

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

Saturday, June 11, 2011

First Presbyterian Church, Hanford, CA

Attendance:

Pastors:

Sandy Brown, Steven Carter, Ken Crabtree, Marilyn Creel, Paul DePledge, Bill Ekhardt, Tom Elson, Jae Han, Carl Knoch, Rich Latta, Rick Lemberg, Tedd Lyons, Lou Paradise, Tom Parsons, Mary Raine, Steve Raine, Jim Rogers, Bill Rudy, Randy Scheer, Dan Schwan, Sharon Stanley, Arlin Talley, Tony Winterowd

Commissioned Lay Pastors:

Robbyanto Notomihardjo (Ebenezer), John Bosavanh (University), Lorna Bosavanh (University), Terry Barnhill (Terra Bella)

Elder Commissioners:

Norman Ferreira (Hanford), John Davis (Easterby), Verna DenHartog (Coalinga), Terry Holland (University), Betty Strain (Oakhurst), Iwan Gunawan (Ebenezer), Sue Benson (Coalinga), Craig Baker (Woodlake), Sostenes Infante Jr (Hanford), Don Howard (Lemon Cove), Dale Foote (Orange Cove)

General Council:

Beth Downie, Ruth Smith

Visitors:

Ruthie DenHartog (Coalinga), Rev. Ginger Memmott (Presbytery of Utah)

After determining that a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order with prayer at 9:13 a.m. by Moderator Tedd Lyons. Host Pastor, Rev. Tony Winterowd, welcomed the presbytery.

The docket was **approved** as printed, and the minutes of the April 7, 2011 meeting were **approved** with the correction that Steve Raine's call to Easterby Presbyterian Church began on April 16, 2011. The Consent Agenda was approved as written:

Consent Agenda

June 11, 2011

Action of COM, March 8, 2011, for information purposes only:

1. Stephen Justin Spurlock was examined by COM as a Candidate and **approved** for ordination, pending a call.

Action of COM, May 10, 2011, for information purposes only:

2. Kevin Reimer will become Dean at Fresno Pacific University and COM **voted** to recognized it as a call to a validated ministry.

Action of Finance and Property Commission, February 7, 2011, for information purposes only:

3. Korean Presbyterian Church of Bakersfield renewal of mortgage loan with General Assembly was **approved**.

Action of Tedd Lyons, Moderator of Presbytery, for information purposes only:

4. Ordination for Stephen Justin Spurlock was set on June 5, 2011, at University Pres, Fresno. Ordination commission consisted of Rev. Tedd Lyons, Rev. Chris Erdman, Rev. Sharon Stanley, Elder Sandra Eaton (University), Elder Tony Biasell (Sierra Vista), Elder Mike Naylor (Dinuba).

New action for Consent Agenda

5. **Approve** transfer of Stephen Justin Spurlock to The Columbine United Church of Littleton, CO, in the Denver Presbytery, beginning July 1, 2011.
6. **Dismiss** Spurlock ordination commission with thanks.

Moderator's Moments – Tedd Lyons

Tedd spoke about Thomas Merton's contention in *No Man Is an Island* that the destiny of a Christian is a great one, but that a Christian cannot achieve greatness unless he/she loses the

need for recognition. If we don't humble ourselves, become little, we live in a myth that we have created. When we are most truly ourselves, we lose the need to compare ourselves with others to see how big we are. The Presbytery has become little, and that may be a good thing for us.

Interim General Presbyter/Stated Clerk's Report – Sandy Brown

Sandy continues to appreciate the opportunity to serve the Presbytery as Interim General Presbyter. He preached at the worship service at Synod, attended Stated Clerk training in Louisville, and will be attending the Big Tent Conference and a meeting in August at which responses to the passage of Amendment 10-A will be considered. He read a letter from the pastor of the Orosi church announcing the 125th anniversary of the founding of the church. Asked, "What is your church going to do in response to 10-A?" the pastor answered, "Same as we've been doing for 125 years. Preach the Gospel."

The Stated Clerk reported that the past and present members of the Permanent Judicial Commission for the minutes, as required in the Rules of Discipline, are: Rev. David Abdo and Elder Ned Herbert (class of 2008); Rev. Ken Crabtree and Elder David Prewitt (class of 2010); Rev. Bill Ekhardt, Rev. Roger Minassian, and Elder VJ Jones (class of 2012); Rev. Karl Schafer (class of 2014).

General Council Report – Ruth Smith

Ruth spoke of the reaction of leaders of the Church of England when the new Book of Common Prayer was introduced by the Dean of St. Giles Cathedral in 1637—he was pelted with 'sewer water' and sticks. The Church has a long history of passionate outbursts and fighting new things. The moderator-elect, David Nash, has resigned for family reasons and a new moderator-elect will need to be nominated. The council continues to work with churches in response to Amendment 10-A. The New Form of Government (NFOG) has a guide on pp.69-72 regarding what options need to be considered in developing each Session's Manual for Administrative operations.

Consideration of the Belhar Confession

Discussion considered the point of view that the Belhar Confession is an excellent statement of the church's response to racism and gives the denomination the opportunity to partner with other Reformed denominations, which have adopted it. Others expressed concern that it may be used in argument beyond the expressed context of racism to support other issues. Some wondered why a new confession was needed. The motion to adopt the Confession of Belhar was **defeated**.

Worship

Following a short break, Presbytery entered into worship. Rich Latta, Terry Holland and Steve Carter spoke on the 8th constitutional question of ordination: "Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love?" The Lord's Supper was observed during this time of worship.

The meeting resumed with a video brought by the Task Force for the Future. Speaker Andy Stanley spoke of organizational culture, using the metaphor of an old couch which becomes sacrosanct long past its usefulness. Programs in the church are often like old couches: loved because of tradition and memories but no longer effective. This video was used as a discussion starter around the lunch tables.

Presbytery adjourned for lunch at 11:50 a.m. and reconvened at 12:45 p.m. with another segment of the video.

Task Force on the Future- Mary Raine

Presbytery has received copies of the common rule developed by the Task Force on the Future:

"Because our Presbytery desires to strengthen the journeys of our members within the Kingdom of God, and with complete recognition that we are wrapped in God's mercy, we ask each person to pursue these disciplines with energy, intelligence, imagination and love:

◆ Reflect daily on Scripture.

- ◆ Pray daily for the congregation you serve, your colleagues, the denomination, and the church.
- ◆ Worship regularly with your Presbytery and/or community of brothers and sisters.
- ◆ Explore issues of faith and life that are central to ministry, including the church's confessions.
- ◆ Meet frequently for prayer, discussion of readings, and reflection on theological, pastoral and ministry issues.
- ◆ Support other pastors and sessions with prayer and communication.
- ◆ Seek opportunities to serve within and outside your congregation.”

Members of presbytery were asked to live within this rule. A rededication service focusing on the Constitutional Questions of ordination will be held at the September presbytery meeting.

On October 2, 2011, there will be presbytery-wide gathering for World Communion Sunday to be held at First Pres, Visalia. Gary Demarest will be preaching. Participants will help to assemble Hygiene Kits to be used in disaster areas.

GA has approved a matching grant proposal for transformation within our presbytery, and presbytery will match the \$15,000 received. A variety of uses are being researched.

The pulpit swap was considered successful at building community between those churches that participated.

Committee on Ministry – Arlin Talley

Presbytery **approved** the call of Easterby Presbyterian Church to Steve Raine to serve as installed pastor.

Presbytery **approved** the request to grant COM authority to examine David Dack on behalf of Presbytery. David has been examined and certified by CPM as ready to be examined by Presbytery prior to receiving a call.

Arlin reported that he will be candidating in Minnesota and expects to be called to the church that he served there before accepting the call to Community Presbyterian Church in Three Rivers. Members of Presbytery expressed their appreciation for Arlin's gracious and fair-minded leadership, insight, perspective and his knowledge of the Book of Order which has been invaluable to the Presbytery, committees, churches and commissions.

The presbytery broke into small groups to discuss the Goal for 2011: To build up the “connective tissue” between the people and the congregations of the Presbytery. Projects were recommended to the moderator.

Other Business

Rick Lemberg brought a resolution from the Sierra Vista session requesting that the Presbytery of San Joaquin adopt as its standard for ordination the language of G—6.0106b from the 2009-2011 Book of Order. This resolution is printed below:

Resolution for Standards of Ordination

Presbytery of San Joaquin

Meeting June 11, 2011

Whereas: In the 2009-2011 edition of the Form of Government, Book of Order, the ordination standards in the Book of Order require an ordained officer to:

“...live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained as deacons, elders, or ministers.”

Whereas: The new language approved by the Presbyteries and General Assembly deletes the above quoted language and replaces it with:

“The governing body responsible for the ordination and/or installation...shall examine each candidate’s callings, gifts, preparation, and suitability...the examination shall include, but not be limited to a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions...governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the Confessions....”

Whereas: The Presbytery of San Joaquin interprets the new language of the Book of Order to authorize the governing body of each congregation and presbytery to establish its own standards of ordination beyond those stated in the Book of Order.

Whereas: Presbytery of San Joaquin follows the historical Christian teaching on these subjects and is guided by Scripture and the Confessions, which normatively call for leadership in the church to require those so ordained to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman or chastity in singleness.

Therefore, it is **RESOLVED** that the historical ordination standard known as G-6.0106b, shall still be mandated within the examination process for all called to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament in Presbytery of San Joaquin as set forth below:

“Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historical confession of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained as deacons, elders, or ministers of Word and Sacrament.”

Following discussion, the presbytery **approved** this Resolution as policy of the Presbytery pertaining to the examination, ordination, and acceptance of ministers of the Gospel and directed the General Presbyter to release information about this action to news media.

Jim Rogers reported that Nominating Committee had received the nomination of Elder Beth Downie (Northminster) to fill the vacancy for vice moderator (Moderator Elect). Presbytery **elected** her to this position.

One Minute Messages

Arlin Talley reported that the NFOG is on line, with changes paralleling former FOG language. He also reported that he will be installed on July 15,2011, as Moderator of National Presbyterian Men’s Ministry in Massanetta Springs.

Terry Holland thanked the churches who faithfully support the Theological Education Fund.

Sharon Stanley reminded the Presbytery of upcoming training at Calvin Crest for Living Waters for the World. The presbytery is invited to the FIRM Family Festival, held in Fresno on June 13-17 and July 5-8.

Tedd Lyons announced that he will be pairing churches for the next pulpit exchange.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 3 p.m.