

Poetry Vespers Set Tone for Assembly Retreat

by Rev. Jody Noble, Immanuel Presbyterian Church Schererville

The morning began with Poetry Vespers, led by **Rev. Nanette Sawyer** of Grace Commons, a Chicago area congregation. Using a theme of "the soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all," Nanette and a wide variety of people present for worship read from poems. Nanette's message focused on three abilities that we each must learn as raised up by Mary Oliver in the poem "In Blackwater Woods": to love what is mortal; hold it against our bones knowing our own life depends on it; and, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go. For ideas on how to incorporate the psalms into worship consider "Psalms for Prayer: An Invitation to Wholeness" by Nan Merrill and/or beginning a conversation with Nanette (Nanette@gracecommons.net, 312-399-2081).

The **Presbyterian Peacemaking Offering** was the recipient of the morning offering of \$425.10.

The Christmas House, hosting international seminary students, is a highlighted opportunity for congregations. For more information, contact the presbytery office. **Commission on Ministry** has increased the minimum terms of call pastoral leadership in 2013 by 1%. This means that the minimum for a **Teaching Elder** is **\$36,595** and **\$29,276** for **Commissioned Ruling Elders**. Support for PC(USA) Ministers & Teaching Elders [Click Here](#).



Members of Pierceton Presbyterian and the presbytery body acknowledged the retirement of **Rev. Steve Mullin** and his wife, **Susie**.

Pastoral Leadership Care Committee also acknowledged the retirement of **Rev. Mark Morrison**. Pastors who celebrated an ordination anniversary since our last presbytery meeting were recognized with a CD entitled "Laughter From the Well." There were 62 pastors named with 33 years as the average years of service.

Rev. Frank Vardeman, General Presbyter shared that more than 160 youth and adults came through the 2012 Geneva Center summer program, many of whom shared that they found God and Christ for the first time in their lives. And not to forget that Geneva Center is a hospitality site for retreats and conferencing. He also expressed a prayer that the presbytery will exist for mission, like a fire exists for burning.

An entertaining and insightful presentation on the 2012 General Assembly in Pittsburgh was given by GA Commissioners **Rev. Jerry Egger**, First PC Rensselaer, **Rev. Mary Ann Banning**, First PC Mishawaka and **Elder Andy Betts**, Sunnyside PC

South Bend.

Elder Pam Camren, First PC Mishawaka presented a first reading of changes to the bylaws and standing rules. A vote will be taken in November.

Rev. Tom Albaum, First PC Monticello reported for the Administrative Commission for First Presbyterian Church, Rensselaer. A vote taken to give the AC original jurisdiction was approved unanimously.

The **Stewardship Ministry Team** will be offering three continuing education opportunities around the presbytery over the next few months. Presbytery peacemaking grants are now overseen by the Stewardship Ministry Team. Mission grants for one time matching funds of technology will be offered with criteria centering around hands on ministry. Watch God Calls and the presbytery web site for future information.

The slate of nominees presented by the **Nominating Committee** was unanimously approved. Our thanks to all that have agreed to serve and to all those who currently serve.

We heard a report from **Rev. Terri Thorn**, First PC Lebanon on the work of the Transformation Ministry Team, as well as the experience of her congregation in Wave 3.

Rev. Anna Parkinson, First PC Goshen reported on the New Development Ministry Team and their vision for future activity.

Elder Ann Bingaman shared that the Ministerial Excellence Fund Team wrote a renewal proposal and received confirmation from the Lilly Foundation that monies have been extended for four more years. A broad range of funding has been given out and ministers are encouraged to apply for additional grants.

Rev. Kevin Bowers, Bethany PC Lafayette reported on the work of the Administrative Commission with Faith, west Lafayette, which has centered to date on determining how to implement charges of the AC in partnership with representatives of the congregation.