

Presbytery Assembly

Uplifting...Affirming...Exuberant

By Linda L Long, Stated Clerk

Our assembly of ministers, elder commissioners and guests met last Friday and Saturday in retreat at Geneva Center for worship and community:

- Welcomed and appreciated **Rev. Tim Jones** for his leadership as Acting General Presbyter these several months.
- Elected **Rev. Frank Vardeman** to be our General Presbyter, to begin November 1 and to be installed at our November Assembly.
- In his Friday sessions, **Rev. Paul Hooker** eloquently talked about the process that led to the proposed New Form of Government, and theology that underlies and informs our relational polity.
 - “Missional ecclesiology” builds upon the core principles of the relational view of the Trinity that speaks of the connectedness of God that informs the core of what we do, and teaches that “mission is not a function of the church, it is an attribute of God. The church is called to bear witness to what God is doing in the world.” “God is still at work in the world, and we get to help.”
- Heard about experiences of our commissioners (**Jill Kitowski, Alice Yacullo, Bill Hudson and Bill McLean**) and young adult delegate (**Juli Miller**) to General Assembly and a bit about the items presbyteries will address during the coming year.
- Examined and approved commission to ordain **Jody Shultz Noble** on October 10, 3 pm Central time at Immanuel, Schererville.
- Commissioned **Rick Ryan** as lay pastor for Elston Presbyterian Church, surrounded by members of his congregation, Dayton Memorial.
- Took in Paul Hooker’s preaching from Jeremiah to the exiles in Babylonia the message they were to settle in where they were, and to pray for **Shalom**, for the peace, well-being, integrity of the people where they were—the ultimate blessing. It brought home that message to us, that God has placed us where we are, that we have the promise of *Shalom* by “open-ended, open-minded, and open-hearted commitment to the mission of God” in today’s world.
- Shared hymns, prayers and the **Lord’s Supper** with pastor and elder of First Presbyterian Church in South Bend, presiding.
- Caught snatches of the exuberance and fellowship of the **Triennium** experience through Bill’s Smutz’s report and the video compiled by his son, enriching perspective on our calling to be today’s church, “For such a time as this...!”
- Elected several leaders nominated to serve.
- Heard experience of those engaged in **Missional Transformation** process and invitations to the next round of “Come and See” events to encourage congregations to join in the journey with a second wave of congregations engaging in the three-year process.
- Considered budgets and policy matters, referring one back for further consideration and inviting written feedback on proposed procedural documents for our Presbytery.
- Closed before prayer with an **affirming message** from our Acting GP, Tim Jones, about what he sees as God at work among us in Wabash Valley, examining candidates, transitioning to a new GP, docket planning, studies of Scripture together, team and committee working relationships, sharing stories through “God Calls,” and the caring and commitment of staff for one another and our Presbytery.