

Presbytery of Wabash Valley
Council Summary
God Calls
May 6, 2011

With 16 members present, Council convened on Tuesday, April 26th, with our linear docket organized around the non-linear priorities of the Presbytery:

1. Discern God's mission by incorporating Scripture prayer and spiritual formation in our life together:
 - After opening with prayer and approving the docket, Council read and shared thoughts about the Missional Transformation scripture our teams and committees and some sessions and congregations have been reading, Matthew 5:17-20, in the end noting that there is a call to action: do...teach...live
 - Listened, learned and enjoyed conversation with Wes Tillett, who talked about his family's experiences living and serving as mission co-workers in Lebanon since last August. He is inviting direct relationships, i.e. mission partnerships between Christians in Lebanon and our congregations, Presbytery and Synod.
 - Spun out ideas from Joan Gray's imagery in an article by Earl Johnson, "Stewards Ship," a practical approach. Are we a "rowboat church" that simply works harder, adds programs and keeps going when its tough, or are we a "sailboat church" that is pushed forward by the wind of God's Spirit and directed by Jesus as captain? Visualizing a dinghy, rigged for sailing and rowing, brought a deeper discussion of stewardship as a combination of head and heart, and led to the image of presbytery as a regatta of churches.
2. Enhance ministry partnerships and model effective communication:
 - Frank Vardeman reviewed the conversations of the Visioning Team, and the goals and policies of our working relationships. Each team and committee is encouraged to craft its goals to carry out our priorities, and to share those through Council.
 - Council discussed the misunderstandings emerging about our Presbytery vote on the amendment concerning ordination language, and encouraged inquiries and open communication to clarify how our presbytery examines and ordains candidates, how our minister members are received, and how our Committee on Ministry works with congregations during pastoral transitions. Frank agreed to send a letter of information and invitation to have conversation with anyone in our congregations who has concerns.
3. Be good and faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us:
 - Referred Presbytery bylaws and standing rules to a task force to review edits suggested by our attorney. The same task force will propose some amendments to clarify or rectify some minor points of procedure.
 - Approved financial support for the Michigan All People's Church probe of the New Ministry Development Team.
 - Approved financial support for the 2nd Wave of congregations joining in the missional transformation journey process with materials provided by the Center for Parish Development.

Presbytery of Wabash Valley

- Consulted with Administrative Commission for the former Ladoga church concerning the preschool ministry, and agreed to support during time of transition beyond May 2011.