

The Presbytery of Elizabeth
Minutes of Council
September 9 mmviii

Attendance.

Ministers

5. Robert Martin (Crescent Ave.), Committee on Ministry
10. Michael Granzen (Elizabeth Second), Moderator of Presbytery
13. John Howard (Siloam-Hope), At-large, Worship and Theology Team
9. William Weaver (Linden), Personnel Committee
6. John Illian (Central), Outreach and Social Concerns Unit, co-chair
3. Lawrence Finn, III (MaL), Evangelism and Church Vitality Unit, chair

Elders

1. Lee Anne Lowman (Central), Chair of Council
18. Gerald Nelson (Liberty Corner), Trustees of Presbytery, chair
15. 17. Judy Wussler (Fanwood), Committee on Representation, chair; Synod of the Northeast
4. Helen Mosley (Siloam-Hope), Educational Ministries Unit, chair
14. Virginia Miller (Osceola), Presbyterian Women, chair
22. Joanne Noblitt (Rahway First), Financial Development Committee, chair
6. Jack Paddon (Liberty Corner), Outreach and Social Concerns Unit, co-chair

Ex officio

20. Rev. Robert Foltz-Morrison, Executive Presbyter
19. Rev. Paul F. Rack (Bethlehem), Stated Clerk
23. Elder Sara Burke (Westfield), Administrative Assistant

Not present or Excused

11. Barbara McLaughlan (Westfield), Moderator of Presbytery
12. Alan Ford (Bethlehem), General Assembly Council
13. Jeffrey Wildrick (Dunellen), At-large
21. Elder David Bomgaars (Central), Treasurer of Presbytery
7. Rev. Gregory Horn (Cranford), Committee on Preparation for Ministry, chair
8. Elder Betty Prezzy Bryant (Third-Westminster), Nominating Committee, chair
2. Elder Susan Gieser (Westminster), Vice-Chair of Council

Devotions

After presenting an award to the outgoing Moderator, Bob Foltz-Morrison presented a devotional moment on baptism and the importance of remembering it and its communal context.

Council Chair.

The Council **VOTED** to approve the agenda of today's meeting.

The Council **VOTED** to approve the Minutes of the June 10, 2008, Council meeting.

The Minutes of the July 22, 2008, retreat will be approved at the October meeting.

A sign-up sheet for monthly devotions was distributed.

Elder Lowman suggested that the Council members-at-large might be willing to work specifically with the pastors of the presbytery, under the guidance of the immediate past Moderator. She will share this idea

with Betty Prezzy Bryant, the chair of the Nominating Committee, as they seek to fill these positions. There were no objections.

Stated Clerk.

Paul Rack presented a proposed Docket for the September Stated Meeting of presbytery. The Council discussed the details of the Docket. The WATT process is expected to be in a series over several presbytery meetings, leading up to the vote on the amendments to the *Book of Order*, in 2009. There was concern that the people participating in the process in earlier meetings might not be the same people who show up for the vote. The September meeting will feature a "mutual invitation listening exercise" on the topic of "faith." Perhaps a letter describing the entire process, encouraging participating in the whole thing. The Council chair volunteered to drop WATT a note to this effect. The scheduling of the presbytery's voting on the amendments to the constitution was also discussed. And the usefulness of the Announcement Cluster; it was suggested that announcements be made in writing and distributed, to support the verbal presentation.

Treasurer.

The Council looked at Dave Bomgaars' written report. We are running a deficit, which is not unusual at this time of year. Only 52% of income has been received for the year.

Discussion Items.

1. Personnel.

Bill Weaver reported on the sabbatical request from the Executive Presbyter, to complete his D.Min. studies at Hartford Seminary. The request is for three months, beginning on October 1. During those months the Council will be responsible for picking up the slack in Bob's absence.

The Personnel Committee has been considering this possibility for about seven months.

The Council **VOTED** to grant this sabbatical.

2. Administrative Manual.

The Stated Clerk presented the latest revision of the Administrative Manual. A concern was raised about having a version in which the prior version could be compared with the new one, so that it can be clear what the changes are.

3. Survey Feedback.

Lee Anne went over the results of the survey that was issued to gauge how the presbytery was feeling about the content of stated meetings.

4. 2008/2009 Calendar.

Barbara McLaughlan's written report was referenced again, relative to the scheduling of presbytery meetings and themes. The October meeting generated particular concern, as the Council has received a letter from the session of Elizabeth First, giving their plan for the October presbytery meeting, which they are hosting. The practice of having the host church determine the theme and schedule of a presbytery meeting would be a sharp departure from presbytery's normal practice. It appears that the session would like to see the meeting focus on their new steeple, their history, and their participation in worship. The Council **VOTED** that the WATT recommendations for the October meeting be adopted, and that the session be affirmed and encouraged to invite the presbytery to share with them in celebrating these congregational milestones at another time.

WATT is suggesting that the November meeting be moved off of Thanksgiving week and either ahead into December, or back a week. There are pros and cons for all of these options. The Council defeated a motion which would have moved the November stated meeting of presbytery from November 25 to December 2.

5. Financial Development Committee.

Joanne Noblitt reported on the work of her committee, beginning with an examination of per capita and how it is used. Our philosophy has been to cover with per capita mainly functions that are arguably *Book of Order* mandated. The question is how to pay for the things that are not strictly "mission," and not mandated either. Our presbytery's per capita assessment is generally on the low side, in comparison to other presbyteries.

Administrative Assistant.

Sara Burke thanked the Council for their allowing her to take extra time to visit with her ailing mother over the summer.

Committee on Ministry.

Rob Martin announced that the COM is seeking funds from the Board of Pensions to assist in resourcing pastors. There would be a \$5500 expense to the presbytery, from the COM budget.

The Elizabethan.

The question arose as to the appropriateness of distributing the written version of The Elizabethan, which seems to include mainly the reflections of one pastor. The discussion centered on the degree to which the views expressed might be thought of as representing the presbytery. The consensus was to allow it to be set on the table at presbytery, but not sent out with the packet. There was also a sense of not using the name "The Elizabethan," as this has historically been used by the presbytery as a newsletter title. The identification of the document with Elizabeth Presbytery should be removed.

Adjourn.

The Council **VOTED** to adjourn with prayer by the Stated Clerk, at 6:20 pm (EDT).

Attest:

Rev. Paul F. Rack
Stated Clerk