m.; approved dissolving the position of Associate Pastor at the Canfield Presbyterian Church; and approved for the Rev. John Gruneich and the Rev. Richard Hasler to labor outside the ecclesiastical bounds of Eastminster Presbytery.

Joseph Badger Meadows— Rev. Ross Slaughter reminded the presbytery of the Middle School Retreat to be held at JBM September 22-23.

Communication and Nurture—Rev. Todd Allen stressed the importance of the Pastor’s Retreat October 3-5 at JBM.

The Presbytery at Worship – Focusing on the theme of St. Francis, the Rev. Meta Cramer, the Rev. Lynn Thompson Bryant, and the Rev. Mark Phillips, led the presbytery in reflecting on the blessings and value of God’s good creation and its creatures, including a video clip from “The Vicar of Dibley.” The service ended with the blessing of the presbyters’ pets (in absentia). The meeting of Eastminster Presbytery adjourned with the benediction at the conclusion of the worship service.

The presbytery enjoyed a delicious dinner in the fellowship hall of the Firestone Park Church.

Following dinner, the Presbytery heard a keynote address on stewardship by the Rev. Marie Cross, Co-Executive of the Synod of the Covenant, followed by six workshops provided by the Rev. Marie Cross, the Rev. Dan Schomer, Mrs. Lorraine Jones, the Rev. Mark Ruppert, Mr. Aaron Meadows, and Mr. Stephen Keizer.

The next Stated Meeting will be held at the First Presbyterian Church, Barberton, on November 8, 2005, at 5:00 p.m.