

# **The presbytery meeting summary**

## *With a special focus on mission*

March 10, 2018

With a special focus on mission — both mission done by co-workers on our behalf and that done with our own hands — the presbytery met March 10 at Valley Community Presbyterian Church in Golden Valley.

We welcomed the Rev. John McCall, mission co-worker in Taiwan, both to our pulpit for worship and to the podium to speak about his ministry. The Rev. McCall teaches at three seminaries of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan. He shared stories about his students' dedication and eagerness to learn. He spoke about his experiences teaching, preaching and equipping the leadership of the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church.

We commissioned our own PTCA 2018 Mission Team bound for Denham Springs, Arkansas. Planned in collaboration with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, our mission team will assist in recovery, clean-up and rebuilding from the 2016 Louisiana flooding. The team, which represents a half-dozen PTCA churches, leaves on Saturday, April 7, and returns ,Saturday, April 14. Team members include:

- Jon and Laura Arthur, First Presbyterian Church, Hudson;
- Neal Hubbard, First Presbyterian Church, South St. Paul;
- Larry and Barb Janski, Buffalo Presbyterian Church, Buffalo;
- Rev. Kirk Johnston, First Presbyterian Church, Hayfield;
- Terrance Johnston, First Presbyterian Church, Hudson;
- Ginger Kirby, First Presbyterian Church, Rochester;
- Ronda Marshall, Community Presbyterian Church, Rochester;
- Sue Tourville, First Presbyterian Church, South St. Paul;
- Hjordi Van Ausdal, First Presbyterian Church, Hudson;
- Ken Wooley, First Presbyterian Church, Hudson; and
- Rev. Brenda Alexander, Chair of the PTCA Mission and Witness Committee, whose retirement from active ministry we also celebrated.

We look forward to hearing about their experiences at our May meeting.

In other business, Executive Presbyter Jeff Japinga provided a substantive report about the work happening in and around the presbytery. Discussions within that report include: How we meet, when we meet, what should happen at our meetings, and how we can honor both our constitutional responsibilities and our mission and values as a presbytery. Connections between the presbytery and our congregations continue to be a priority.

Suann Nichols, chair of the Board of Trustees, informed the presbytery that, for the current time, its accounting services will be provided by the accounting firm of BerganKDV instead of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

Mike Quady, chair of the Committee on Congregational Vitality, announced that applications for 2018 Congregational Development Grants will be accepted through May 18, 2018. These grants are intended to encourage, support or expand innovative, and perhaps risky, ministry initiatives at the congregational level. Successful applications will build on the current gifts, passions, abilities and callings of congregation. There is an application form on the presbytery website under the Committee on Congregational Vitality's tab.

General Assembly is only three months away. Our Bills and Overtures Committee presented three overtures, all of which the presbytery passed.

- The Committee worked in collaboration with the session of the Presbyterian Church in Oronoco and the Rev. Lisa Johnson, to finalize an “Overture on Establishing Minimum Guidelines for Paid Parental Leave for All Staff throughout the PC(USA).”
- Cherokee Park United Church, St. Paul, and Ruling Elder Tomie Evans worked with the Committee on an “Overture on Advocacy for Climate Change Action and a Thriving Lower-Carbon Economy.”
- The Rev. Dean Seal and Shepherd of the Hill, Chaska, worked with the Committee and the Rev. Doug Mitchell on the overture an adopting the “Letter from the Birmingham City Jail,” written by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a contemporary statement of faith for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

At the request of the stated clerk, following discussions with First Presbyterian Church, LeRoy, the presbytery voted to request that the Synod of Lakes and Prairies submit an overture to General Assembly making a slight change in the boundaries of the presbytery, effectively transferring the LeRoy church to the Presbytery of North Central Iowa. The text of these overtures can be found in the presbytery meeting packet.

Our delegation to General Assembly, Commissioners Barbara Anne Keely, David Parker, Walter Rockenstein, Phil Romine and YAAD Janimah Igwacho, were commissioned for service. Walter Rockenstein has been selected as moderator of the Mission Coordination Committee of General Assembly.

The meeting began with a time of worship, which included celebration of the Lord's Supper and the Necrology Report.

The Presbytery Packet, with the full text of all written reports, and the minutes of this meeting, can be found at the Presbytery's website, <http://www.ptcaweb.org>. Click on the "For PTCA members button" and look for the "Presbytery meetings" tab.

The presbytery's Annual Meeting will be on May 8, 2018, beginning at 4 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis. In addition to key items of business, the meeting will offer opportunities to see and experience the congregation's successful completion of its new, two-story wing as part of its "Open Doors, Open Futures" campaign.