

## Heartland Presbytery Meeting Highlights April 12, 2008

The Presbytery gathered with prayer at the Presbyterian Church of Stanley in Overland Park, Ks, under the leadership of Moderator Rev. Tamara Miller from the Linwood United Church in Kansas City, MO.

Beginning with worship, Elder Sarah Butler the Commissioned Lay Pastor of First, Pleasanton, Ks, preached the morning's sermon, commissioners lighted memorial candles for those elders and ministers who had joined the Church Triumphant in 2007 and celebrated Holy Communion.

Correspondence was received from **Missionary Rev. Shirley Hill**, a minister member of Heartland who is serving in Cameroon as health consultant and chaplain to the Presbyterian Church of the Cameroon. Individuals and congregations in Heartland Presbytery contributed the largest percentage (2.75%) of the total \$915,034 raised for **Mission Challenge 2007**.

The **Administrative Commission for Churches Seeking Dismissal** reported an agreement had been reached with the Hillsdale congregation that voted to disaffiliate from Heartland Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church (USA) in January 2008 (language reflecting EPC polity). The presbytery voted to dissolve the Hillsdale congregation as a PC (USA) church according to G-11.0103i and approved the legal agreement. The Hillsdale congregation will meet its financial obligations to Church Development Corporation and the presbytery will transfer the Hillsdale church property to that congregation pursuant to G-8.0401. The Hillsdale church will pay \$90,000 to the presbytery. This transaction will close on April 14, 2008.

**Reports** were heard from Stewardship and Mission Interpretation who demonstrated a true "Minute for Mission" and provided a bulletin insert in the presbytery packet; Presbyterian Women and their upcoming Spring Cluster Meeting, the Board of Pensions, Heartland Presbyterian Center, the Presbyterian Foundation, Presbytery Council and the Executive Presbyter.

The Presbytery approved an **Overture** to the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly concerning the examination of deacons, elders and ministers.

The Presbytery approved the **Neema Fellowship**, a Swahili speaking congregation, as a new church development in Prairie Village, Ks.

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The Presbytery examined **Rev. Krista Kiger**, for installation as pastor of **First, St. Joseph**. After a thorough examination in the area of bible, theology, polity, the sacraments and her sense of call, the presbytery added its blessings. The meeting closed with prayer at 2:35 p.m.

### Overture

The Presbytery of Heartland respectfully overtures the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2008) to:

- 1) Commend presbyteries and Sessions that have incorporated serious theological reflection and prayerful discernment into their examination procedures, as recommended by the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly through its adoption of the report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, and the Authoritative Interpretation adopted by the 217th GA (2006).
- 2) Direct the Stated Clerk to collect and/or develop models of such procedures that honor the Authoritative Interpretation and follow the Book of Order and make them available to the whole church.
- 3) Remind Sessions and presbyteries, as they carry out their constitutional responsibilities under G-6.0108,
  - a) That the purpose of ordination and installation examinations is to discern whether God has called and equipped persons for particular service, in order to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, engage in faithful ministry in the world, build up the church of Jesus Christ, and bring glory to God; and
  - b) That in light of this purpose, all persons being examined should be treated with respect, recognizing that God's Spirit blows where it chooses; (*John 3:8*)
  - c) That theological questions should offer the opportunity for the ordination candidates to demonstrate knowledge of the Reformed tradition and insight in application;
  - d) That personal questions on all topics should be posed with discretion, respect, and sensitivity, and that specific inquiry cannot be made into the sexual orientation or practice of persons being examined if the persons have not, on their own initiative, made a declarative statement. If such inquiries are not made into the sexual orientation or practice of all persons being examined, then such inquiries may not be made into only select persons' orientation or practice. (*See GAPJC rulings in Presbytery of San Joaquin v. Presbytery of Redwoods, Rem. Case 215-8 [2003] and Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church, GAPJC Re. Case 214-5 [2002]*)

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### Overture

The Presbytery of Heartland respectfully overtures the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2008) to:

- 4) Commend presbyteries and Sessions that have incorporated serious theological reflection and prayerful discernment into their examination procedures, as recommended by the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly through its adoption of the report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, and the Authoritative Interpretation adopted by the 217th GA (2006).
- 5) Direct the Stated Clerk to collect and/or develop models of such procedures that honor the Authoritative Interpretation and follow the Book of Order and make them available to the whole church.
- 6) Remind Sessions and presbyteries, as they carry out their constitutional responsibilities under G-6.0108,
  - a) That the purpose of ordination and installation examinations is to discern whether God has called and equipped persons for particular service, in order to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, engage in faithful ministry in the world, build up the church of Jesus Christ, and bring glory to God; and
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