

## **Presbytery in Brief January 26, 2019**

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina gathered to do the work of the church, worship and discernment, on Saturday, January 26th. The people who are First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia, NC welcomed us into their home, showing hospitality and love to all who attended this gathering of our extended family of faith.

The agenda for this meeting was quite full and began with installing the new Moderator and Vice-Moderator, Rev. Lauren Vanacore and Dick Larson. We thanked our outgoing Moderator, Melvin Meares, for the connectional work he undertook during his tenure, and look forward to his continuing leadership as the chair of the General Council. Lauren Vanacore then convened us with prayer and welcomed us on behalf of First Presbyterian, Gastonia.

Christ's presence in our midst was especially evident during worship. We worshipped under the leadership of Lauren Vanacore, Daria Ragan, Janet DeWater, Heather Wood Davis, Chris Vogado, and Charles Whitesides. Heather Wood Davis proclaimed God's Word, focusing on Psalm 19. We received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and recognized the Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders who have passed away in our Presbytery over the past year.

The bulk of the meeting consisted of discussion and voting on proposed amendments to the Book of Order. Several of the amendments were bundled into a consent agenda, and the rest were set to be considered individually. Two of the amendments were pulled from the consent agenda before the consent agenda was passed without dissenting vote. The remaining items, including those pulled from the consent agenda, were then debated and voted upon. The closest vote concerned amendment 18-A, which dealt with the composition of Nominating Committees for Elders and Deacons. One pastor of a very small church raised a concern that this would be overly burdensome on very small congregations such as the one he served. After a standing vote, the amendment passed. Due to time concerns, amendments 18-F and 18-G were moved to the April meeting of Presbytery, so there's still time to vote on those and take part in shaping our covenant for how we're going to be the Body of Christ together!

Later in the meeting, the Presbytery had the opportunity to hear a second excellent sermon! John Haggmann, candidate for examination and ordination, proclaimed the Word of God focusing on Nehemiah 8. John has accepted a call as the Pastor/Head of Staff for First Presbyterian Church, Morganton. His ordination and membership in the Presbytery were enthusiastically approved.

As part of the report from the Peace and Justice Committee, Unity Presbyterian Church gave an informative report on their work in interfaith relationships and as an Earth Care congregation. The Holy Spirit guided us in many other reports and decisions. For a comprehensive list, feel encouraged to consult the meeting minutes.

The Teaching Elders and Congregations who make up our extended family of faith, the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, will next gather in Montreat, NC on Tuesday, April 30th, 2019.

Your Brother in Christ,  
Rev. Joseph W. Taber IV,  
Pastor, Presbyterian Church of Lowell

## RESOLUTION OF THANKS

Ruling Elder Lloyd Williams, Jr. and Teaching Elder Rev. Luke Harkey submitted the following Resolution of Thanks:

Gracious God, we thank you for this 119<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina and pray that what we have done here may honor you and advance the work of your kingdom.

We thank you for:

- the thoughtful planning of this meeting by our presbytery staff and General Council
- the hospitality of the First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia, its pastors, officers, and members
- for the privilege of gathering to worship you and share in the Lord's Supper
- for our worship leaders and musicians, and our preacher, the Rev. Heather Wood Davis who challenged us to hear Psalm 19 and join our voices in praise of God
- for the faithful and exemplary service of our immediate past moderator, Elder Melvin Meares and his visits to so many of our congregations
- for the dedicated service of the Rev. Lauren Vanacore as moderator and Elder Dick Larson as Vice-Moderator
- for Elders and Pastors from this presbytery who entered the church triumphant in 2018
- for the Advocate program as a new initiative of the Committee on Ministry to connect with our congregations
- for John Hagmann as he is ordained and begins ministry at First Presbyterian Church Morganton
- for the Rev. Kenyon Meeks, Honorably Retired, who has transferred from Salem Presbytery.
- for the Youth Ministry of this presbytery and the Triennium gathering this summer
- for the Souper Bowl of Caring
- for our Guatemala Partnership
- for our mission work in Guatemala, in Malawi, in Taiwan, in Western North Carolina, and around the world

We offer this resolution of thanks in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.