

Highlights of the December Presbytery Meeting

—Ed Albright, Executive Presbyter

The Presbytery met on a beautiful Tuesday, December the 2nd 2003 at the Korean Community Presbyterian Church. It was a thrill for all of us to visit this wonderful new facility that was completed in June of this year. Rev. James Jung, pastor of the church, many of the elders, and members of the church welcomed us and extended hospitality and served a delicious lunch that was “Southern cooking” with a touch of Korean.



This meeting of Presbytery was especially long but interesting. There were a number of issues that were debated and then voted upon with a close count. The following are some of the highlights of the meeting:

- We elected some seventy ministers and lay people to the class of 2006 of our major committees and ministry teams. We also elected the commissioners to the General Assembly for 2004 as well as the alternate commissioners who will attend General Assembly in 2006.
- After much discussion the Presbytery decided **not** to adopt the Council’s proposed budget for 2004. Instead, the decision was to delay adopting a budget until further work could be accomplished by the Council.
- The national organization of the Men of the Church presented its



annual award to the Rev. Dr. Fahed Abu-Akel for outstanding service to the denomination. Elder Charles Easley, Vice Moderator of the General Assembly and Moderator-elect for the Presbytery, presented the award.

- Presbyterian Women presented the “Presbyterian Women’s Life Membership Award” to Margaret Ann Gatch. This award was presented at the meeting of Presbytery because Margaret Ann has made major contributions to the life and work of this Presbytery. She and her husband will be moving outside of the bounds of the Presbytery at the end of this year. This award was presented by Jeanne Simpson, Presbyterian Women’s Moderator.

The Presbytery approved all of the Amendments to the Constitution as proposed by the last meeting of the General Assembly with the exception of one, (03-G) which called for the immediate placement of a minister or other employee of the church on administrative leave if there is alleged offense of sexual misconduct towards a minor or towards a person who lacks mental capacity to consent.

- The Presbytery approved an

overture to be sent to this year’s General Assembly that calls for an addition to the current number of youth advisory delegates to the annual meeting of the Assembly by adding one YAD for each of the sixteen Synods. It was recommended and approved for many reasons, but one is that as the General Assembly moves to meeting bi-annually there will be an increased number of commissioners and it was felt that therefore there should be an increased number of youth advisory delegates.



Certainly, the highlight of the day was the wonderful presentation by the Outreach ministry team, which included a parade of banners and an explanation of all of the ways in which this Presbytery does mission through this ministry team. A very wonderful video was a part of this presentation as well as a Mission Fair in the place where the Presbytery had lunch.

- The Presbytery received into its membership Grace Cheptu, who was ordained the evening of the presbytery meeting at First African church and will serve in a CPE residency program at the New York City Presbyterian Hospital in New York City; Joong Chan Choi as a member-at-large from the



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Making Our Congregations Safe Places The Appropriate Exercise of Power and Boundaries

—Ruth Hicks,
Associate Executive
Presbyter for Ministry

In a recent daylong workshop entitled *Making our Congregations Safe Places*, presenter Janis Cook began with the following questions:

- Sexual discrimination and/or harassment are more likely to occur in the corporate environment than in a religious setting. (true or false)
- The fastest growing type of discrimination in America's churches is age discrimination. (true or false)
- American courts have ruled that affectionate comments, hugging, and touching are

more acceptable and less likely to be deemed "inappropriate behavior" in a church setting compared to corporate and academic settings. (true or false)



If you are not exactly sure of how to answer any of these, it is a signal that you should be paying attention. As Robert Kennedy once said, "The problem with power is how to achieve its responsible use instead of its irresponsible, indulgent use."

The workshop consisted of many more specifics than this, but I

believe that the following points are a framework from which to develop *your* individual church's policy for making a safe environment for *everyone*.

- Educate all staff and leadership on policies and procedures
- Check references
- Check backgrounds
- Educate members of the congregation, especially children
- Have a clear reporting structure (multiple channels)
- Ensure internal consistency
- Investigate complaints immediately
- Display required posters
- Provide training
- Stress confidentiality

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Tropical Florida Presbytery; Douglas DeCelle who is called to be the pastor at First Presbyterian Church, La Grange; Kevin Knab called as the Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Atlanta; Margaret Aymer who is to be ordained and serve as the professor of New Testament at the Interdenominational Theological Center; Elizabeth Coleman who serves as the area director for Bread for the World.

- The Presbytery enrolled four new candidates for the ministry; William Taylor (Church of the Master); Jill Lum (Trinity Presbyterian Church of Atlanta); Katie Preston (Roswell Presbyterian Church); Andy Gans (Alpharetta Presbyterian Church).

- The Presbytery has been discussing for several years ways in which to encourage all installed pastors of congregations to submit their terms of call in an annual report to the Presbytery as called for by the Book of Order. The Committee on Ministry recommended and the Presbytery adopted the following policy: that the Committee on Ministry, in compliance with the Book of Order, be given the authority to review, approve, and enter into the records of the Presbytery, as an addendum, the annual terms of call of installed pastors.

- The Presbytery engaged in worship at the noon hour. We enjoyed special music provided by a praise team of the Korean Community Presbyterian Church. We also heard a wonderful sermon preached by the

Rev. Dr. John Griffith, President of Presbyterian College.

- The Presbytery heard an update on the Presbytery Capital Funds Campaign, which included the report that the Presbytery has received a challenge grant from Howell & Madeline Adams and friends in the amount of 1.2 million dollars. When this challenge is met the Presbytery will exceed its goal of 7.9 million dollars to be raised for the seven projects of the campaign. It was reported that \$430,000 has been committed in the last sixty days towards the challenge grant.
- The Rev. Tom Bagley gave a wonderful report about his work as NCD pastor for Hamilton Mill. He reported that on Sunday November the 30th he had as many as sixty people in church for worship.

Host Families Needed for Christmas International House

You would be responsible for providing bed and breakfast to these students as well as get them to our headquarters at St James United Methodist Church – Activities Building each day-4400 Peachtree Dunwoody Road (carpooling is an option). We would provide activities for them each day except Sundays,

Christmas Day and New Years. Please let us know if you can help. Contact Sussi in the AMIS Office 404-846-4396, amis@peachtreepres.org.

Week 1 (December 19-26)

Week 2 (December 26-January 2)

Sharing More Than Just Space Ecumenical Partnerships that Work

Rev. Marinda Harris, Pastor, Westhills Presbyterian Church

Did you know that **Westhills Presbyterian Church** is also called home by the registered believers of Mosque #15 of the Nation of Islam, headed by the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan? Minister Ray Muhammad is the Imam of this mosque.

This unique interfaith relationship began in early 2000 when this group of Muslims was looking for a place to call home. With limited resources and a strong desire to be located in an inner city community where many of the underprivileged could be served, we were approached as a possible location.

After leaders of the church and mosque met, it was agreed that we would lease space to the mosque and work out a building usage schedule that would serve both our needs. We have not yet reached our ultimate goal which is to provide needed services to our community as a cooperative venture (i.e. after school program). We have,

however, come to understand and appreciate each other through joint activities such as feeding the homeless, cleaning, and sprucing up our building and grounds and even occasionally participating in each other's worship services.

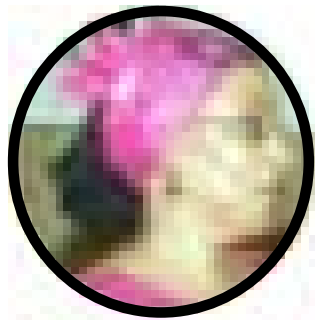


Photo taken from PCUSA website.

Just as they have supported us with volunteers for various church programs serving the community, we, too, have supported them with some of theirs.

For example, they provide a food-cooperative wherein fresh produce and fish are sold at a discounted price for those in the church and community.

Early this year, Brother Wendell Muhammad, Minister of Protocol, and I participated in an interfaith/ecumenical dialog at the Interdenominational Theological Center. We shared our experiences, **“the ups and the downs”** of sharing worship space. We have all been spiritually enlightened by the two different faith communities working together.



Pews for Your Church

I am a member of the First Baptist Church in Sumter SC and our church is planning a remodeling program. I have been given the privilege to disposing of 90 pews to a church in need. These pews are 14 and 19 feet long and have cushions.

Don Morris
2818 Porcher Dr
Sumter, SC 29150
803-469-7478

Bibles

One of our pastors, Elise Ledbetter, needs 65 new Bibles of various reading levels. Elise volunteers as chaplain at Hillside Hospital, Inc., a long-term residential facility that serves children from all over the state. The average length of stay for these children is 12 to 18 months. Elise's goal as chaplain is to let the children know in concrete ways God remembers them. With snacks and religious videos, she conducts Hillside Chapel. For some children it's the only church they know. They appreciate the Bibles they have been given. They even read them or if they don't read, carry them to the chapel anyway. But Elise's supply of Bibles is gone and the new children haven't gotten their Bible. Any help to provide these children with Bibles, especially of the correct reading level, is appreciated. Please contact Elise at Hillside Hospital (404) 875-4551 ext. 242 or Ed Albright at Presbytery (404) 898-0711 ext. 20

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Interfaith Airport Chaplaincy —A Pastoral Ministry to People of all Faiths

—Cristie Reed, IT & Communications Coordinator

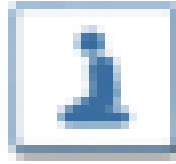
The Annual Interfaith Luncheon was held on October 20, 2003 at the Airport Marriott Hotel in College Park, Georgia. This year participants of the luncheon celebrated the 21st Anniversary since the Airport Chaplaincy's inception in 1982.

Highlights:

- Special music was provided by Chaplain, Emmanuel Williams.

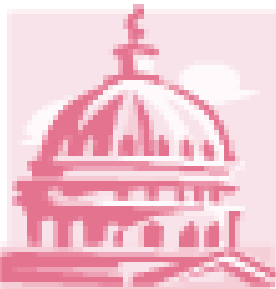
- David Menchhofer was presented with a Service Award.
- The guest speaker was Martin Luther King III.

The Interfaith Airport Chaplaincy provides a caring religious presence offering two basic services, The Interfaith Chapel and Chaplains on call. The chapel is open at all hours as a sanctuary for prayer and meditation and is a haven



to persons of every faith among the passengers, employees, and the general public using the airport. The Chaplains on call consist of a staff of dedicated professionals and volunteers offering spiritual care and assistance.

For more information about The Interfaith Airport Chaplaincy, Inc., send correspondences to P.O. Box 20801, Atlanta, GA 30320, call (404) 762-1051 or e-mail to atlchpl@mindspring.com.



Presbyterian Rally Day 2004 Georgia Capitol and Central Presbyterian February 19th, 9:00 - 2:00

Presbyterians will meet at the Georgia Capitol for a Legislative Rally on February 19th to demonstrate support of public policy makers and public policies which serve the common good. The gathering will begin at 9 AM with an orientation at Central Presbyterian Church, 201 S. Washington Street, across the street from the Capitol. Following a period of orientation and sharing of information about legislative issues, participants will visit the Georgia Capitol, observing the House and Senate in session and speaking with legislators. At noon, Barry Davies, Memorial Drive Presbyterian, will lead a songfest on the Capitol steps. Presbyterian Rally Day will continue with lunch at 12:30 PM at Central Church. During this luncheon, attendees will meet Presbyterian legislators and hear about issues affecting children and the environment.

Presbyterian Rally Day at the Capitol 2003 was an unparalleled opportunity for Presbyterians to learn about the making of public policy. The 2004 Presbyterian Rally Day promises even greater insights into the legislative process as the decline in state revenues has seriously impacted the needs of children and issues of the environment promise to impact the lives of all Georgians.

Parking near the Capitol is limited. Participants are encouraged to car pool or ride MARTA. Additional driving directions and parking suggestions may be found at www.central-presbyterian.org. Other questions may be directed to Cas Robinson, Presbytery Public Policy Advocate at cas-robinson@mindspring.com.

Pre-registration is essential as space is limited! Complete form, attach a check for lunches requested (payable to Presbytery of Greater Atlanta), and send both to Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, c/o Gay Alston, 1024 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30306. Deadline for lunch reservations is February 10!

Name _____

Phone _____

Church _____

Presbytery _____

Lunch reservation, \$7 _____ sandwich lunch _____ vegetarian lunch _____ no lunch

politics
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day