

Highlights of the Stated Meeting of Cherokee Presbytery

10:00 a.m., Saturday, July 25, 2009, Bethany Presbyterian Church

(Full minutes will be posted at www.CherokeePresbytery.org.)

It was a day when forty-one congregations became one church. At our first Saturday meeting – with all things new, none of us knew what the day would be like. And all of us were glad we came. Bethany church opened their doors and gave us a “Sunday best” welcome. The opening procession was complete with banners and ministers in robes. The Bethany PC Praise Team led us in singing *Open the Eyes of My Heart, How Great Thou Art / How Great is Our God*. Pastor Byeongho Choi greeted us on behalf of the Bethany congregation and Pastor Tim Dunn greeted us on behalf of the Ray-Thomas Memorial congregation. Members of the Hospitality and Celebration Team were present to carry forth the theme of Christian Hospitality.

Thirty-two of our 41 churches were represented, 49 of 73 assigned elder commissioners were present, plus 33 of 64 active minister commissioners and 5 retired ministers. With 25 registered visitors and 5 elder Coordinating Team members, the total attendance was 117. First-time elder commissioners were recognized and greeted by the Celebration and Hospitality Team.

Mission Coordinator Rebecca Blackwell spoke briefly about her first forty days (and forty nights) on presbytery staff and introduced other members of staff Kelly Howington, Dan Boles, Sarita Morris, and Betty Cheek. Invitation was given for anyone who wishes to join the staff each second Thursday of the month, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., at the Cherokee Retreat Center Lodge for a time of *Lectio Divina* – scriptural reading and prayer – or to quiet their minds on the newly-installed Labyrinth at the Retreat Center.

Following the Call to Worship, presbytery sang *In Christ There is no East or West*. The Reverend Peter M. Paulsen preached the sermon entitled “Raising the Roof” based on Mark 2:1-12. Following the Affirmation of Faith, moderator of presbytery Gary Pichon asked the installation questions of the Reverend Rebecca Blackwell, which she answered in the affirmative. She was declared installed as Mission Coordinator of Cherokee Presbytery by the moderator and the proceedings were closed with prayer. Her concurring term as Stated Clerk is by a renewable three-year contract with the Coordinating Team.

John Martin, candidate under the care of San Francisco Presbytery, was examined and approved, pending his ordination, to receive a call to be pastor of the Deer Creek Shores PC in Cumming. His installation will be Sunday, August 16, 2009, at 4:00 p.m.

Julie Jensen, minister member of Monmouth Presbytery in New Jersey, was examined and approved for membership in Cherokee Presbytery to

receive a call to be Associate Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Cartersville. Her installation will be Sunday, September 27, 2009, at 11:00 a.m.

Alan Gibson, inquirer under the care of Cherokee Presbytery and elder at the Eastminster PC, was examined and received as a Candidate for the Office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.

Announcement was made that Silvio Esteves (Ray-Thomas Memorial PC) was enrolled as an inquirer on July 21 by the Committee on Preparation.

An offering of \$1477 was received for Cherokee Retreat Center. Lunch receipts of \$449 were also contributed to the CRC fund by Bethany PC.

Presbytery celebrated the Lord’s Supper, led by Rev. Pete Paulsen, Rev. Rebecca Blackwell, Rev. Byeongho Choi, and Elder Velma Tilley (Cartersville First). Special music was provided by the Bethany Men’s Choir.

Presbytery recessed for one hour at 11:45 a.m. and was served a delicious Korean lunch. When we reconvened the Bethany Praise Team led presbytery in singing *The Solid Rock, and You’re Worthy of My Praise*.

The Stated Clerk’s Report included an omnibus motion with eight actions. Reports of Committees, Commissions and Teams were received as information. The report of the Nominating Committee included the election of four additional people to leadership positions in the presbytery.

Presbytery celebrated the Spirit at work through reports from Rev. Carol Wade and Elaine Whitley (Faith/BR) on how the MINDER project has pulled together several of the smaller congregations in the presbytery for dialogue and support, and from Rev. Peter Lim and Sue Monk on how Bethany and Ray-Thomas has come together in a multi-cultural ministry.

Elder Warren Herron (Marietta First), Chair of the Bethany/Ray-Thomas Administrative Commission, reviewed the timeline followed by the Commission and reported on the transition over the last eighteen months with all groups (Bethany Korean-English speaking, RTM English speaking, RTM Brazilian Fellowship) participating in one church. The report brought an overture, which was adopted by presbytery, to remove items 3 and 4 from the charge to the Commission. The moderator dismissed the Commission with thanks. The Commission consisted of Warren Herron, Carol Scott, Byeongho Choi, Bob Bullock, Peter Lim, Doug Roberts, and Soo Chang.

Under new business, Board Chair John Wells highlighted the program of the Cherokee Retreat Center and urged its support, and Paul Bayerl urged attention to the Mission Team’s effort to coordinate joint mission trips among churches in the presbytery.

We celebrated with and for those that shared their joys. We prayed with and for those that brought their concerns. At 2:00 p.m. we closed with a litany of prayer and received the benediction. It was truly a *Sunday best* day.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 22, 2009, at 5:30 p.m., at Providence Presbyterian Church, Dallas.