

Presbytery Coordinating Commission Minutes 29 January 2015

Presbytery of East Iowa ■ ■ ■ ■ Presbytery Office ■ ■ ■ ■ 29 January 2015

Present: Mary Atwood (Immediate Past Moderator), Karen Bartel (Treasurer), Rebecca Blair (Stated Clerk), Kevin Cullum (Camp Wyoming), Harry Hoyt (COM Associate), Sam Massey (COM), Richard Miller (Personnel), Karen Minnis (Trustees), Kyle Otterbein (Moderator), Al Polito (Nominating), Pam Saturnia (Vice-Moderator and Trustees)

Guests: Sarah Dyck (Networking Associate) and Lori Wunder (Special Task Force on Healing and Reconciliation)

Moderator Kyle Otterbein called the meeting to order at 10:14 a.m. with prayer and the lighting of the Christ Candle. The Moderator shared a devotion drawn from Ephesians 3 concerning our opportunities to be ambassadors for Christ. He thanked Immediate Past Moderator Mary Atwood for her grace and generosity of spirit. In concluding his reflection, he affirmed that we are called and as we serve, his prayer is that the spirit found in this Ephesians passage will be fulfilled in us.

Moderator's Report

Vision and Renewal Task Force Proposal

Moderator Otterbein called attention to the proposal from the Vision and Renewal Task Force, soliciting comments and questions from members of the PCC. Response focused upon concerns regarding the way in which the proposal articulates a "problem" in churches to be solved as well as the broad scope of the proposal. One response suggested that the proposal focus more centrally on congregations with a conception of the Task Force not as problem-solvers, but rather as those who help discern calling. This current proposal may be better suited for a workshop format or a retreat setting rather than the setting of a stated meeting. The proposal also appears to make assumptions rather than posing an open inquiry—perhaps more focus could be placed in attending upon where God is at work and maybe this is not a kairos moment for this particular proposal. The PCC requests that Sarah Dyck share this feedback with the Task Force.

As an attendance part of this discussion, the question arose of the process by which those with a passion to pursue a new church development within the Presbytery might act upon this passion. The larger issue informing this inquiry concerns our collective conception of how development occurs—are we pursuing an emergence model along the lines of the ACOG conception in which we develop structure secondarily as we pursue passions and discover initiatives that have some traction, or do we create the structure first and then use this structure to generate initiatives?

Report of the Special Task Force on Healing and Reconciliation

Lori Wunder and Sam Massey, co-moderators of the Special Task Force on Healing and Reconciliation, explicated the Request for Proposal (RFP) that the Task Force has generated. They noted that this document represents an attempt to get their arms around the current situation within the Presbytery since there are numerous public and private streams of “knowledge” and supposition. The Task Force also has identified a variety of visions about what a successful outcome to a healing/reconciliation process would look like. **A motion to receive this document for further study and consideration was seconded and APPROVED.**

New Worshipping Community Inquiry—Farm Church

The PCC reviewed an inquiry from Ben Johnston-Krase, a pastor in Racine, WI, to partner with the Presbytery to begin a Farm Church site. As his inquiry notes, “Farm Church invites the spiritually curious into a life-practice of Christ-centered faith and service” to grow, collect, prepare, and serve food within community to serve those in need. **A motion to refer this inquiry to Sarah Dyck for further concrete inquiry on behalf of the PCC was seconded and APPROVED.**

Special Task Force on Presbytery Meetings

The PCC discussed how to implement the ideas contained in the final report of the Task Force. **A motion that Immediate Past Moderator Mary Atwood, Moderator Kyle Otterbein, Vice-Moderator Pam Saturnia and Stated Clerk Rebecca Blair work to develop a resolution to be presented to the Presbytery for approval from this Task Force Report and to present names of persons to be elected to a PEIA Gathering Planning Team, was seconded and APPROVED.**

Report of the Stated Clerk

North Central Iowa Presbytery Letter

The PCC considered a communication from the Presbytery of North Central Iowa leadership concerning the possibility of forming a statewide presbytery as a possible form of future witness in this geographic area. **A motion affirming that the PCC has prayerfully considered and discussed this communication and respectfully chooses to decline further consideration of this proposal since the Presbytery of East Iowa has just completed a thorough discernment and reconstruction of Presbytery structure to which we are fully committed, was seconded and APPROVED.** The PCC requested the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to the Presbytery of North Central Iowa.

Phil Bergey/Laurie Ferguson Invitation to Join Beta Long-Range Planning Group

The PCC discussed the invitation that Rebecca received on behalf of the Presbytery for the Presbytery to join a small group of presbyteries who are working on transformation in an 18-month process of consultant-provided training and community-based learning that would inform organizational and systemic transformation. **A motion to direct the Stated Clerk to respond affirmatively and to obtain further information about this undertaking was seconded and AFFIRMED.**

The Stated Clerk also reminded those present of the cycle of committee meeting and report deadlines.

Report of the Vice-Moderator

Middletown Legal Action

Vice-Moderator Pam Saturnia apprised the PCC of the ongoing issues concerning the closing of First Presbyterian Church in Middletown. The person serving as Clerk of Session and Treasurer has steadfastly refused to turn over the minutes, rolls, records, and financial information (including bank records and the check book) to the Presbytery. Since questions have been posed concerning the financial disposition of the church which these documents would address, it appears likely that legal action will be necessary to assume title to the church and recover these documents. **A motion to invite attorney James Claypool, who has been representing the Presbytery in this matter, to discuss this issue at the February PCC meeting was seconded and APPROVED.**

Scotland Trip

The Vice-Moderator raised the possibility of her organizing a Presbytery trip to Scotland in 2016 during her moderatorial year. **A motion to encourage the Vice-Moderator to pursue this possibility was seconded and APPROVED.**

The next PCC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in the Presbytery Office Conference Room.

A motion to adjourn was seconded and APPROVED.

Ruling Elder Karen Bartel offered the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruling Elder Dr. Rebecca Blair
Stated Clerk