

Presbytery of Wabash Valley
Assembly Summary for God Calls
September 23, 2011

Imagine thousands of helium-filled balloons in many shapes and colors tethered into one giant balloon, lifting Carl Fredricksen's house from its tiny city lot into the sky and blown by the breath of winds all the way to South America..... That's the scene from the movie Up that Eric Herzog offered as simile for the bold witness we Presbyterians give every day through our congregations and our contributions of dollars and talents to shared ministry and missions of Presbytery, Synod and PC(USA). What an image for our Wabash Valley Assembly yesterday, with more than 129 present!

- Throughout the gathering we worshiped together, led by several of our trained lay pastors. CLP Mae Leech opened by singing the spiritual, "Wade in the Water..." and preached from Matthew 3:13 to remind us of our baptism and its witness to God's love. We are called to be children of God and are given God's visible grace, taking us through troubled waters: "Just follow me down to the Jordan's stream, God's a-going to trouble the water."
- Upon recommendation by CPM and examination we approved Jamie Milton to move from inquirer to candidacy for ministry.
- Upon recommendation by CPM and COM, we examined and approved Paul Anderson as a minister member of Presbytery and affirmed his ordination.
- We recognized as honorably retired William Emrich and Ted Lester, though Ted is retiring from his pastoral counseling practice and will continue as part-time Temporary Supply for South Bend-Memorial.
- In table conversations, we studied the beatitudes found in Matthew 5: 1-12 and used the process of Mutual Invitation to talk about the constitutional issues to be voted upon during the meeting.
- Following debate, we approved proposed Amendment 10-A to the PCUSA Constitution, recommended by the 219th General Assembly for presbytery vote, that includes new language for gifts and requirements for ordination that return to the ordination practices and principles affirmed in 1729. Prayers affirming our unity in Christ followed the debate and vote.
- There was debate about the necessity of Amendment 10-I to the Book of Order, explicitly adding prayer to the Directory for Worship for ordination and installation services. In the end, by a division of the house, it was approved.
- By voice votes, we approved Amendments 10-J through O having to do with disciplinary processes.
- Eric recognized the 92% of Wabash Valley congregations who contributed to our shared ministry through per capita and mission contributions.
- Doug Kelly gave an upbeat report on PC(USA) Board of Pensions benefits and many changes emerging through changes in healthcare law and trends.
- General Presbyter Frank Vardeman reviewed his first three months with us, celebrating the invitations he is receiving to worship with congregations and visit with pastors and session, the presbytery-wide engagement in the Transformation Journey Bible-studies, and the level of financial participation of congregations in broader mission and ministry.
- We elected the slate of nominees to leadership in presbytery teams and committees.
- We approved change of name from First Presbyterian Church of Rochester to Community Presbyterian Church.
- We approved priorities recommended by Council to guide work and goals of presbytery teams and committees:

- ***Discern God's mission by incorporating Scripture, prayer and spiritual formation in our life together.***
- ***Enhance ministry partnerships and model effective communication.***
- ***Be good and faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us.***