Council…Listening for God’s Guidance

*from Rev Bill McLean, Assistant Stated Clerk &
Pastor at First Presbyterian Church Delphi*

Council met on Tuesday, April 29 for a time of service and discernment. Moderator **Kevin Bowers** began the meeting with a time of scripture reading and study of Luke 24:13-35. Together we explored God's Word and listened for God's guidance in our lives.

Council members heard an update from **Ruling Elder Jill Kitowski** on the progress of Joshua Journey II. The journey is making progress, but there is still work to accomplish. Due to the importance of the recommendations, the members of Joshua Journey II were granted an extension to submit their report at the September Presbytery Assembly.

On behalf of the Stewardship Ministry Team, Financial Consultant **Eric Herzog** reviewed the current financial status of the Presbytery. As part of this review, there was extensive discussion of the impact on developing plans and budgets for the future when congregations don't communicate about their inability or refusal to make per capita contributions to the greater church that is funded by those anticipated contributions. Following the discussion, the Council approved a six-month budget to allow time for the exploration and implementation of the recommendations of the Joshua Journey II. If each congregation pays their per capita apportionment in full, then the approved budget is balanced. Unfortunately, if the payment rate is the same as in 2013 with 35 congregations paying no per capita or only partially paying then the approved budget includes a projected deficit of over $32,000.

Council also took action to:

* Support the requests from congregations and the Commission on Ministry (COM) that the Presbytery Assembly form administrative commissions to consider ministry options with Thorntown and Plymouth congregations to consider their future ministry and potential closing of the congregations.
* Approve the sale of a small unused piece of real estate by Lebanon, First.
* Approve inviting the **Rev. Dr. Cinda W. Gorman**, International Relations Coordinator for Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo and **Dr. Atef Gendy**, President of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo to speak to our Presbytery Assembly gathering on Friday evening, September 11th.
* Approve supporting the recognition of the ministry of **Carol McDonald** at the Presbytery Assembly in May.
* Approve use of the Presbytery Directory by the Executive Secretary in the Office of Faith and Spirituality at Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania. She seeks current contact information for the churches in our Presbytery, including Church name, mailing address, contact phone, contact email and Pastor's name. Purpose is to provide information about 4 year PC(USA) Young Presbyterian Scholarship valued at $74,000 ($18,500 per year) for qualified students from PC(USA) churches. The student must be nominated by their church (pastor, youth director, session), hence the need for current contact information for the churches in our Presbytery. "Please be advised that this information will not be used for any solicitation or any other mailings except to offer this scholarship."
* Approve minutes and receive financial reports and reports from the General Presbyter and Stated Clerk.