



Synod of the Pacific – The One Hundred Third Stated Meeting
Burlingame, CA
October 12-14, 2011

E-MAIL INFORMATION PIECE

This resource is intended to help you as you report to your presbytery. The material contained herein is not complete and is intended only as a reminder of activities and actions. Please be sure to check written reports and your own notes for details and for the results of actions taken. Thank you!

The Synod meeting was convened Thursday morning by Moderator Delores Dewhurst as she opened with thoughts about transformation and the character of the sacred in each individual person. She then prayed for our Synod in its deliberations.

Executive Rob Brink reported that the Mid Council Commission (formerly MGB Commission), charged to study presbyteries and synods and make recommendations to the next GA, released on 10/7/11 their recommendation that Synods be 'discontinued as councils and their ecclesiastical functions be vested in 5 regional administrative commissions of the GA'. Further, that GA 'create 5 regional judicial commissions to serve as courts of appeal'. Many concerns were raised regarding this surprising communication! If this passes at GA, the presbyteries will have until July 2013 to vote on the recommendation. If passed by a majority of the presbyteries, there will be an implementation phase which may take until 2016. All of this means that there is time to consider how this Synod will respond, including the strong possibility that our savings and loan program, as well as other synod services, may be continued under the umbrella of an independent corporation in consultation with and approved by our 11 presbyteries.

Ann Butterfield, Director of Business Services, reported that the Synod Savings & Loan Service was running a surplus; which means that with excess deposits, Loan Applications are being encouraged. Savings and loan rates were updated and appear below as well as on the website.

Stated Clerk Wendy Warner reported on the status of ecclesiastical cases – all of which may be found on the Synod website. The minutes of most of our presbyteries were reviewed in September. Our presbyteries are blessed with wonderful Stated Clerks, but we are in prayer for John Lococo (San Jose) who is quite ill, and retiring at the end of the year, with John Kelso as Acting S.C. Carolyn Knight (Sacramento) has retired, and that half-time position is open. The Task Force charged with updating the Synod Administrative Manual (SAM) to be in compliance with the new Form of Government reported, and all proposed changes were approved.

The Coordinating Committee recommended, and Synod passed a recommendation that the Presbyteries approved a reduction in the number of commissioners sent by each Presbytery to Synod. Each Presbytery will now be asked to vote on this proposed change, which will be sent to the Presbytery Stated Clerks under separate cover, with more details.

Rev. Dr. James McDonald, the new President of San Francisco Theological Seminary, introduced himself and shared some of his vision for the seminary in the 21st Century. After having spent over 15 years as a pastor and then 13 years working with Bread for the World, he sees God's call to the seminary as place to raise up leaders who will work toward the transformation of the church to engage with the world, and for the renewal and encouragement of God's people to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in today's world.

Thursday evening Worship included a message based on Philippians 4:1-9, "Rejoice – REALLY!", the Celebration of the Eucharist, the Installation of Moderator Delores and Vice Moderator Buddy, and an offering of \$579 received for PDA – Disaster Relief for Somalia, East Africa.

During the business meeting on Friday morning, some of the actions which were taken were:

- Synod voted that each presbytery receive an additional \$20,000 from unrestricted reserves! This is in addition to the \$10,000 voted in May, and the over \$76,000 determined at the Partnership Funding consultation, a significant portion of which is from the net revenue of the Synod Savings and Loan, as well as the Benefits Services. **All of this means that each Presbytery in our Synod will receive over \$106,000 during 2011!!!**
- The Mission Partnership Committee has reviewed the effectiveness of PMX, and after much discussion, the Funding Consultation in March, 2012 will hear a report from a consultant before making a funding determination.
- The Mission Finance Committee approved new loans and reminds it's churches and related organizations that the Synod Investment and Loan Service offers competitive interest rates (see below)

The business of the Synod was concluded before the scheduled noon dismissal on Friday with prayers for the work of our pastors by Edward Dunn. Edward Eissabake then told of the plight of Yousef Nader-Khanie, a 32-year old pastor in Iran who is in prison awaiting execution for apostasy. Joey Lee offered prayer for Yousef, and Delores declared the meeting adjourned.

NEWS FROM PRESBYTERIES!

BOISE – In the midst of much transition, this presbytery is focusing on mission! The Owyhee P.C. marked their 100th Anniversary with a weekend long celebration! First P.C. Boise sent a mission team to Jamaica to work on construction of a school for the deaf. Covenant P.C. held a Make A Difference Day (MADD) where members spent a Saturday working for others in the community, and the Sunday message the next day was how each of them had been changed by the experience. The College of Idaho student chaplain has led student mission trips to Nicaragua, Haiti, Tijuana and San Francisco!

SACRAMENTO – Still adjusting to being a presbytery on their own, there is much pain as congregations struggle with their relationship to our denomination. Nevertheless, due to a grant to expand their Hispanic ministry, Northminster P.C. has an exciting new ministry. A Pakistani minister, new to the presbytery has a Punjab fellowship of over 100 people. A new Indonesian fellowship is just beginning. And a mission to Ethiopia will be rebuilding a broken bridge over a river in a village which separates the town from the school.

SAN JOAQUIN – Also a place with many churches in transition, this Presbytery celebrated World Communion with an evening worship for the entire Presbytery to celebrate their unity and diversity! Expecting about 100, the crowd of over 250 enjoyed not only the celebration of the Eucharist, along with music and dance from many lands but also much more food than could be eaten! The lack of enough tables was not a deterrent to this joyful celebration of a Presbytery with much going for it! A sad note was that earlier this fall a young staff person died from a fall at Calvin Crest. Prayers for her family and this wonderful camp are requested.

SAN JOSE – Acknowledging their wide diversity, the Council has had 4 two-hour conversations outside of the Council meetings, which have provided a time to voice concerns, share stories, laugh, cry, and renew a commitment to each other. The Presbytery voted overwhelmingly to renew their agreement on how to treat each other in times of disagreement, and now is planning to have these conversations throughout the Presbytery. A refugee resettlement ministry which includes ecumenical and secular partners held its second very successful summer camp and is planning for next year. New federal law affects church nurseries, in that drop-side cribs will no be longer allowed by the end of 2012. The only exception is for churches that do not pay their nursery attendant but use volunteers exclusively.

STOCKTON – Also new to being a stand-alone presbytery, Stockton has held two presbytery-wide study sessions to determine direction. They have developed a mission statement, Manual of Operations, budget and financial standards, a personnel committee, and hired their first executive, Julia Leeth. Julia has been meeting with the pastors, worshipping with the churches, and clarifying priorities for the presbytery. At the top of the list are mission, ministry and relationship building.

REDWOODS – This Presbytery has voted to require healthy boundary training every 3 years. Acknowledging the wide range of views in our denomination on the issue of ordainability, Scot Clark, an openly gay man has been ordained by this Presbytery. Doug Huneke, long-time pastor at Belvedere-Tiburon and social issues activist, is retiring, as is John Cushman in Santa Rosa.

CASCADES - (not their report) This is to congratulate Cascades Presbytery on being acknowledged by the GAMC as one of the Top Ten Presbyteries in our denomination of total gifts to Presbyterian Mission in 2010!!!

NOTE:

PACIFIC MISSION EXCHANGE is a website (PacificMissionExchange.org or click the link from the Synod website) where ANYONE can donate to specific mission projects in our Synod! Read about projects large and small, and donate through this secure site to one or more of your choice!

Please let your presbytery know about this – and perhaps put a link on your presbytery website!

Synod Investment and Loan Service offers competitive interest rates (effective 8/1/11):

<u>Investments</u>		<u>Loans</u>
- Custodial Demand	2.75%	- Line of Credit 6.25%, before mission giving discounts
- 6 month MDC	3.25%	- Amortized 6.00%, before mission giving discounts
- 1 year MDC	3.50%	- JM Muzzy 5.00%, before mission giving discounts
- 2 year MDC	3.70%	-Ins./Risk Mitigation 2.00%
- 3 year MDC	3.90%	