

**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF  
PRESBYTERY OF SAN JOAQUIN**

Thursday, April 7, 2011

Fresno International Refugee Ministries (FIRM), Fresno, CA

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**Attendance:**

*Pastors:*

Paul Armstrong, Sandy Brown, Marilyn Creel, Paul DePledge, Bill Ekhardt, Tom Elson, Chris Erdman, Jae Han, Carl Knoch, Rich Latta, Rick Lemberg, Tedd Lyons, Ron Owens, Lou Paradise, Tom Parsons, Mary Raine, Alan Reutter, Jim Rogers, Karl Schafer, Randy Scheer, Pat Sheahan, Sharon Stanley, Arlin Talley, Eric Thompson, David Votaw, Tony Winterowd

*Commissioned Lay Pastors:*

John Gutierrez (Lindsay - La Fé), Robbyanto Notomihardjo (Ebenezer), John Bosavanh (University), Lorna Bosavanh (University), Jose Ramon Palafox (Corcoran)

*Elder Commissioners:*

Norman Ferreira (Hanford), John Davis (Easterby), Verna DenHartog (Coalinga), Terry Holland (University), Richard Braddy (Oakhurst), Betty Strain (Oakhurst), Mark Vanciel (Visalia), Fred Leavitt (Exeter), Lilace Turmon (Easton), Mike Naylor (Dinuba), Jeff Altimus (Oakhurst)

*General Council:*

Betty Braddy, Beth Downie, Tony Biasell, Ruth Smith, Mel Khachigian (Synod PJC)

*Corresponding Member:*

Skip Herbert (Presbytery of Sacramento)

*Visitors:*

Steve Raine (Coalinga), Matt Naylor (Dinuba)

After determining that a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order with prayer at 4:06 p.m. by Moderator Tedd Lyons. Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley welcomed the presbytery to FIRM. Rev. Skip Herbert of the Presbyterian Foundation was welcomed and seated as a corresponding member.

The docket was **approved** as printed, and the minutes of the February 5, 2011, Presbytery meeting were **approved**.

**Moderator's Moments** – Tedd Lyons

Moderator Tedd Lyons read from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *Ethics*. He reflected on human efforts to identify those who are right and those who are wrong, thinking of course that we are right and they are wrong. Bonhoeffer speaks of a truth that comes not from claiming right or wrong but from knowing God.

**Interim General Presbyter/Stated Clerk Report** – Sandy Brown

The reports on church growth in our presbytery at the end of 2010 show that some congregations remained static, some lost members, but three congregations gained members and he wanted to celebrate their successes: Foothill Pres, Porterville, welcomed 1 new member; Korean Pres, Fresno, added 10 members; and Lemoore Pres had 19 new members.

Rich and Marilyn Hansen will be in the area from May 8-14, and are available to speak in the evenings.

On May 24-26 a workshop sponsored by Synod will be held at Davis Community Church in Davis on the topic of "In Times of Discontinuous Change." Speakers will be Alan Roxburgh and Mark Lau Branson.

The churches have an opportunity to work together to build connections and grow relationships through mission, and Sandy encouraged churches needing help on a project to put the word out to other churches in the Presbytery.

It appears that Amendment 10-A will be passed by presbyteries. Presbytery Council will be looking at how to respond, including preparing a press release which will express the stand of the Presbytery of San Joaquin. Any comments should be sent to either Sandy, the Council Moderator Ruth Smith, or Presbytery Moderator Tedd Lyons.

**General Council report** – Ruth Smith

Ruth reported that Council received a progress report from the Administrative Commission for the Hanford Presbyterian Church. Council is also working on being proactive in the face of the pending approval of Amendment 10-A.

**Task Force for the Future** – Mary Raine

The Task Force is concentrating on building community within the Presbytery, beginning with a multi-cultural event on World Communion Sunday. Beth Downey is heading a joint choir for worship, and churches will be contacted with information about what to bring for the potluck and for the mission project of building Hygiene Kits.

The Task Force is submitting a grant to GA that focuses on transformation within the Presbytery. As part of that transformation, Council is developing a common rule and members of Presbytery will be asked to live within it. The rule will be presented to Presbytery in June. and a rededication will be held at the September meeting of Presbytery.

**Commission on Ministry (COM)** - Randy Scheer

Stephen Raine received a half-time call to Easterby Pres, Fresno, to begin April 15, 2011. Once certified by the Presbytery as ready to receive a call, COM will work out the details of the call. Randy moved that the Presbytery examine Stephen for ordination. The move was seconded. Following examination, Stephen Raine was approved for ordination, pending formal receipt of the call from Easterby Pres. Randy Scheer prayed for Steve.

**Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)** – Karl Schafer

CPM has examined several candidates and found them ready to receive calls. They have received a new Inquirer, Eliecer Barrantes. Members of Presbytery were encouraged to be aware of members of churches who may have a call to pursue ordained ministry and to talk with them about it.

**Presbyterian Foundation** – Skip Herbert

The goal of the Foundation is to raise gifts beyond the needs of the church. 80% of Presbyterians have wills, but only 1 in 8 Presbyterians leave money to the church. He believes that is because they have never been asked to leave money to the church. An estimated \$66 trillion will change hands in the next 20 years.

The Foundation has a guaranteed life income plan whereby an individual can receive an income while naming a church or organization as beneficiary, and it also works on developing endowments through investment of permanent funds. The first endowment was started in 1802 and is still paying. Individuals aged 70 and older can transfer IRA assets directly to a church and receive a tax benefit.

**Dinner** at 5:30 p.m. was prepared by participants in FIRM programs.

Presbytery reconvened at 6:15 p.m. with **worship**. Dave Votaw, Chris Erdman, and Sharon Stanley spoke on the ordination vow, “Do you promise to further the peace, unity and purity of the church?”

### **Ministry Development Team – Betty Braddy**

The focus of the Ministry Development Team has been evolving. Grass roots ministries have become more effective than placing a ministry from “above.” They are moving from NCD supervision to developing ministry opportunity teams.

One area providing the Presbytery an opportunity to serve is New London. Matt Naylor, a member of Dinuba Pres, has moved to New London as a mission worker and spoke to the Presbytery. Built as a place to house farmworkers who moved to the area in the 1930’s from Oklahoma, while the demographics have changed, the underlying poverty and related issues have not. Matt showed pictures taken by residents with cameras given to them for a Camera Project documenting what they love, what they hate, what life in New London is like. One picture showed a success story—a field, formerly a dump, cleared of garbage and reclaimed as a soccer field. Matt hopes to develop a community center where job training and discipling could take place and invited Presbytery to join in finding ways to do mission with him.

### **Discussion and Vote on the New Form of Government - Tedd Lyons**

Concerns were voiced that the new FOG will mean that history will be lost, and potential changes could create further division in the denomination. Alternately, the view was proposed that the new FOG will permit presbyteries to build structures that fit their specific circumstances and needs. The result of votes cast for the new Form of Government was announced. The new FOG was **defeated**.

### **Nominating Committee – Jim Rogers**

The following ballot was presented and **approved**:

*Personnel* - David Rose (2012-1), Christine Goodrich, elder at Westminster Fresno (2012-1)

*CPM* – Carl Knoch (2011-1), Tom Elson (2012-1), Gordon Graves, elder at University (2013-2), Eric Thompson (2013-2)

*COM* - Larry Wayte, elder at Westminster Fresno (2012-1)

### **Calvin Crest – Tony Biasell**

Christ continues to be central to the ministry of the camp, and groups and individuals who have never been to CC before are being invited. The Memorial Day work weekend is still open to volunteers.

### **Discernment Committee – Rick Lemberg**

Rick presented the following resolution:

Easton Presbyterian Church

Whereas, The session of Easton Presbyterian Church, Fresno, California, voted unanimously to request that the church be dismissed, with its pastor, The Reverend Ron Owens, and its property, to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church;

Whereas, The request has been made in proper form and proper consideration has been given to the interests of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

Whereas, The presbytery is satisfied that the vast majority of the members of the church concur with the request of the session, that the majority of the members constitute the true church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and that due consideration has been given to the request of those members who wish to remain members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

Whereas, The property of the church is not encumbered by any means through the presbytery, synod, General Assembly, or any agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);

Whereas, The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in correspondence with the General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church;

Whereas, The Reverend Ron Owens has requested to be dismissed to the Presbytery of the West, of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church;

Whereas, The committee appointed by the Council of the Presbytery of San Joaquin, having conducted its inquiry in accord with intent of the Book of Order that each case should be judged on its own merits, recommends that the Great Ends of the Church (G-1.0200) will be best served by dismissing Easton Presbyterian Church, with its property, to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church; therefore be it,

*Resolved*, That the Presbytery of San Joaquin dismiss Easton Presbyterian Church to the Presbytery of the West, Evangelical Presbyterian Church;

*Resolved*, That the Presbytery of San Joaquin transfer to Easton Presbyterian Church any interest, expressed or implied in the trust clause (G-8.0201), in the property, real and personal, currently held by Easton Presbyterian Church; and

*Resolved*, That the Presbytery of San Joaquin dismiss The Reverend Ron Owens to the Presbytery of the West, Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

Easton will pay per capita for 2010 and 2011 and plan to continue to support several mission projects, including Calvin Crest. The resolution to dismiss was moved and seconded and **passed** with regret. Prayer was offered.

### **One Minute Messages**

- The West Coast Presbyterian Pastors Conference will begin on May 2 at Mt. Hermon.
- At the TEE meeting in Austin the request was made for prayers for the seminaries.
- Tom Elson suggested that the Ministry Development Team adopt the acronym TOM—Team for Opportunities in Ministry
- The Presbyterian Hymnal Project has a website for input on what the new hymnal should be called. Contact Beth Downie.
- Mark Vanciel announced a Living Waters for the World training session. Teams have installed systems in Ecuador, Haiti, and (in June) Guatemala in partnership with churches in the Presbytery.

The next Presbytery meeting will be held at Hanford Presbyterian Church on June 11, 2011. The Presbytery was adjourned with prayer by Moderator Tedd Lyons at 8:30 p.m.