

Presbytery Council
April 1, 2008

Presbytery Council met on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, at the Presbytery Center. The meeting convened with devotions and prayer by the Council Moderator, Rev. Ken Foust. Rev. Foust opened by asking who had experienced an April Fools joke today, then he read an April Fools passage- 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 where Paul proclaims that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing.

Present

Bernice Adams	Bonnie Hartley
Ross Bash	Douglas Holben, ex-officio
Susan Blank, ex-officio	Helen Kester
Cynthia Cadenhead	Phyllis Neral
Gary Close, ex-officio	Michael Orsted
Carole Isley Corey, ex-officio	William Rogers
Cheryl Croushore, ex-officio	Charles West
Ken Foust	

Excused

Martin Ankrum	Robert Downs, ex-officio
Keith Conover	Glenn Hart

Absent

Gerald Cumer, ex-officio

Correspondence

None

Introduction of new members of Council

Reverend Foust introduced Charles West, the newest member of the Council. Members of Council introduced themselves to Chuck.

Adoption of the Agenda

It was **MSP** to approve the agenda as printed.

Approval of the Minutes

It was **MSP** to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2008, meeting as printed and the minutes of the March 13, 2008 Council Retreat with the following addition: (under the discussion of the St. Paul's situation) "In an extended discussion of how Council might respond at the meeting of Presbytery, it was **MSP** to assign Phyllis Neral to present the recommendation of Council that Presbytery not concur with the request of the St. Paul's congregation."

Treasurer's Report

In the absence of the Treasurer, Rev. Holben presented the March financial report speaking to changes the Bookkeeper is making in submission procedures. He also pointed out that as of the end of the first month we are slightly ahead of the annual expectation for FirstFruits giving.

Report of the Stated Clerk

Reverend Close presented the following items:

1. Reverend Close presented his resignation from Council as an elected member because of the conflict of interest since he is serving as Stated Clerk.
2. He then presented the following information about next steps in dealing with the action of Presbytery regarding the dismissal of the St. Paul's congregation, received from Mark Tammen at the Stated Clerk's Office at the General Assembly.

- a. Our minutes of that meeting should reflect the process we followed. He said the Timeline created by Phyllis Neral would be fine.
- b. We need to obtain a set of mailing labels for all members of the St. Paul's Church with which to contact them to identify those persons desiring to be transferred with the Church to the EPC. [Cards should be send soon with a deadline of approximately May 10th to allow time to collate the list of those desiring to be transferred to the EPC.]
- c. Prior to the next meeting of Presbytery I will write a letter to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of the East of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church stating the following: "The Presbytery of Redstone of the Presbyterian Church (USA) at their stated meeting on March 29, 2008, acted to approve the request of the St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Somerset, PA to be dismissed to the Presbytery of the East of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. We hereby transfer to the Presbytery of the East of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church the Reverend Keith Fink, pastor; the members identified on the attached sheet; and the property of the congregation both real and personal."
- d. I would report that action to the Presbytery at our next meeting.
- e. The names of those who did not respond in the affirmative would be passed on to the Committee on Ministry to be contacted and invited to consider either transferring their membership to another PC(USA) congregation near where they live, joining with others to undertake re-establishing a PC(USA) presence in Somerset, or allowing their membership to remain with the Presbytery until such time as their circumstances change or until the deadline for action set by the COM is reached.

It was **MSP** to delay implementation of these actions until the period during which an appeal may be filed by any commissioner in attendance at the stated meeting of Presbytery on March 29, 2008, has expired. [That period is 90 days from the date of the meeting.]

Report of the Executive Presbyter

1. At our Presbytery meeting on March 29th we dismissed the Somerset, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). I am deeply grieved at this outcome, despite the many extraordinary efforts to prevent this eventuality of the hostile intents of the New Wineskins Association of Churches and the EPC.
2. In March I visited the Greensburg, Maplewood; Connellsville (2); New Alexandria, Congruity; Greensburg, Westminster; Murrysville, Newlonsburg; Somerset, St. Paul's; Liesenring; Dunbar, First; and Delmont Presbyterian Churches. I also met with six pastors from other churches in our Presbytery during the course of the month of March.
3. Let us continue to be in prayer for the Pastor Nominating Committees of the Delmont; Farmington, Mt. Washington; Johnstown, First; and Latrobe Presbyterian (Director of Christian Education) Churches as they discern God's call for pastoral and educational leadership for the future of their churches.
4. During the month of March I met with the Presbytery Council (at the Council Retreat), the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, the Strategy for Ministry Development Team, the Company of Pastors, the Presbyterian Church (USA) General Assembly Council, the District III pastors, and the Presbytery of Redstone.
5. I continue my major responsibilities with the Partnership for Missional Church (including supervision of the Presbytery's Student Field Education Student), the Board of Pensions Grant for Leadership Development of Pastors for "first call and new call pastors," and the Re-Forming Ministry Project of the Lilly Foundation.

6. I took 3 vacation days in March to visit my younger son and his wife, to hear his tuba recital, visit Disneyland, and golf! I came home sick and was off for two days trying to recuperate from the flu.
7. We lost our treasurer, Debbie Hepler, and congratulate her on her call to be the Executive Director of the Ghost Ranch in Abiquiu, New Mexico. Our best wishes and hearty congratulations on her election to this Presbyterian Church (USA) ministry.
8. Thank you for your prayers for Barbara Moyer, our bookkeeper, who suffered a heart attack on February 27th. Bobbie Shaffor has assumed her bookkeeping, accounting, and accounts payable/receivable functions. We are hoping for her complete recovery and return to her function as our Presbytery's bookkeeper.

Dr. Holben then presented a letter expressing his desire to enter honorable retirement and requested that the Council negotiate with him a date earlier than the six months lead time required by the Personnel Policy. Dr. Holben suggested that a date of June 30, 2008, would be desirable to him. It was **MSP** to approve his request and to report this action to the Committee on Ministry for their confirming action.

Associate for Pastoral Care

Reverend Carole Isley Corey led the Council in prayer for those lifted up— Ron Durika, Victor Van Allen, and others from the congregations of those attending Council, plus Cheryl Croushore's father is in the hospital – bacterial infection in the blood and other medical issues; a pastor dealing with high PSA; Carol Gnatuk, recovering from surgery for a serious infection, and Sam Earhart. Carol included the whole Presbytery in her prayer as a result of the second traumatic event in Doug's announcement of his retirement.

Unfinished Business

Report the Johnstown Home Property Acquisition

Ross Bash reported that the closing on the purchase of the new property was completed on March 31, 2008. He presented the completed documents for filing.

New Business

Gateway Clipper Event

Cheryl Croushore reported that the attendance at the Gateway Clipper Event was very low this year. Because of the minimum guarantee required the Presbytery will a large portion of the expense involved. There was discussion regarding whether or not the event ought to be continued into the future.

Procedure for Implementation of the Policy for dealing with Church desiring to leave the denomination

It was **MSP** to form a Task Force charged with developing a strategy that will make sure that all of the constitutional requirements are in place for dealing with future situations like the St. Paul's situation, and that a way of educating the presbyters be developed and implemented before another request will be brought to the floor of Presbytery. By acclamation Chuck West was asked to convene the Task Force, with Helen Kester, Bill Rogers, and Phyllis Neral serving.

Adjournment

It was **MSP** to adjourn, and the meeting was concluded with prayer led by the Reverend Dr. Holben at 9:10 p.m.

Gary G. Close, Secretary