

**HIGHLIGHTS OF NOVEMBER 11-12 STATED MEETING**  
**“Be not Afraid...” (Isaiah 10-24) “Do not Fear” (Luke 12:32)**

A stated meeting of the Presbytery of the Cascades was held November 11-12, 2011, at First Presbyterian Church in Corvallis, Oregon. Ruling Elder Mary Lou Williams, Moderator of the Presbytery presided. A total of 222 presbyters signed in as being in attendance. There were also a large number of visitors attending.

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The meeting was opened in prayer and worship, led by The Rev. Charles Falconer.

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Xiomara Arena, from Centro Presbytery, Cuba, and the Rev. Gretchen Janssen from Palisades Presbytery were welcomed as corresponding members. Merle Bottge, Associate Stated Clerk from the Central Region and Lloyd King, Associate Stated Clerk from the South Region were introduced.

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The following teaching elders were introduced as new members of Cascades Presbytery: The Rev. Lawrence Porter, transferring from the Presbytery of San Francisco, The Rev. William D. Sperry, transferring from the Presbytery of San Fernando, and The Rev. Stephen C. Brewer, transferring from the Presbytery of San Jose. Not present was The Rev. Tracie A. Bullis, transferring from the Presbytery of Huntington.

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Teaching elders who were recognized as recently honorably retired included: The Rev. Richard A. Christensen, The Rev. James T. Hazlett, The Rev. Delbert E. McAmis, The Rev. Lorraine R. Stuart, The Rev. Robert M. Stuart, and The Rev. Kathleen J. Waugh.

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The Mission Support Committee presented information about hunger ministry grants through the Cents...-ability offering, the work of the Oregon Roundtable against Hunger, Heifer International, and Self Development of People Grants.

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The Congregational Support Committee presented news from the Eco-Justice Team about how churches can become “Earth Care Congregations.” Theresa O’Brien of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Eugene reported on that congregation’s journey toward becoming an “Earth Care Congregation.” Jenny Holms announced the Earth Care Summit: Environmental Justice and Faith, which will be held Jan 30, 2012 at Highland Christian Center, Portland, Oregon.

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The Professional Support Committed highlighted opportunities for education and support. Maureen O’Rourke, director of the Media Resource Center reported on coming schedule changes for the Media Resource Center in 2012. She will be available in the Center on Tuesdays. The Rev. Tim Cayton of the Uncommon Ministries group presented a riveting introduction to prison ministry in Oregon.

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The report of the Relational Support Committee included an appeal for articles relating to local mission projects, ministries and human interest stories from the editor of the Presbytery newsletter, Omnibus, Kathy Waugh. The next Presbytery Pulpit Exchange will be held April 22, 2012. An overnight stay at Menucha Conference Center will be provided to one pastor who commits to participating in the exchange. Spencer Parks and Scott Crane from Menucha Retreat Center presented information about two retreats which will be held at Menucha in January. The Moderator of the Cascades Presbyterian Women, Marsha Landrith introduced the PW Coordinating Team members present and announced the Church Wide Gathering of Presbyterian Women which will take place in July 2012, in Orlando, Florida. Marsha was then commissioned by the Presbytery to serve as one of three representatives from Presbyterian Women to the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women of the United Nations.

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Presbytery Treasurer, Pam Fogg, interpreted the written report on the presbytery's financial status and condition. She reported that the presbytery's financial position is good, but income is down, which is cause for concern.

In the report of the Presbytery Council, Part 1, Council Chair, Ric Neese presented the proposed presbytery budget for 2012. Fund 1, the Administrative Budget, funded by per capita payments was balanced with a transfer from the Administrative Reserves Fund and a proposed increase in presbytery per capita apportionments of \$.77. When added to the slight increases to General Assembly and Synod per capita rates, this will make the total proposed per capita payment per member for 2012 of \$23.85. The Fund 2 or Program portion of the proposed budget was balanced by reducing Westminster Foundation expenses by 20% and reducing all presbytery staff to part time (at least 20%). This reduction in spending reflects recent decreases in Presbytery Partnership Giving and per capita giving. The presbytery approved the per capita increases and the proposed budget for 2012.

Janet Wylie, Chair of the Personnel and Administration Committee presented the proposed terms of call for the elected staff; the three co-executive presbyters and the stated clerk. The terms of call reflected the 20% reduction in staff hours for the co-executive presbyters. After some questioning and discussion, the presbytery approved the terms of call. Janet also reported that Co-executive Presbyter, Aleida Jernigan is on Sabbatical through the end of 2011, and that recent staff reviews have been conducted.

The Board of Trustees brought a request from Moreland Presbyterian Church to modify the designation of 2009 property sale proceeds from a dedicated property maintenance fund to a general building maintenance fund. Presbytery voted to approve.

The Synod of the Pacific Report included the following: At the October 2011, meeting of the Synod, commissioners voted to recommend that presbyteries be asked to approve a reduction in Synod Commissioners from 52-39, and that commissioners be elected for three year terms instead of four year terms, and that re-election to a second three year term be allowed for a maximum of 6 consecutive years of service. Presbytery voted to approve this recommendation. Gail Saxowsky was recently elected by the synod to the class of 2017 on the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission. John Brinegar was elected to the class of 2014 Board of Directors of Zephr Point Conference Center, The Synod of the Pacific will be offering "Green Loans" for church projects that improve energy efficiency. Synod has an overage in unrestricted reserve funds and has distributed \$20,000 to each presbytery in the Synod from this account.

The Rev. Charles Falconer was granted a few moments of personal privilege to share his memories of the beginnings of his ministry associated with First Presbyterian Church, Corvallis.

Highlights of the Friday Evening Worship Service and Celebration of the Eucharist were the music presented by the musicians from First Presbyterian Church Corvallis, including organist Robert Thompson, the Chancel Choir under direction of Carol Nelson, with Gayle Hazel as soloist, and the Gratitude Jazz Band. The Reverends. Bruce Cameron and Debbie Garber co-celebrated communion, and The Rev. Beverly Crow preached on the "Do not Fear" Texts. \$974.40 was received for the Christmas Joy Offering.

Saturday morning worshippers were greeted by the music of the combined Cascades Presbytery E-string Band and the Corvallis Gratitude Jazz Band. The Rev. Robert Perdue led the liturgy.

The Committee on Preparation for the Ministry presented three candidates for ordination examination. Adam Walker Cleaveland was examined and approved for ordination as Teaching Elder so that he might accept a call from First Presbyterian Church, Ashland, Oregon, to serve as Associate Pastor. Jennifer S.

Pratt was examined and approved for ordination as Teaching Elder in order to accept a call as Membership Relations Director for Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. Stasia V. Van Buskirk was examined and approved for ordination as Teaching Elder in order to accept a call as Chaplain at Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center, Tualatin, Oregon. Presbytery approved the enrollment of Nick T. Silvey, member of First Presbyterian Church, Vancouver, as Inquirer for ordination as teaching elder.

The Committee on Preparation for the Ministry recommended the following overture to the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly: *Whereas it has been 44 years since the standard ordination exams were established for candidates for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament (Teaching Elder); and whereas, times have changed and we as a society have discovered that people today learn and process knowledge in different ways, especially those persons with learning disabilities as well as those who come to us for whom English is a second language; and whereas, many candidates are failing to pass the exams on the first, second, or even third try; Therefore, the Presbytery of the Cascades overtures the General Assembly to 1. Reexamine the viability of testing as a way of discerning a candidate's suitability for ministry. 2. Reevaluate and reassess the process by which the exams are written, administered, and graded.* Presbytery voted to approve sending the overture to the General Assembly.

John Brinegar presented the report of the Seminary Support Network.

Pat Berger, Chair of the Nominating Committee presented a motion to presbytery that there be only one nominee for election as Moderator of the Presbytery of the Cascades instead of the contested election as is the present practice. After discussion the presbytery voted not to approve the motion.

The following members of presbytery were elected as commissioners to the 220<sup>th</sup> General Assembly: Rev. Dwayne L. Brown, Rev. Bruce W. Cameron, Rev. Barbara J. Campbell, with alternate teaching elder commissioners being Rev. David C. Dornak, Rev. Laurel S. Neal, and Rev. James P. Freda. Ruling Elder Commissioners elected were Janet Anderson, Trout Lake, Washington, Shaw Foster, Phoenix, Oregon, and Garry Rawson, Reedville, Oregon, with alternate commissioners being Sandra Corless, Oak Hills, Milwaukie, Stan Pomeroy, Yachats, Oregon, and Dennis Bottenfield, Grace, Portland, Oregon.

Victoria Syhalath, McMinnville, Oregon was elected Young Adult Advisory Delegate, and the alternate YAAD is Sean Champoux, Westminster, Eugene.

In the Report of Presbytery Council, Part 2, Shirely Tomey of the Church Growth and Vitality Task Force reported some of the task force's observations and discernments. Brian Heron presented some observations about the present state of the church from his two month Pedal Pilgrimage. In keeping with the task force mandate to "be an incubator for nurturing member churches to a vital future, and to help congregations thrive in order to grow the kingdom of God, Eileen Parfrey led the presbyters in a contemplative bible study focused on the parables of the Kingdom of God from the Gospel of Matthew.

Dwayne Brown, Co-chair of the Council Special Team for Cascades Presbytery Mission and Structure Review presented recommendations to the presbytery. The Special Team affirms that the Vitality and Growth of Congregations as the priority of the presbytery. It affirms the 5 essential visions towards that goal under which the presbytery is now functioning. It recommends that Council explore other structures to implement this vision as the presbytery's current means of implementation are no longer able to support it. Council has appointed the officers of the Presbytery to evaluate and implement the recommendations.

Jack Hodges, member of the General Assembly Mission Council presented information on that body's mission and ministries. On behalf of the GAMC, he also presented the Presbytery of the Cascades with an award for being in the top ten presbyteries in basic mission giving, special offerings, and total giving.

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The presbytery approved the formation of an Administrative Commission made up of the following people: Elder Ron Atwood, Elder Judy Hubbard, Elder Molly Keating, Rev. Helen Lewis, Elder Jim Mattis, Rev. Ashton "Skip" Roberts, and Rev. Richard Wiggers. The functions of the administrative commission are A. Work collegially with the session of First Presbyterian Church, Portland. B. Gather and assess information about the church and its recent difficulties. C. Advise the session, COM, and the presbytery of its findings, assessments, and recommendations.

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John Goff and Ian Doescher of the Presbytery Task Group reported on the results of the appreciative inquiry conducted at the June stated meeting regarding the design of presbytery meetings. A five minute DVD of the findings can be found on the Cascades Presbytery Facebook page and a link will be posted in the next CEE. For members of presbytery who did not participate in the survey, there will be a short electronic survey available for their input in early 2012.

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The meeting was closed with worship led by Gail Saxowsky. A sign of peace was exchanged in the name of Christ.

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A great deal of thanks goes out to the staff and member volunteers of First Presbyterian Church, Corvallis who hosted what many participants rated as one of the best meetings ever attended.

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The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery will be held March 9-10, 2012, at Mt. Tabor Presbyterian Church, Portland, Oregon.