



Presbytery of Des Moines

REV. PHILIP W. BARRETT, GENERAL PRESBYTER & STATED CLERK
E-MAIL: PBARRETT@DMPRESBYTERY.ORG

August 7, 2013

CALL TO THE 493rd STATED MEETING

The 493rd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Des Moines will be held on Saturday, August 17, 2013, at the Heartland Presbyterian Church in Clive, Iowa. Directions and a map are included in this packet.

As usual, this will be an all-day meeting. It will be fun and busy with our Compañeros folks leading us in special activities, commissionings, a new structure proposal, new candidates and a retirement.

→ Registration and coffee fellowship begin at **8:30 a.m.**, not before. People will be setting up and preparing food up to that time.

The Presbytery will convene at 9:30 a.m.

The *Proposed Docket* is enclosed, along with items for information and action. Commissioners should make sure to bring these as we only have a few extras for visitors.

→ When you come, be prepared for some different ways of doing some things. The major change is how we will deal with items not requiring action. Instead of reviewing or asking questions about these things while we are gathered in the Sanctuary, there will be tables set up at which folks from the various committees and groups simply bringing reports will be located. Commissioners will have time to visit these tables, ask questions and have more informal conversation with representatives of these groups. It is hoped that this time of conversation with these groups and each other will both add a special dimension to our time together and make for a more efficient time of dealing with actions.

We will continue to handle much of our “usual” business in what is called a “consent agenda” process. This means we can handle –in one action – votes to approve or adopt actions or recommendations that do not require debate or conversation. Only items included in the packet will be included in the Consent Agenda. The Proposed Consent Agenda appears following the Proposed Docket in this packet. You will notice that the reports contain a letter designation with parts of them having numbers for easy identification.

At 9:00 a.m. there are two opportunities for orientation to presbyter procedures. One is for those attending a meeting for the first time and guests, the other is for anyone interested in learning more or talking about our budget. Look for room signs or ask for directions at the Registration Table.

The activities mentioned early in this letter, along with the other things before us and our always outstanding worship experience, will make for an interesting and active meeting.

The Minutes of the May Presbytery Meeting were distributed to ministers and commissioners in June. Please be sure to bring these to the meeting. You may download them for printing by going online to www.dmpresbytery.org. Again, extra copies are at a minimum.

Meeting Format: Under our structure and style of operating in our presbytery, meetings do not have business as the central focus and purpose for our gathering. Worship, dialogue and fellowship are primary reasons for meeting. Worship and fellowship will play an especially important part in this particular meeting. There is still business – after all, we cannot be Presbyterians if we do not have business – but most of our meeting time will be more conversational than parliamentary in nature. It will help our meetings to be carried on in this kind of spirit if members and commissioners come expecting such a spirit to be present.

As is our regular practice, the meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. All of the items on the docket require presbytery attention or fit in with what we have said we want to happen at our meetings.

- Plans are in place to keep our time together moving quickly so we can be done by mid afternoon. We encourage each commissioner and minister member to be present for the entire meeting. Avoidable late arrivals and early leavings are discourteous to those presenting reports and rob other people of the opportunity to share in work and ministry with those not present

Immediately following lunch is a time for announcements. We use this time only for announcements. A time for sharing joys and concerns is part of worship.

Participation Guidelines: Every once in a while, those attending a presbytery meeting ask who may participate in discussions during a meeting. *Guidelines for Participation in Presbytery Meetings*, included in this packet, will hopefully help in answering these questions.

Child Care: Those needing care for their children should call the Heartland Church at 515-987-4246 by noon on Wednesday, August 14, to let them know of your needs. Please bring a bagged meal for your child. Milk will be provided.

A/V Equipment: The Heartland Church has video projection and a screen in the Sanctuary. They also have two other “mobile” projectors (bring your own cords) as well as a DVD player and TV. If you need any other equipment, please let the Presbytery Office know so we can make arrangements for you.

We continue to have a registration process that requires all attendees to sign in. A Reminder: **Congregations are not excused from having an elder in attendance.** If you plan to bring extra visitors, please call the church to let them know.

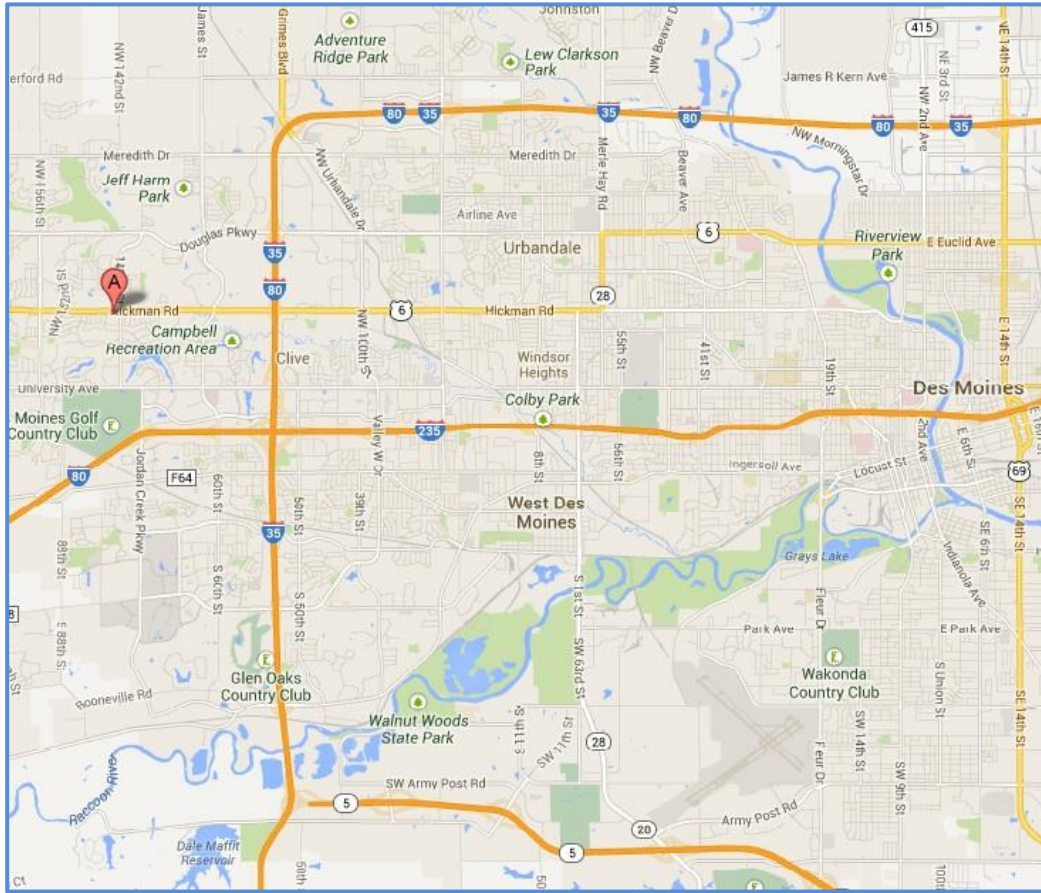
In case of bad weather, call the Presbytery Office (515-276-4991) for information about any changes in time, date or location.

I look forward to this great day with all of you on Saturday, August 17.



Philip W. Barrett
Stated Clerk

Map to Heartland Presbyterian Church in Clive, Iowa:



Driving Directions: Heartland Presbyterian Church is located at 14300 Hickman Road and is on the south side of the street. The church is located a little over 2 miles from I-35.

- When coming from the **west** on I-80, take exit 123B towards I-35 N. Take exit #125 for Hickman Road off of I-35. Take a left on Hickman Road and travel just over 2 miles. Turn left on 142nd Street and the driveway to the church will be immediately on your right.
- When coming from the **east** on I-80, continue on when I-35 joins with I-80 until you reach exit #125 for Hickman Road. Take a right on Hickman Road and travel just over 2 miles until you reach 142nd Street. Take a left onto 142nd Street and the parking lot for the church will be immediately on your right.
- When coming from the **south** on I-35, take exit #125 for Hickman Road. Turn left on Hickman Road and travel just over 2 miles to 142nd Street. Take a left onto 142nd Street and the church parking lot will be immediately on your right.

Parking: The church parking lot is located on the south side of the church building.

Building Accessibility: The church is totally handicapped accessible.

Entrance: The main entrance off the parking lot will be visibly marked. Look for signs. It will be important to use that door, as to not disturb the day care center in the building.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

Meetings of our Presbytery are always special because it is a time for the Presbytery family to gather for conversations, business and fellowship. Many different people come to a Presbytery meeting for many different reasons.

When our Presbytery meets, we welcome and encourage participation. There are times, however, that participation is limited. Those times are ordinarily when our Presbytery is conducting its formal business. Because our Presbyterian structure calls for elected Commissioners to determine direction and act on business, only those who are elected Commissioners or are members of our Presbytery are allowed to participate in discussions or voting. Visitors and guests become observers of the process at that time.

At other times in our meetings, each person present is invited to participate in dialogues, conversations, or other activities. Such times include worship, special thematic presentations and small group discussions.

If you are not sure when you may participate in what is happening in the meeting, please talk to the Moderator or Stated Clerk individually.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES AT-A-GLANCE

TO DO THIS	YOU SAY THIS:	MAY YOU INTERRUPT SPEAKER?	MUST YOU BE SECONDED?	IS THE MOTION DEBATABLE?	IS THE MOTION AMENDABLE?	WHAT VOTE IS REQUIRED?
Adjourn the meeting	"I move that we adjourn."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Not amendable	Majority vote required
Recess the meeting	"I move that we recess until..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Amendable	Majority vote required
Complain about noise, room temp, etc.	"Point of privilege."	May interrupt speaker	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	No vote required ³
Suspend further consideration of something	"I move we table it."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not Debatable	Not amendable	Majority vote required
End debate	"I move the previous question."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not Debatable	Not amendable	Two-thirds vote required
Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone this matter until..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Majority vote required
Have something studied further	"I move we refer this matter to a committee."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Majority vote required
Amend a motion	"I move that this motion be amended by..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Majority vote required
Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Majority vote required
¹ The motions or points above are listed in established order or precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below it. But you may introduce another that is listed above it. ² In this case, any resulting motion is debatable. ³ Chair decides						
Object to procedure or to a personal affront	"Point of order."	May interrupt speaker	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	No vote required, chair decides
Request information	"Point of information."	If urgent, may interrupt speaker	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	No vote required
Ask for a vote by actual count to verify a voice vote	"I call for a division."	May not interrupt speaker ²	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	No vote required unless someone objects ³
Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question."	May interrupt speaker	No second needed	Not debatable	Not amendable	Two-thirds vote required
Take up a matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Not amendable	Majority vote required
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..."	May interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable if original motion is debatable	Not amendable	Majority vote required
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider..."	May not interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Not debatable	Not amendable	Two-thirds vote required
Vote on a ruling by the chair	"I appeal the chair's decision."	May interrupt speaker	Must be seconded	Debatable	Not amendable	Majority vote required
¹ The motion, points, and proposals listed above have no established order of precedence. Any of them may be introduced at any time – except when the meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed in the above chart (motion to adjourn, motion to recess, point of privilege). ² But division must be called for before another motion is stated. ³ Then majority vote is required.						

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PROPOSED DOCKET**August 17, 2013**

8:30 p.m.	Registration Begins Fellowship and Refreshments	
9:00	Orientation of "First Timers" Budget Orientation	Nancy Lister-Settle Gary Modlin
9:30	Convene Presbytery	Jim Howland
9:45	Worship	
10:45	K-1 – Compañeros Report	Mark Davis
11:45	Visit Committees Tables	
12:30	Lunch	
1:30 p.m.	Announcements	
1:40	Compañeros Mini Courses	
2:10	E – Leadership Council Report	Ann Johnson
2:40	I – Stated Clerk Report Approval of May Minutes	Phil Barrett
2:45	D – Budget and Finance Committee Report	Gary Modlin
2:50	B – Professional Care and Development Committee Report	Jan Scott
2:55	K – Social Ministries Task Force Report	Nancy Lister-Settle
3:00	C – Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report	Sue Tomlinson
3:10	A – Congregational Care and Development Report	Sarai Schnucker Rice
3:20	J – General Presbyter Report	Phil Barrett
3:25	Other Business	
3:25	Adjournment and Benediction	

CONSENT AGENDA

August 17, 2013

A – Congregational Care and Development Committee Report

- A-A-15 Pulpit Supply List Addition
- A-A-16 Terms of Call for Bill O’Connell
- A-A-17 Delores Doench Contract
- A-A-18 Pulpit Supply List Addition
- A-A-19 Pulpit Supply List Addition
- A-A-20 Jay Basler Transfer
- A-A-21 Bob Zirkelbach Transfer
- A-A-22 Linda Curtis-Stolper Contract

B – Professional Care and Development Committee Report

- B-A-5 Claude Jones Chaplain Position

D – Budget and Finance Committee Report

- D-A-6 Position Funding

Income & Expense Reports as of July 31, 2013
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position as of July 31, 2013
Restricted Funds as of July 31, 2013

E – Leadership Council Report

- E-A-5 Moderator and Vice Moderator Elections
- E-A-6 Worship Task Group Moderator Election
- E-A-7 New Sharon Administration Commission

I – Stated Clerk’s Report

- I-I-11 Reports Filed and Correspondence Handled
- I-I-12 Resignations Received
- I-I-13 St. Paul AA/EOE Report Received
- I-I-14 Hartford Loan Papers Received

A – CONGREGATIONAL CARE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**August 17, 2013**

In June 2013 the Committee took the following actions:

- A-A-15 Added Laurie Berry and Linda Curtis-Stolper to the Pulpit Supply list
- A-A-16 Approved Terms of Call between Johnston, St. Paul and TE William O’Connell, as of August 19, 2013:

Salary	\$41,400.00
Housing and Utilities	\$18,200.00
SECA Relief	\$4,900.00
Continuing Education	\$1,500.00
Medical Expense	\$2,200.00
Mileage (IRS rate) & Hospitality	\$2,000.00
Total	\$70,200.00

In July 2013, the Committee took the following actions:

- A-A-17 Approved Temporary Supply Contract between Platte Center and TE Delores Doench, as of July 1, 2013:

Salary	\$12,000.00
Mileage	\$.555/mile or IRS rate

- A-A-18 Approved Doug Bolsem for Pulpit Supply list

In August 2013, the committee took the following actions:

- A-A-19 Approved Dawn Linder and Jay Basler for Pulpit Supply list
- A-A-20 Approved transfer of membership for Jay Basler from Chicago Presbytery
- A-A-21 Approved transfer of membership for Bob Zirkelbach from Southeast Illinois Presbytery
- A-A-22 Approved Interim Pastor contract between CRE Linda Curtis-Stolper and Newton, First, as of August 15, 2013:

Cash Salary	\$24,785.52
FICA	\$1,366.75
Automobile Allowance	\$4,125.00
Resource Materials	\$100.00
Other Items	\$200.00
Continuing Education	\$1,500.00
Vacation	Four weeks
Study leave	Two weeks

Respectfully Submitted, Sarai Schnucker Rice, moderator

B – PROFESSIONAL CARE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

August 17, 2013

The Committee reports the following actions to the Presbytery:

B-A-4 Granted permission to TE Claude Jones to serve as part-time chaplain at Calvin Community.

The Committee presents the following recommendations to the Presbytery for adoption:

B-R-1 That the proposed pastoral minimum salary be changed for 2014 as shown on the following report, *Pastoral Compensation Minimum Salary Recommendations Report*.

B-R-2 That the following *Annual Report of the Type of Work in Which Each Minister is Engaged* be approved.

B-R-3 That the following *2013 Salary Changes Report* be approved.

B-R-4 That the Rev. Hans Cornelder (Gibson, First and White Oak) be granted the status of Honorably Retired as of August 1, 2013.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jan Scott, moderator

B – PROFESSIONAL CARE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT continued...



**Presbytery of Des Moines
5-Year History
Pastoral Compensation
Minimum Salary Recommendations Report**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Effective Salary ¹	\$40,500	\$41,100	\$42,744	\$43,600	\$43,600
Pension Dues ²	31.5% of Effective Salary	31.5% of Effective Salary	32.25% of Effective Salary	33% of Effective Salary	35% of Effective Salary
Continuing Ed. Dollars ³	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Continuing Ed. Leave ^{3,4}	2 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks
Auto Reimburse	Actual or IRS	Actual or IRS	Actual or IRS	Actual or IRS	Actual or IRS
Vacation ³	4 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks

¹ Effective Salary includes cash salary; employee contributions to 403(b) plans, tax sheltered annuity plans; salary reduction contributions to flexible health spending accounts and cafeteria plans; housing, utilities, and furnishings allowances; employing organization contributions to 403(b) plans, tax sheltered annuity plans, equity allowances; bonuses, overtime pay, professional expense allowances that are not set up on an “accountable reimbursement” basis, gifts from employing organization, manse equity allowances; other allowances such as medical deductible, insurance premiums, and the portion of any SECA allowance that exceeds 50% of the SECA obligation; and an amount for the manse equal to 30% of all the above if the member lives in employer provided housing. See Board of Pensions publication, *Understanding Effective Salary*.

² The Board of Pensions plan includes health insurance, disability insurance, life insurance, and survivor benefits, along with retirement pension benefits.

³ Continuing Education dollars and leave are not lost if not used by the end of the year but accumulate up to a maximum of three years’ worth. Example: If no continuing education was taken in 2012 and 2013, the dollars and time available for 2014 would be \$4,500 (1,500+1,500+1,500) and 6 weeks. To avoid budget surprises, any such carryover should be reported to the Session in advance.

⁴ Sundays are included in the weeks of continuing education and vacation, so a pastor planning continuing education could be away for 2 Sundays for that purpose, and a pastor taking vacation could be away 4 vacation Sundays.

B – PROFESSIONAL CARE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT continued...**Presbytery of Des Moines****ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TYPE OF WORK IN WHICH EACH MINISTER IS ENGAGED****August 17, 2013****MEMBERS ENGAGED IN A VALIDATED MINISTRY WITHIN CONGREGATIONS OF THIS CHURCH (G-2.0503):**

Randy Allman	Denis R. James	Scott Paczkowski
Kim Alten	Ann E. Johnson	Char Reif
Josyph Andrews	Claude J. Jones	John W. Reynolds, Jr.
Kenneth E. Arentson	Richard Kiefer	Kenneth Rummer
Ross Blount	Shamaine Chambers King	Janette S. Scott
Roger Claxton	David J. Klanderman	Adam Smith
Hans Cornelder	Kirsten Klepfer	Gregory Smith
D. Mark Davis	James Koopman	Holly Smith
Delores L. Doench	Nathan Lamb	Kenneth R. Stuber
William T. Ekhardt	Martie Larsen	Susan Tomlinson
David W. Endriss	Mike Maddy	Scott Valentine
Donald E. Freeman	David M. Madsen	Robert W. Waldron
John W. Gilmore	Jane Martinez	James L. Wallace
Suzanne L. Gorhau	Timothy S. Maxa	Joan White
Richard W. Harbart	Dennis E. Morey	Lynn M. Williams
James E. Howland	Barbara Nish	Michelle Williamson
Sara Hopkins	Dale O'Connell	James Woodworth

MEMBERS ENGAGED IN A VALIDATED MINISTRY IN OTHER SERVICE OF THIS CHURCH (G-2.0503a):

Philip W. Barrett (General Presbyter/Stated Clerk)
Katherine Pater (Mission Co-Worker to El Salvador)

MEMBERS IN A VALIDATED MINISTRY IN SERVICE BEYOND THE JURISDICTION OF THE CHURCH (G-2.0503a):

Mary Beth Mardis-LeCroy, Interim Ministry, Madrid, Iowa
John W. McElroy, Pastor, Churchlands Christian Fellowship, Balcatta Western Australia

MEMBERS AT LARGE (G-2.0503b):

Stephen L. Bowie	Christopher P. Harris
David E. Braak	Dawn M. Linder
Marcy Campbell	Michelle Parsons

MEMBERS WHO ARE HONORABLY RETIRED (G-2.0503c):

John C. Beran	Jack DePond	Patricia Summers
Robert L. Burnett	Aaron Koskamp	Russell Tomlinson
Theron Conrey	William LeMosy	Ronald Van Heukelom
Robert C. Cook	Marvin D. Potter	Francis Younkin
Carl L. Cooper	Elizabeth (Betty) Sandy	

REPORTS NOT YET RECEIVED

Peter L. Brantner	Ray Martin	Sara Speer Palmer
Goanar Chol	J. Jeffrey Means	Sarai Schnucker Rice
Bruce Giese	Adam Nardini	Kay E. Steddom
Elizabeth Knott	Linda O'Connell	Erasmio Velez

B – PROFESSIONAL CARE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT continued...

Presbytery of Des Moines

2013 SALARY CHANGES REPORT

August 17, 2013

Report available upon request.

C – COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY REPORT

August 17, 2013

The Committee presents the following Recommendations to the Presbytery for adoption:

- C-R-1 The Committee recommends that inquirer Laurie Berry be enrolled as a candidate under the care of the Presbytery of Des Moines.
- C-R-2 The Committee recommends that enquirer Ekram Kachu be enrolled as a candidate under the care of the Presbytery of Des Moines.

Statements of Faith for both Laurie & Ekram are included with this report.

Both Laurie and Ekram will be present at the August 17th Presbytery meeting to read their statements of faith and be questioned for candidacy.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sue Tomlinson, moderator

Statement of Faith

Laurie Elizabeth Berry

I believe in the Triune God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I believe that the triune God is the creator of all things and scripture tells us that God looked upon creation and found it to be good. God created human beings, both male and female, in God's own image, but the man and woman disobeyed God and as a result sin became a part of human life on earth. God freed the people of Israel from the captivity of Egypt and made a covenant with them to be their God. Throughout the history of God's people God remains faithful, even when God's people are not faithful.

In Christ, who is God in the flesh, God so loved the world that he made a new covenant, and with Jesus Christ's resurrection forever conquered the claim of sin on the people of God. In life Christ gave us a vision of the glory of God and taught us to love God and to love one another. In Christ's suffering and death on the cross the power of sin and death were conquered. Christ came as a servant leader and with his life Christ teaches each one of us to be a servant of God and one another.

Just as the Holy Spirit inspired and sustained God's prophets in the Old Testament, so too it inspires and sustains us. The Spirit gives us the power to live for others and to proclaim the word of God to the world. The Spirit makes it possible for us to work together as the body of Christ. The Spirit sustains us, encourages us, inspires us and unifies us to serve God.

In Baptism we are claimed by God and sealed by the Holy Spirit as God's own children and we share in Christ's redemptive work of salvation. We are buried with Christ in his death and raised in his resurrection, a new creation in the Holy Spirit, joining in God's covenant to give us new life, to protect us from evil and to nurture us in love. In embracing the covenant we chose to turn our backs on evil, renounce sin and to serve as Christ's faithful disciple, confessing faith in Christ and in the church. In Baptism we are joined with one another, as scripture states "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no

longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all are one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3: 28). In Baptism we are bound together to love and serve God with joy until the day that God makes all things new.

Christ invites us to the Communion table and at that table we remember and give thanks and praise to God for all that God has done and all God is. We join with the faithful from all generations, past, present and future to glorify God for the gift of Jesus Christ. We remember Jesus Christ’s life, death and resurrection that released us from the slavery of sin and death and made us new creations in the Holy Spirit, We are united in Christ through that same spirit and acknowledge our need for God’s grace and offer our lives in gratitude to be living sacrifices, proclaiming Jesus Christ to the world. We are nourished and sustained by the bread and the wine, symbolic of the body and blood of Christ, and are renewed by the elements to do God’s work through the power of the Holy Spirit. In Communion we recall the last supper that Jesus shared with the disciples and together we anticipate the heavenly banquet that waits for us when Christ comes again and all things are made new.

I believe that the church is the body of Christ, and Christ is the head of the church. The church includes those who have gone before: the Old Testament men and women who were children of God’s covenant, the apostles, our spiritual forefathers- and-mothers, and those who now gather together throughout the world to worship and serve God. The church is also those saints who are not yet born but who will become disciples of the living Lord. All together we gather to worship God, to serve under the headship of Christ and to serve as Christ’s faithful disciples and to share God’s love with the world.

Statement of Faith

Ekram Kachu

I believe in one God, who is Creator of all. He has revealed Himself in three different Persons, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And His attributes, He is one in being, essence, full of glory, eternal, infinite, sovereign, omniscient, everywhere, all-powerful, unchanging. Also God is holy, just, righteous, loving, gracious, merciful, and good.

I believe in the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God incarnate, God in human form, the spoken image of the Father, who became human in order that He might reveal who God is and provide the means of salvation for humankind. I believe that Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary. He is truly fully God and truly fully human. I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for all people as a replacement sacrifice and He rose from the dead. He ascended to heaven in His glorified body and is now seated at the right hand of God as our High Priest.

I believe in the divinity and character of the Holy Spirit. He regenerates sinners and indwells believers. He is the agent by whom Christ baptizes all believers into His body. He is the great teacher who illumines believers’ hearts and minds as they study the word of God. I believe that the Holy Spirit is the seal by which the Father guarantees the salvation of believers unto the day of redemption.

I understand that salvation is a gift of God. By the grace of God through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Christ died in our place and bore our sins in His own body. I believe salvation is received by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

I believe that the church, the body of Christ, is the visible church of Christ. Who is responsible for the wellbeing of fellow believers, peace and welfare of the others? I believe that the sacrament of Baptism with water is a mark by which a Christian believer begins a new life in Christ. I believe in the baptism of infants and adults. I also believe in the Lord's Supper as we unite with Christ's death and shed blood. The church is specially made to the growth of the kingdom of God that comes through witnessing the good news of Christ. I understand the Bible, comprised of the Old and New Testaments, and it is the reliable word of God, and it is God-breathed.

I believe that God created the angels to be His servants and messengers, that humankind is uniquely made in the image and likeness of God, that all humankind are sinful because of Adam's fall, that all human being choose to sin, and are totally unable to remedy this fallen state.

I believe in the return of Christ to the earth with His saints to establish His promised kingdom. I believe in the bodily resurrection all human beings, the saints, to everlasting joy and bliss.

Therefore, I believe that through the Love of God, Christ died for me and "once for all" while we were still sinner. I believe that the Holy Spirit helps and guides Christian believers so that they could understand the truth and mystery of the Bible and sanctifies them in their faith journey. As he loves the world and sent his only son, (1) God wants human beings to reconcile to him as well as to one another. I believe that the commandments of God are meant for good relationship between God and believers and believers with their neighbors. Jesus condensed these commandments in to LOVE – "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with your entire mind. And love your neighbor as you love yourself." (2) This love has to be extended to all nations in the rest of the World. The promise of salvation involves a responsibility of reaching to others. I believe in the "priesthood of all believers" was each individual member is call to ministry by God through the support of the Church and the Holy Spirit. This call includes all different ways of reaching out to our neighbors. Christ is alive in our hearts and in the scriptures. He charges us to continue his ministry as he promised us saying, "I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (3)

(1) John 3:16

(2) Luke 10:27

(3) Matthew 28:20 (NIV)

D – BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

August 17, 2013

The Committee presents the following recommendation for adoption by the Presbytery:

- D-R-2 The Presbytery of Des Moines (a “Corporation”) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) having received and reviewed the loan application of the Community United Presbyterian Church, a member in good standing of this Presbytery, located at 315 N Vine, Hartford, IA, approved the loan application and guarantees the repayment of principal and interest on the loan from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A., A Corporation “CL)”, in the amount of \$136,770.00. The officers of the Presbytery Corporation as listed on the attached Affidavit/Certificate of Incumbency marked Exhibit A are authorized to sign a Guaranty Agreement for this loan as agents of the Presbytery Corporation.

The Committee presents the following item of information to the Presbytery:

- D-I-1 The committee received as a report of information from the Personnel Committee the following information on July 10, 2013: The Personnel Committee decided to move forward with a new communications position with \$6,000 as the maximum expense for the rest of the year. Personnel Committee was thinking \$7,200 will be the annual figure for next year’s budget since they are offering \$15.00 per hour. There are no benefits being offered since it is a very part time position (1/4 time) and benefits are rarely offered on such positions. The position will be for Communication Coordinator. Phil Barrett received permission from the Clifton Heights Administrative Commission to use up to \$6,000.00 to fund the Communication Coordinator position for the rest of the year.
- D-I-2 We have received the auditor’s letter attesting to our financial status and processes. Following this report you will find the auditor’s letter. The full audit report is available upon request in the Presbytery Office.

All actions listed in this report were completed via electronic communications by committee members.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gary Modlin, moderator

D – BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MERIWETHER, WILSON AND COMPANY, PLLC

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
OFFICES at

TELEPHONE

WILLIAM H. BOORN, CPA
DENNIS L. MUELLER, CPA
STEPHEN L. KOEHN, CPA
SUSAN K. CHANTLAND, CPA
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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Coordinating Council and Board of Directors
The Presbytery of Des Moines of the
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Des Moines, Iowa

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Presbytery of Des Moines of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (The Presbytery), which comprise the Statement of Financial Position as of December 31, 2012, and the related Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets, and Cash Flows for the year then ended, and The related notes to the financial statements. The prior year summarized comparative information has been derived from The Presbytery's 2011 financial statements and, in our report dated May 10, 2012, we expressed an unqualified opinion on those financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Presbytery of Des Moines of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as of December 31, 2012, and the results of its activities and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with account principals generally accepted in the United States of America.

Sincerely,

MERIWETHER, WILSON AND COMPANY, PLLC
Certified Public Accountants

May 14, 2013
West Des Moines, Iowa

D – BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT continued...**Presbytery of Des Moines****2013 Income Report
as of July 31, 2013**

	2013 Budget	2013 YTD
Income		
Carryover from 2012	\$32,182.40	\$32,182.40
Total Per Capita	\$259,600.00	\$212,043.83
Total Past Years Per Capita	\$5,000.00	\$404.51
Presbytery General Mission (pledged)	\$117,285.26	\$73,973.11
Synod Support Staff Salaries	\$40,000.00	\$23,333.31
Hunger Action Enabler Income	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Khadamat Sudaniya Grant Income	\$14,500.00	\$9,624.96
Montezuma funds-amt to balance budget	\$22,355.17	
Interest Income	\$150.00	\$167.85
Miscellaneous Income	\$500.00	\$51.26
Total Income	\$494,572.83	\$354,781.23
2013 Expenses		
	\$494,572.83	\$289,130.55
Surplus(Deficit)	\$0.00	\$65,650.68

D – BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT continued...**Presbytery of Des Moines****2013 Expense Report
as of July 31, 2013**

	2013 Budget	2013 YTD
Governance Expense		
Committee Preparation Ministry	\$2,100.00	\$0.00
Stewardship & Mission Interpretation Committee	\$2,200.00	\$0.00
Permanent Judicial Commission	\$500.00	\$0.00
Committee of Representation	\$50.00	\$0.00
Budget & Finance Committee	\$0.00	\$0.00
Nominating Committee	\$90.00	\$0.00
Personnel Committee	\$75.00	\$0.00
Sexual Misconduct Response Team	\$50.00	\$0.00
General Assembly Per Capita	\$54,877.56	\$54,877.56
Synod Per Capita	\$39,940.00	\$39,940.00
Subtotal	\$99,882.56	\$94,817.56
Administrative Expense		
Moderator Expense/Task Groups	\$150.00	\$0.00
Administrative Commissions	\$500.00	\$40.00
Presbytery Meetings	\$300.00	\$0.00
Commissioner Orientation	\$0.00	\$0.00
Stated Clerk Expense	\$50.00	\$0.00
Communication	\$1,800.00	\$209.64
Insurance	\$6,000.00	(\$203.42)
Legal fees	\$500.00	\$0.00
Subtotal	\$9,300.00	\$46.22
Extension of Ministries		
Social Ministries Task Force	\$5,000.00	\$3,715.60
Hunger Action Enabler Travel & Con Ed	\$1,500.00	\$519.88
Broken Bread	\$300.00	\$0.00
Khadamat Sudaniya Committee Expense	\$50.00	\$52.47
Khadamat Sudaniya Grant Expense	\$14,500.00	\$9,166.63
Cross Ministries	\$60,000.00	\$35,000.00
Older Adult Ministries Task Force	\$1,000.00	\$469.65
Camping	\$4,500.00	\$2,160.96
Youth	\$8,300.00	\$4,020.77
Resources	\$500.00	\$351.63
Women's Advocacy Task Force	\$50.00	\$0.00
Subtotal	\$95,700.00	\$55,457.59
Support of Local Ministries		
Congregational Care & Development Committee	\$1,000.00	\$75.20
Professional Care & Development Committee	\$3,300.00	\$924.00
Regional Partnerships		
Southeast	\$0.00	\$0.00
East	\$0.00	\$0.00

DM West/NW	\$0.00	\$0.00
Southwest	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
West	\$0.00	\$0.00
South Central	\$0.00	\$0.00
DM Two Rivers	\$5,500.00	\$177.18
Leadership Council	\$450.00	\$542.61
Worship Task Group	\$75.00	\$0.00
Bills & Overtures	\$50.00	\$0.00
Emergency Contingency	\$500.00	\$0.00
Subtotal	\$15,875.00	\$6,718.99

Office Expense		
Condo dues	\$2,520.00	\$1,775.00
Rent-copier lease	\$4,725.00	\$3,110.33
Office supplies	\$4,725.00	\$3,315.44
Postage	\$3,150.00	\$1,225.48
Telephone & Internet	\$4,200.00	\$1,650.60
Utilities	\$2,100.00	\$1,191.33
Janitorial Services	\$3,780.00	\$1,833.02
New Equipment	\$3,000.00	\$869.25
Equipment Maintenance/Tech Services	\$2,500.00	\$968.85
Books & Subscriptions	\$250.00	\$59.00
Office Travel	\$1,000.00	\$93.10
Audit	\$7,000.00	\$6,878.84
Church & Staff Appreciation	\$200.00	(\$56.35)
Subtotal	\$39,150.00	\$7,817.07

Personnel		
General Presbyter Salary	\$75,433.00	\$37,716.60
General Presbyter Benefits	\$24,892.89	\$12,446.46
General Presbyter Prof Expense	\$600.00	\$90.00
General Presbyter Con Ed	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
General Presbyter Travel	\$10,000.00	\$4,452.51
Office Manager Salary	\$39,254.00	\$18,500.04
Office Manager Benefits	\$13,110.42	\$6,420.00
Office Manager Con Ed	\$750.00	\$0.00
Office Manager FICA	\$3,003.00	\$1,366.34
Hunger Action Enabler Salary	\$7,500.00	\$3,750.00
Hunger Action Enabler Benefits	\$7,488.00	\$3,130.00
Hunger Action Enabler FICA	\$574.00	\$286.87
Sudanese Ministry RP Salary	\$23,533.00	\$11,766.60
Sudanese Ministry RP Benefits	\$11,223.96	\$5,611.98
Sudanese Ministry RP Con Ed	\$1,500.00	\$1,774.45
Sudanese Ministry RP Expenses	\$3,000.00	\$1,470.45
Part-time Officer Worker	\$10,500.00	\$366.00
Office Worker FICA	\$803.00	\$28.00
Subtotal	\$234,665.27	\$109,176.30

Total Expenses	\$494,572.83	\$289,130.55
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D – BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT continued...**Presbytery of Des Moines****Restricted Funds
as of July 31, 2013****New Covenant Funds**

McCahon Fund	Annual Income to be used for grants for small churches (under 150) for one-time needs. Unused income to be reinvested each year in the trust.	\$41,981.92
Swan Fund	Interest earnings to be used for seminary students' assistance.	\$25,225.40
Albia/Pitzer Fund	To be used for the assistance of small churches in the Presbytery.	\$18,475.51
Knox Knolls-Camping Fund	3/4 of interest to be used for camping program. 1/4 of interest to be used for Presbytery causes.	\$310,088.29
Walther Fund	To be used for scholarship aid for physically or mentally-challenged youth and/or children in need.	\$21,894.58
Colfax Fund	To be used for church development with interest to be placed in Colfax Fund Money Market.	\$22,923.87
Total of Funds		\$440,589.57

First American Bank

Pastor Emergency Fund	To be used for short-term loans for pastors.	\$2,847.59
Colfax Fund Money Market	To be used for church development.	\$1,899.35
Clifton Heights Money Market		\$78,281.05
Montezuma CD		\$78,640.01
Total of Accounts		\$161,668.70

E – LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT**August 17, 2013**

The Council has taken the following actions:

- E-A-5 Elected TE Jim Howland as Council Moderator and TE Ann Johnson as Vice Moderator of the Council.
- E-A-6 Elected TE Don Elly as Co-Moderator of the Worship Task Group.
- E-A-7 Elected RE Mickey Van Baale (Newton, First) and RE John Sprole (West Des Moines, Covenant) to fill two vacancies on the New Sharon Administrative Commission. Mickey was also elected as Moderator of the Commission.

The Council presents the following item of information to the Presbytery:

- E-I-4 Presbytery meetings will have a special theme or presentation in the future. These will be coordinated by the moderators. If any person or group has a presentation in mind, the Presbytery Moderator or Vice Moderator should be contacted so that these can be coordinated in the presbytery meeting schedule.

The Council presents the following recommendations to the Presbytery for adoption:

- E-R-4 That the Presbytery approve *Creation of the Positions of Presbytery Pastors*. (See following proposal)
- E-R-5 That the Presbytery approve the *Proposed Restructure of Duties of CCD & PCD*. (See following proposal)

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Howland, moderator

E – LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT continued...**Creation of the Positions of Presbytery Pastors
Report from the Leadership Council
July 26, 2013**

The Leadership Council was charged with visioning for the ways in which Des Moines Presbytery would carry out its ministry as the Presbytery looks into its future.

This process has been a wide-ranging conversation, yet one of the central areas of focus has been on how to vision about a way to carry out the work of Congregational Care and Development Committee (CCD) and Professional Care and Development Committee (PCD). In light of the new Form of Government with its less structured approach to this work, there are significantly less absolutes in putting together the way a Presbytery operates in regard to these committee areas. It should be acknowledged that the process of visioning has taken longer than anyone on the Leadership Council would have anticipated.

A small task group of four persons of the Leadership Council began the process of visioning nearly two and half years ago. The task group collectively listened to the members of CCD and PCD about the current structure of these committees with reflection on its successes and its shortcomings. It should be acknowledged that persons on the task group as well as the currently elected committees have expressed a return to a model of one committee such as the Committee on Ministry in operation under the former Form of Government.

With the new Form of Government and with the current realities of the Presbyterian Church (USA) this model of a Committee on Ministry is not the suggestion of the Leadership Council.

The task group has discussed its work and progress at nearly every Leadership Council meeting in the last two and half years. The task group reviewed different proposals from across the denomination about ways to carry out the work. The task group has used its collective experience on these committees in Des Moines Presbytery and in other presbyteries. Three of the four group members had served as Moderator for one of the current Presbytery committees and the fourth person had served numerous terms on the committees. In addition, two members of the task group have served on similar committees in other presbyteries.

The task group divided the work into the *functions* of these committees using Des Moines Presbytery's current Manual of Operation, past experiences, and current loopholes in models in operation.

The task group also believed it was essential to develop a process by which Teaching Elders and their family members would receive care and compassion that would be at its core confidential. This is to say that such care would remain confidential from anyone in the official structure of the Presbytery – not the General Presbyter (or whatever this position will be called in the future) or the structures that will replace CCD and PCD would have access to the conversations with Teaching Elders and families in a newly launched form of ministry. The task group sought to create a *safe place* for these persons to receive front-line ministry. This ministry would be a way for the targeted persons to learn of other services offered through the Board of Pensions as well as local resources.

The task group had concluded recently to follow a model discovered from Greater Atlanta Presbytery with a group developed for the purpose of offering confidential care for Teaching Elders and their family members. The task group reflected on this model for a few months with the Leadership Council and concluded this model would be too cumbersome. The task group brought the possibility of the model to PCD. Members of the current PCD believed that there is a great need for this sort of ministry and urged the Leadership Council to get on with it.

From all of this thought, conversation, research, and prayer, the Leadership Council presents the experimental model of selecting two Presbytery Pastors for an initial nine month run. These persons will be:

- Members of the Presbytery who will work without compensation to provide compassionate care to the target audience of Teaching Elders and their family members.
- Will be reimbursed for mileage and additional expenses such as meals with people in the targeted audience.
- Will be knowledgeable about services offered through the Presbyterian Board of Pensions
- Will refer persons with more in-depth needs to appropriate resources
- Will break confidence *only if* there is an expressed threat of doing harm to self or others.

In careful reflection, the Leadership Council seeks Presbytery Pastors who are:

- Persons who can have a track record of holding confidences as well as significant experience in parish ministry.
- Will include one man and a one woman.
- Will be selected by the Leadership Council and affirmed by the Presbytery.

Please note this model is an *experiment*. The *field testing* of the model will allow the Leadership Council to review its effectiveness with input from the Presbytery Pastors. The input from the Presbytery Pastors *will not* include stories of confidential information gathered, but an overview of their work.

At the conclusion of the nine month run, the Leadership Council will present its finding and with likelihood of creating positions of Presbytery Pastors.

Current scholarship about living out the work of the church in 21st century indicates that oftentimes *experiments* have to be tried to figure out what will be feasible in the current set of realities in the church. It is likely this model will continue to be tweaked as the Leadership Council continues to lead the Presbytery in visioning about its future.

E – LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPORT continued...**Proposed Restructure of Duties of CCD & PCD
July 19, 2013****Congregational Health Task Force**

- Conduct biennial visits with congregations
- Contact churches every month for update and determine how each church is doing
- Refer specific needs and concerns to the appropriate task force or other Presbytery groups
- Administer, coordinate and evaluate special funds requests for mission projects for the Presbytery
- Meet with the Teaching Elder or Commissioned Ruling Elder at least once a year or upon request.

This task force will have a membership of no fewer than nine. It will elect its own moderator who will serve on the Task Force Council.

Congregational Transition Task Force

- Approve terms of dissolution between Teaching Elders and congregations
- Work with Sessions as they determine next steps when Teaching Elder transitions
- Work with Session/PNC in creating appropriate CIF and/or job description
- Work with Session/PNC in creating terms of call
- Assist Session/PNC in interview process
 - Oversee equal opportunity employment action
 - Interview candidates
- Debrief search committees
- Hold exit interviews with persons leaving positions

This task force will have a membership of no fewer than five. It will elect its own moderator who will serve on the Task Force Council.

Congregational Challenge Task Force

- Deal with difficulties within congregations as they arise
- Mediate conflict between Sessions, Congregations, and Teaching Elders
- Make requests to the Presbytery Leadership Council for Administrative Commissions when warranted
- Counsel with Sessions and Congregations regarding inappropriate conduct
- Counsel with Teaching Elders regarding inappropriate conduct
- Make referrals to the Presbytery Pastors
- Make recommendations in regards to dissolution of relationships

This task force will have a membership of no fewer than seven. It will elect its own moderator who will serve on the Task Force Council.

Church Professional Task Force

- Approve individuals seeking to be on the Pulpit Supply List for the presbytery
- Approve individuals seeking to transfer membership to the presbytery but not accepting a call
- Identify and organize continuing education opportunities for church professionals
- Make recommendations to the Presbytery in regards to annual compensation for Teaching Elders and Certified Christian Educators including minimum standards
- Conduct annual compensation package surveys for other church professionals to be shared with the presbytery and personnel committees
- Review and approve validated ministries, members-at-large, and Certified Christian Educators

This task force will have a membership of no fewer than five. It will elect its own moderator who will serve on the Task Force Council.

Congregational Task Force Council

- Coordinate efforts between the following Task Forces:
 - Congregational Health Task Force
 - Congregational Transition Task Force
 - Congregational Challenge Task Force
 - Church Professional Task Force
- Facilitate communication and information-sharing among the Task Forces
- Ensure duties of each task force are completed in a timely manner
- Communicate with the Presbytery regularly on the activities of the Task Forces

This council's membership will consist of the moderators from each of the Task Forces. This council will meet monthly and whenever situations warrant. This council may request the presence of any presbytery staff or officer for advisory assistance. It will elect its own moderator.

I –STATED CLERK REPORT

August 17, 2013

I present the following items of information to the Presbytery:

- I-I-11 All reports have been filed with the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and the General Assembly as of this date. All correspondence received has been referred, assigned or answered.
- I-I-12 I have received the resignations of TE Lynn Williams from the Congregational Care and Development Committee and TE Peter Brantner from the Professional Care and Development Committee. These have been referred to the Nominating Committee.
- I-I-13 I have received the AA/EOE Report from the Pastor Nominating Committee of the St. Paul Church, Johnston. This will be referred to the Congregational Care and Development Committee for their action and recommendation to the Presbytery.
- I-I-14 I have received the loan papers from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Corporation related to the loan to the Community United Church in Hartford. This loan was approved at our last meeting, and the official language for that will be before the Presbytery today for action.

Respectfully Submitted,
Philip W. Barrett

J – GENERAL PRESBYTER REPORT

August 17, 2013

We live in a fearful culture. All we have to do is look at everything from gun sales to political debates to economic issues to teaching children about “stranger Danger” to church issues. We wonder what’s going on and, more importantly, what’s going to happen to us. As I visit with folks from our presbytery congregations, no matter the size but especially those with smaller memberships, the wonder and fear about the future of congregations is very real and mostly the prime continuing conversation.

A little while back while in a devotional time, I came across these words from Amy Avery Hampton:

“There’s much we can be afraid of these days: the economy, our jobs, terrorism, devastating illness, even death. Perhaps we worry constantly about these. More likely, we worry about what affects us on a regular basis: our children, our marriages, our futures. We can live in a constant state of “crisis.” Our fear of being liked or wanted by others can increase our anxiety, even making us compromise ourselves to reach some favorable outcome.

“To live from a posture of fear becomes exhausting and lonely. It zaps our energy and robs us of the abundant life that Jesus came to give. May the amazement of the resurrection remind us that we no longer have to live lives of slavery to our fears.”

Some of our fears are “reasonable,” but some are at least based on incomplete, if not erroneous, information. One of these at least incomplete fears was lifted up to me when reading an article written by Steve Willis, an author published by the Alban Institute. Following this report is a copy of his article, *Being the Church Today*. In it, he lifts up some realities that we Presbyterians need to remember, grasp and come to understand. For me, his thoughts can help us live in our current reality and strive to serve Christ in hopeful spirits rather than bemoaning a current situation based on incomplete or incorrect memories of our past. I hope you find some thought-provoking insight from this article.

I have had a variety of places to go and things to do beyond the “regular” routine of my work. Some of these are:

- Participated in the annual retreat with ecumenical leaders in Iowa
- Met with several pastors
- Met with the Knox Administrative Commission
- Attended a meeting of the Leadership Team for our Tri-Synod conversations on sharing resources
- Attended the farewell reception for Eldred Kingery as Executive Director of Calvin Community
- Attended the 165th Anniversary Celebration at First Church, Des Moines
- Attended the 125th Anniversary Celebration of the East End Church in Ottumwa
- Attended worship at the Ankeny Church
- Preached a Trinity Church In Indianola and First Church, Atlantic

- Met with the Personnel Committee at First Church in Grimes
- Participated in a webinar on “Developing Emergency Plans and Operations for Houses of Worship
- Met with ecumenical leaders in the Des Moines area

If you'd like to more about any of these, please let me know.

I continue to be grateful to God for all of you and your areas of ministry. May these be filled with hope based on confidence in God's presence with us.

Yours in Christ,
Philip W. Barrett

Alban – Building Up Congregations and Their Leaders

www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=10249

Being the Church Today

by Steve Willis

The numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States occurred in the year 1965¹. That was the year that the largest percentages of American people affiliated with and attended church. More Americans were going to church than at any other time in U.S. history. Where I live in the South, this "highpoint" is usually considered to have occurred several years later. The highpoint was the late 1960s, not 1776, when our nation was being born through a bloody rebellion against England, nor was it 1861, when our nation began the brutal internal struggle of the Civil War and saw the beginning of the end of slavery. Nineteen sixty-five was the year *The Sound of Music* premiered in New York City, the year that 3,500 U.S. Marines arrived in South Vietnam, the year that President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Social Security Act, establishing Medicare and Medicaid. Nineteen sixty-five was the year that CBS first aired *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. In other words, it wasn't that long ago. In the living memory of many church people are the days when we were most popular in our nation's history.

We tend to get nostalgic when thinking back on the church's role in American society. We have let our frustration with our fairly new status as the peripheral mainline of Protestantism today create a festering illusion in our minds. The change in our social location from being at the center of culture to moving toward the periphery has clouded our vision. We dream that once upon a time all our churches were big, bustling centers of activity, filled with children, distinguished by selfless service to the community, and immersed in happy, loving relationships between people.

Yet consider the reality of what churches actually looked like in this era. Less than a decade after the apex of American church growth, the Presbyterian Church in the United States (the former denomination of Presbyterians in the southern states) published the work of a task force reporting on the small church. By 1974 when this report was published, the southern Presbyterian Church was near its numerical

¹ Anthony G. Pappas, *Vital Ministry in the Small-Membership Church: Healthy Esteem* (Nashville; Discipleship Resources, 2002), 10.

height. The church was booming. So our nostalgic memories should be chastened by the reminder that in 1974, 73 percent of these churches had a membership of fewer than 250 members. And 44 percent of these churches had a membership of under 100 members!² So the truth is that even during the "glory days" the majority of our churches were small.

As mainline Protestants, we are still working through our fixation with numerical decline. We used to be the popular kid in class, but now-not so much. One response to this changing circumstance has been the creation of an unrealistic mental picture: once we were a great and glorious church, but now we are doomed to the dustbin of history. This fanciful delusion keeps us from seeing the ministry right in front of us. This Camelot-like dream diverts us from both the joys and the challenges of being the church today. We have romanticized our triumphs. We have confused our former popularity and status in the culture with being the church of Jesus Christ. We pine for the glories of our misremembered past.

So today, as we evaluate the church through relentless, overbearing market analysis, we mistakenly use dominant culture tools to understand our present situation. We have less power, less money, and fewer numbers. So we think we must be dying, because life can only be measured by numbers and money. Right? Ironically, the proof of our decline is not lessening power, money, and influence but rather our commercialized, dominant-culture idolization of the market. We see our situation through the same spectacles that the dominant, secular American culture views the world. The problem is not that we are getting smaller and more peripheral. The problem is a lethargic faith imagination and a graceless covenant love.

Small churches, especially small rural and neighborhood urban churches, have an advantage in this changing context. They are less likely to be stuck in the unrealistic, pining daydream about past power and prestige. These churches did not feast on the popularity boom of the fifties and sixties. Here, one will not see reminders of the glory days; no sanctuary that will seat five hundred; no pictures of hallowed ministers from yesteryear: no monuments to influence and position.

Small, peripheral-church folk may bemoan the waning influence of Christianity on American culture. But this is a different kind of lament. And after the last decade's shameless greed and endless military campaigns, they have good reason to bemoan the loss of Christian influence. The small-church lament is not about being left behind. It was always behind, always out of step, and always at the margin. The small-church lament is that things are not as they should be. And that lament has a long, important tradition in the life of covenant people. Angry protestations about declining membership rolls and budgets do not offer a prophetic word to the church. But paying closer attention to people and places and speaking out about who people are and what they are created for carry the potential for genuine transformation.

Healthy, vital, peripheral churches continue to tell and, more importantly, show people that they belong to God. In many different contexts, through many different styles of worship, with many different theological perspectives, the small church embodies the truth that human beings belong to God.

This article is adapted and excerpted from *Imagining the Small Church; Celebrating a Simpler Path* by Steve Willis, copyright © 2013 by the Alban Institute. All rights reserved.

² Task Force on Ministry to the Small Church to the 113th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, *Strengthening the Small Church for Its Mission* (The Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1974)

K – SOCIAL MINISTRIES TASK FORCE REPORT

August 17, 2013

JUST NEIGHBORS

SMTF is pleased to present the Just Neighbors Award and brand new traveling banner to Art for El Salvador (www.facebook.com/ArtForElSalvador). Maria and Niah Howard are members of First Presbyterian Church of Dallas Center. We are now accepting nominations for the November award; nomination forms are available at our display table, at the Presbytery Office, and online.

CROSSING THE DESERT OF HOPE AND FEAR SEMINAR

BorderLinks, Tucson, AZ, September 24-29, 2013

Nine delegation members are preparing for the BorderLinks experience. Make plans now to hear from them after their return! Contact Rev. Liz Knott (elizabethknott84@gmail.com) for more information.

SERMON CONTEST

Congratulations to Rev. Marcy Cambell whose sermon was selected by the judges as the winner of the “Welcoming the Stranger” sermon contest!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- 2013 CROP Walks – find out when your local Walk is scheduled!
- Latino Heritage Festival, Des Moines – look for the Compañeros’ El Salvador booth
- Peacemaking Offering – suggested date: Sunday, October 6th, World Communion Sunday
- Compañeros 2013 Fundraiser – the evening of October 12th; contact Betty at the Presbytery Office or any Compañeros member for tickets
- Rural Partnership Offering – designate a Sunday for your congregation to receive the 2013 RPO; materials are available online at the Presbytery of Des Moines.
- Hope for the Hungry – November 16, 2013, 8:30 to 3:00, at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Des Moines; contact Hunger Action Enabler Nancy Lister-Settle for information and how to register (neitherthecat@gmail.com).

JOIN US!

The Social Ministries Task Force meets on the first Saturday of every month at the Presbytery Office in Urbandale. We **welcome** anyone with an interest in peace and justice and a desire to help promote social ministries in the Presbytery of Des Moines.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nancy Lister-Settle, moderator

M – TRANSFORMATION TEAM REPORT

August 17, 2013

The Presbytery Transformation Team has developed four new workshops for congregations in the Presbytery. These workshop titles are:

- A Praying Congregation
- Leadership
- Visioning/Ministry Discerning
- Hospitality in the Kingdom of God

The workshops are available to any congregation in the Presbytery starting this fall. More information, including a workshop information sheet, is available at the Transformation Team display in the display tables area at today's meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Howland, moderator

T-4 – OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES TASK FORCE REPORT

August 17, 2013

Coming up soon – *Faithful Through the Years* recognition at the November 12th Presbytery Meeting.

This year we will be looking at the valuable time so many have given so willingly and faithfully. There will be no single winner. Each person will be recognized. **The deadline for your nomination is: September 30, 2013.**

You may go on the Presbytery website at: <http://www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org/missions/older-adults.html> to print off all the information needed to nominate someone from your church.

Respectfully Submitted,
Darlene Shepherd, moderator