

PRESBYTERY MEETING FEBRUARY 6, 2010

POSTLUDE

Moving others closer to God, goal of evangelism



Rev. Eric Hoey delivers compelling message on Evangelism.

Keynote speaker and Director of Evangelism and Church Growth PC(USA), the Rev. Eric Hoey, spoke with great clarity and passion on the topic of Evangelism, a focus that many Presbyterians shy away from.

Our call is clear, said Rev. Hoey, both in Scripture and our Book of Order. We are to be Christ's faithful evangelists and undertake this mission "even at the risk of losing life..., sharing the gospel, and doing deeds in the world that point beyond themselves to the new reality in Christ." (G-3.0400)

God longs for those outside the church, said Rev. Hoey,

pointing to the three parables in Luke 15 (The Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, The Prodigal Son). God has given us the power of the Holy Spirit to help us share the good news with others in their journey of faith. We are not alone. There are many who walk alongside individuals as they travel the road to life in Christ.

Scriptural examples and memorable video clips (The Pizza Evangelist and Where Are the Youth?) captured the good and the bad of evangelism styles. Rev. Hoey identified six styles of Evangelism described in familiar Bible passage that we can use in various contexts as we live out God's call to be Christ's faithful evangelists:

1. Peter's Confrontational Approach (Acts 2:22-41)
2. Paul's Intellectual Approach (Acts 17:15-34)



3. The blind man's Testimonial Approach (John 9:1-15)
4. Matthew's Interpersonal Approach (Luke 5:27-29)
5. The Samaritan woman's Invitational Approach (John 4)
6. Dorcas' Service Approach (Acts 9:36-42)

Thoughtful conversations among commissioners followed the address, when they met in Cluster (geographic) groups to discuss why we have so much trouble with Evangelism, what we can do about it, and what we need to do to be more effective in our Evangelism.

Responses from these groups were recorded and will be reviewed by the Ecclesiastical Affairs Committee. An audio recording of Rev. Hoey's address will be made available.



Morning Worship: 'Go and make disciples'

Almost on cue, sunlight sparkled through the chancel windows after days of clouds and rain, as 247 commissioners and 54 visitors were called to Morning Worship. St. Philip's



Rev. Eric Hoey

new organ and the St. Philip Choir stirred hearts and minds through the majestic and sometimes intimate music of Bach, Brahms, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. In his sermon, "Jump-Starting the Church," the Rev. Eric Hoey used a metaphor of an automated external defibrillator (AED) and the church. An AED is a device used to shock the heart that

has gone out of normal rhythm so that the heart resumes its regular rhythm. AEDs enable bystanders to save a life in times of emergency with little or no training at all. Wouldn't it be wonderful, said Rev. Hoey, if the church were equipped with something like an AED which would could give a "shock" that would bring new life into every church!

Rev. Hoey told a personal story of saving someone else's life. It wasn't easy. It wasn't pleasant. It was sometimes painful, inconvenient, and frightening at times. One day he received a call asking if he would be tested to see if he was a donor match for someone who was not doing very well. He was a match, and without knowing very much about the experience, he agreed. Helping a person to live, said Rev. Hoey, being the instrument

continued in next column

Welcome back, Joseph!

Commissioners welcomed the Rev. Joseph Kho (Honorably Retired) as a new member-minister of New Covenant. He has transferred from Los Ranchos Presbytery in California. Rev. Kho was a member of New Covenant Presbytery from 1995-2006, serving at Formosan Presbyterian. He has returned to this "warm presbytery" after his retirement and is now living in Katy.



Rev. Joseph Kho

that saves someone's life, has changed my life. It is priceless to be the instrument that brings new life to someone else.

During the worship service, Rhonda Haskins and Mary Sterner were recognized as Certified Associate Christian Educators and charged to continue in faithful ministry to those they walk alongside.

The morning offering (just shy of \$2000) was given to advance the work of Campus Ministries in New Covenant.

The service concluded with the Sacrament of Holy Communion and the hymn, "Hear the Good News of Salvation."



Connie Nyquist and Mary Marcotte congratulate Rhonda Haskins (left) and Mary Sterner (right) as Certified Associate Christian Educators.

New communications resource connects presbytery community

A weekly email called Tuesday Connect is now being sent to anyone interested in being connected with the news about and for the congregations of New Covenant. To be added to the distribution list or to submit a short announcement, email Helen Wolf at hwolf@pbvofnewcovenant.org.

The information included in Tuesday Connect is short and concise (50-100 words) and includes photos and links to websites for additional information. This weekly email replaces individual announcements from the presbytery except those of an emergency nature.

Information at the bottom of the email enables easy forwarding to friends or unsubscribing. Helen Wolf's email address is also located there.

Proposed Changes to the Standing Rules for Meetings of the Presbytery

Presbytery approved the proposed changes to the Standing Rules of the Meetings of Presbytery after dividing the question concerning Certified Christian Educators (section 8) for consideration at a later date.

Most changes are matters of sentence structure and vocabulary as well as incorporation of the current practice of using the internet as the primary medium for distribution of meeting materials.

Sing, sing a song

What better way to remember the words of presbytery's Vision Statement than doing what we all love no matter how talented we are – sing!

Rev. Jim Gill, First Presbyterian Tomball, and his enthusiastic band of musicians unveiled "The Vision Song" at the presbytery meeting. In no time, the assemblage was singing and clapping to the familiar words: "Growing congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples."

The song was released at the General Council Retreat in January, a fitting venue since it was General Council that brought New Covenant Presbytery its new vision statement!



"Vision Song" by Rev. Jim Gill gives beat to vision statement

In preparation for ministry



Supporters surround Wendy Bleike, New Covenant's newest Candidate for Ministry of Word and Sacrament

Elder Jim Bushong (with microphone), chair of Committee on Preparation, introduced Wendy Bleike, member of First Presbyterian, Houston, who spoke about her journey of faith, her life

and service in faith, and her motives for ministry.

Wendy was enrolled as a Candidate for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Surrounded by those who have accompanied and supported her during the time of inquiry, Wendy officially entered a covenant relationship with the presbytery in this next phase of preparation.

Next Stated Meeting New Covenant Presbytery

Sat. May 8, 2010

**Northwoods PC,
Houston**



Speaker:

Rev. Dr. Laura Mendenhall

Former president of Columbia Theological Seminary,
Decatur, GA.

Currently senior philanthropy advisor for the Texas
Presbyterian Foundation

Annual Clergy Retreat

Pastors were reminded to put the date of the New Covenant Clergy Retreat on their calendars: April 13-15. This R&R time at Cho-Yeh follows the busy Lenten and Easter season.

Ed Kilbourne, singer, storyteller, and folk theologian will be our guest. He is known for his collections of moving music, quirky humor, and insightful monologues. Spouses are invited, too!

Report on Presbytery finances



Pete Koester

Elder Pete Koester, Chair of Finance Committee, reported on presbytery finances at the six-month point in the 2009-2010 Budget.

Total Operating Revenues were 49% of budget, and Total Operating Expenses were 48.9% of budget. Net Loss of \$21,166 was due to no transfer from the Miller Fund in the first six months of the current fiscal year. The transfer will be made in April 2010.

New Covenant Presbytery has two more years remaining on the Debt Repayment Schedule (2007-2012). The next payment to General Assembly will be sent in April 2010; final payment will be made in 2011.

Advancing the Vision

More than \$80,800 was awarded to fund six Vision Initiatives grants to advance New Covenant vision. The grants, funded through the Cris Miller Fund, enable entities in New Covenant Presbytery to establish scholarships, initiate and expand projects, continue ministry, develop community outreach, and equip disciples.

General Council member, Elder Mary Herlitz, described the projects that have been awarded funds and encouraged submission for the next round of grants. Guidelines for Vision Initiative Grants and applications are posted on the presbytery website, www.pbyofnewcovenant.org. Application should be submitted to the Presbytery Center by March 31, 2010.



Elder Mary Herlitz

- Congregational Resourcing Team funded nine scholarships to the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators in San Antonio in January of 2009.
- First African Presbyterian in Houston expanded their Reach Out to Houston and Beyond Evangelism Project with the objective of winning back backsliding members, developing discipleship, and winning more souls to the ways of Jesus Christ.
- Heritage Presbyterian in Houston was able to continue the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in the Copperfield area of Northwest Houston.
- Inglesia Fuente de Esperanza NCD funded a youth minister who would be a part of a three-pronged Fountain of Hope Food Ministry: Food for the soul (a youth ministry), Food for the body (a licensed agency pantry of Houston Food Bank), and Food for the mind (offering instruction in English and computer literacy)
- Timber Ridge Presbyterian used its grant to increase disciples for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in its local and global community by developing a Church Renewal Initiative, A Praise Service Feasibility Study, a Community Outreach Speaker Series and an International Mission Ministry.
- Korean Young Nak Presbyterian in Houston called an English-speaking pastor for the younger, second generation. The congregation increased its membership and nurtured in faith many English-speaking children, youth and young adults in its neighborhood and beyond. The new minister has energized the youth program and doubled its size.

CODA

Elders and minister commissioners to the February presbytery meeting received the following announcements by presbytery agents on behalf of presbytery and conducted the following additional business:

- Elected Amy Klinkovsky, an inquirer under the care of our presbytery and student at San Francisco Seminary, as a Theological Student Advisory Delegate to the 219th General Assembly. She has been nominated for this position by the seminary.
- Granted Honorably Retired status to the Rev. Morris J. "Skip" Ehrlich, II, effective Dec. 1, 2009; the Rev. C. Paul Bennett, effective Dec. 1, 2009; and the Rev. William Poe, effective June 30, 2010.
- Rev. David H. Jenkins has transferred to Grace Presbytery, effective 1/9/10; Rev. Ellen Babinsky has transferred to Mission Presbytery, effective 12/6/09; Rev. Craig Sanders has transferred to Grace Presbytery, effective 3/15/10; and Rev. Steve Frazier has transferred to Homestead Presbytery pending receipt of pastoral call.
- Candidate Teri Summers Minette was ordained 12/27/09 and called to Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery.
- Proceeds of the sale of Westminster, Beaumont, designated as "New Life Fund," have been assigned to Evangelism and Renewal oversight. The property has been sold and all proceeds have been distributed.
- Atascocita, Clear Lake, and Westminster churches participated in World Mission Challenge 2009 by hosting mission worker Jed Koball in the fall.
- Rev. Lynn Hall Buckridge, Elder Margaret Swarts, Rev. Lacy Sellers, and Rev. Jim McLeod were elected to the Nominating Committee.
- Approved validation of call for Candidate Juan Herrera to Tampa Bay Presbytery.
- Rev. Scott Thayer has accepted a call to Monmouth Presbytery.
- Chad A. Erb, First Kingwood, has been enrolled as an inquirer.

Postlude is published after each stated meeting of the Presbytery of New Covenant.

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