

**Minutes in Seconds**  
**Digest of Actions Taken at Stated Meeting of**  
**The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley**  
**East Guilford Presbyterian Church Dec. 5, 2009**

The meeting theme was “**Revelation 21:1, 5.**” We were welcomed by Host Pastor **Patty Wolff**. First time commissioners and guests were introduced; Phil Gehman was seated as corresponding member.

**Consent Agenda approval** included the Financial Reports through Oct. 31, 2009, Revised 2010 Remittance Form (benevolent giving), extending PSV Transitional By-Laws through 12/31/2010, COM’s “Financial Reality Checklist”, Minutes from Garrattsville Administrative Commission and those to ordain/install Rev. Douglas Hatch, Rev. Steven Swanson, Rev. Linda Hendrian.

**Approved the Minutes of September 15th Presbytery Assembly** meeting in Unadilla as corrected.

The **Stated Clerk**’s report included notice about GA Statistical Reporting (deadline Feb. 23, 2010); churches that submitted records for October Readings of Session Minutes; highlighted the new ‘Clerks of Session’ resources tab on the presbytery website. Two churches are still needed to host the March 2010 and September 2010 assembly meetings. The Stated Clerk also brought the reports of the two **Investigating Committees** – one did not find for **Vindication** and also did not file charges against those seeking vindication; the **Disciplinary** one concluded: “No charges will be filed” (against minister members). In response to questions, the Stated Clerk explained that a presbytery cannot change a judicial report.

**Phil Gehman of the Board of Pensions** reported that pension plan payments remain at 31.5% for 2010, that there will be changes in deductible starting January 1<sup>st</sup> to simplify the medical plan, and that after last year’s 26% drop in value of the pension fund, it has recovered 21%. He also encouraged the Christmas Joy Offering which benefits retired and disabled church workers and their dependents.

Council Moderator **Deb Fleming** brought the **Council Report**. Elders **Doug Garnar** and **Marilyn Myers** were elected to the **Committee on Nominations**. The **2010 PSV Revised Operating Budget of \$320,036 was approved** (\$268,836 income and \$51,200 from special accounts), with \$3,000 of cuts to administrative side and only 50c increase in Per Capita. Finance sub-committee responded to motions from the last assembly to look at mission giving -- PSV receipts for 2009 will only total \$107,000, not the \$132,000 in this year’s budget, so anticipated receipts for 2010 are decreased.

In accordance with the signed Settlement Agreement, members of an **Administrative Commission** were appointed to work with the **Rev. Dr. Barbara J. Schwartz** for 6-12 months: **Elders Joan Wise-Hostetter (Owego, COM) Doris White (Nineveh), Richard Crocco (Gilbertsville), Charles Mays (Walton) and ministers Parrish Bridges (Owego), Jill Schaeffer (Cincinnati) and Steve Starzer (Conklin)**. The Stated Clerk provided their Orientation that afternoon. The **Committee of Counsel** in the Remedial Case, the **Rev. Robert Howard** and **Elders Dale Barber and Carl Mugglin**, was dismissed with thanks.

Council Moderator **Deb Fleming** noted the list of “**relevant**” **documents in minister files** and the process by which one’s individual file could be viewed. She noted that the **proposed re-wording of the Mission Statement** had been withdrawn and **proposed Confidentiality Policy** was still being worked out between Council & Committee on Preparation for Ministry. **Allen Presby** reported on conversations about shared financial staffing with Cayuga-Syracuse and Utica Presbyteries.

**Interim Executive Presbyter Cheryl Ann Elfond** thanked those leaving office who had served the presbytery. Her PowerPoint presentation reviewed the **core values** (transformational, spirit-centered, missional, relational, faithful to Christ, and trustworthy) and the **actions needed to live out those values** (affirm and celebrate congregational mission; help congregations to discover, define, and do mission; support and equip laity; support and equip pastors; facilitate communication and dialogue (using clusters, technology, etc.); foster partnerships and connections among congregations; and foster and support partnerships with other Presbyteries to share expertise and ideas) from the 2005 Revision **Statement**. **She**

then asked those present to share in small groups and identify where they see these actions. After a period of small group sharing, she invited members to share.

**John Schwartz** of the **Ethiopian Partnership** presented a PowerPoint slide presentation on Western Wollega Bethel Synod and the Ethiopian Rural Education Project (EREP). **Presbytery approved a letter to endorse** the Learning Well Partners (Mary Rhodes, founder) **grant application to Westhill Foundation** (England) for \$26,400 to benefit EREP curriculum development.

**Jill Schaeffer** introduced the **Justice in Mission resolution on Marcellus Shale Gas Drilling**. The resolution “strongly urges (presbytery’s) member churches to consider thoroughly the possible positive and negative affects of any gas drilling.” After discussion, the resolution was approved.

**Worship** was an Order of the Day at 11:15 AM, with outgoing Presbytery Moderator Pat Raube preaching on the Revelations passage and reminding the assembly that God is with us through change.

After lunch, the **Committee on Ministry** Moderator **Doug Horne** brought the motion to approve the **proposed constitution uniting Christ Presbyterian (Cortlandville) with United Community Church of Cortland** (already a union of American Baptist and Congregational). Elders **Nancy Thane** and **Jenny Wissink** described the experience of the two churches worshipping together and discerning God’s will. Motion was approved.

The **Rev. Lisa Ruth Mays** gave a Workshop on “**The Church Transforming**” at 12:45 PM. The Transformation needed for the local congregation is the move from being the church that does mission to being the missional church.

The resumed Committee on Ministry report noted that **Rev. James Martin** has transferred to Lackawanna Presbytery to assume an Interim position at Towanda, PA, and that our COM has agreed with Lackawanna’s to **share Pulpit Supply lists** with each other. The written COM report noted **Rev. Andrew Stehlik**’s transfer to New York City Presbytery as Pastor of Rutgers Presbyterian Church and **Rev. Tom Ballard**’s transfer to Eastern Tennessee Presbytery as Interim for New Hope Presbyterian Church in Knoxville. **Rev. Sharon Dittman was granted Honorable Retirement** as of Nov. 30, 2009. A question about “**scruples**” was added to the COM Form #5 examination of ministers seeking to serve presbytery positions. Elder **Carolyn Brunelli** of the **Lordville** Church was approved to receive training to preside over the Lord’s Supper for that congregation.

On behalf of **Committee on Preparation for Ministry** Moderator **Barbara Schwartz** introduced **Inquirer Craig Kunkle**, whom she reported had been approved after recommendation by the Northminster Session. Schwartz also encouraged Theological Education Fund gifts, such as one she had given in memory of Dan Little, and publicized youth institutes at Richmond, VA and Pittsburg, PA.

On behalf of the **Committee on Lay Preaching** Marilyn Myers gave worship stoles (designed by Rev. Sue Trigger) to the **Commissioned Lay Pastors** serving churches in our presbytery: Deb Fleming (Cabin Hill), Judi Gage (Bovina Center), Doris White (Windsor).

The **Committee on Nominations** report presented name for election to office, with additional names from the floor. The following were elected: Vice-Moderator 2010 – Rev. Doug Horne; Council 2010 – Judi Gage; Council 2012 – Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Devine (Endicott, First), Rev. Lisa Ruth Mays (Walton); Committee on Ministry – Class 2010 Rev. Dr. Jill Schaeffer (Cincinnati), Rev. Frank Amalfitano (HR), Class of 2012 – Rev. Dale Francis (WNY), Rev. Mark Montfort, Mark (Oneonta, First) Co-CHAIR, Rev. Viktoria Berlik (at large), Elder Dale Barber (Waverly), Elder Joan Wise-Hostetter (Owego) Co-Chair; Committee on Preparation for Ministry – Rev. Dr. Barbara Schwartz Chair, Class of 2012 – Rev. Dr. Steven Swanson; Committee on Lay Preaching Class of 2012 – Rev. John Gay (Cortland, United), Elder Janet Schwengber (Delhi, First); Committee on Representation Class of 2012 – Elder Jacki Pruyne (Northminster), Elder Lorraine Maxwell (Ithaca) Chair; Permanent Judicial Commission Class of 2013 – Rev. Doug Beattie (HR), Class of 2015 – Rev. Mark Montfort (Oneonta, First), Elder Carl Mugglin (Walton); 2010 GA Elder Commissioner – Elder Chris Burger.

At the end of the assembly business, **Elder Chris Burger** was installed as new **Presbytery Moderator** for 2010 and **Rev. Doug Horne** installed as **Vice-Moderator**. (Outgoing Moderator Rev. Pat Raube becomes Moderator of Council.) The assembly ended with communion and prayer.

43 elders, 27 ministers and 6 visitors signed in to this meeting. The next Presbytery Assembly will be **Saturday morning March 6, 2010 – host church is still needed.**