

**Heartland Presbytery
MINUTES**

Heartland Presbytery met on Saturday, April 12, 2008, at the Presbyterian Church of Stanley, Overland Park, Kansas, for its 190th stated meeting. Presbytery Moderator Tamara Miller presided.

The meeting began with three raps of the Moderator's gavel and an opening prayer at 9:05 a.m. by Moderator Rev. Tamara Miller.

Stated Clerk **Rev. Maryann Farnsworth** moved that the standing rules of the presbytery concerning the scheduling of "New Business" be suspended and the motion from the Administrative Commission for Churches Seeking Dismissal be docketed under the Stated Clerk's Report where that Administrative Commission will be presenting their report. It was seconded and approved.

Rev. Tom Thomas moved the Approval of the Docket as amended. It was seconded and approved.

To build the community, many first-time Commissioners were introduced.

Rev. Craig Holstedt moved the seating of the following corresponding members

Mr. Walter Olker	Presbyterian Foundation	Northern Kansas Presbytery
Rev. Doug Kelly	Board of Pensions	Southern Kansas Presbytery

It was seconded and approved.

Brian Hathhorn, the new Financial Manager of Heartland Presbytery was introduced to the presbytery. Brian is a member of the John Knox Kirk in Kansas City, MO and has his CPA and MBA.

Several announcements for the good of the community were made including upcoming events at area churches.

Several Joys and Concerns were lifted up for prayer including: the death of Rev. John Raske, HR who died on April 2, 2008; Rev. Ron Galvin's speedy recovery from back surgery; a successful fundraising effort for the Heartland Presbyterian Center on April 10; Rev. Nancy Profit in her fight with cancer; the joy of tenacious faith on the part of First, Paola, members and leaders; thanksgiving for Jim and Sue Ahrens as they retire to Grinnell, Iowa from First, Lexington; and prayers for Faith PC in Raytown member and Wanda Trainer in her fight with cancer. Moderator Miller led the presbytery in prayer.

The presbytery entered into a time of worship under the leadership of the Congregational Ministries Division which focused the worship service on the Covenant Value: "Care for one another through mutual prayer and the sharing of our needs and concerns." Elder Sarah Butler, CLP, First, Pleasanton, KS, preached the sermon. Included in worship was a time of remembering the elders and ministers who joined the Church Triumphant in 2007. Candles were lighted following the reading of each saint's name and the chime of a low pitched hand bell. The sacrament of Holy Communion was shared under the leadership of Rev. Glenda Watts and Rev. Don Schomacker.

Rev. Maryann Farnsworth presented the Report of the Stated Clerk as follows:

Debbie Miller, Presbyterian Church of Stanley Church Office Manager was recognized for completing her Fellowship in Presbyterian Church Business Administration and certification in the ecumenical organization, National Association of Church Business Administrators.

Rev. Farnsworth reported that she had earned her status as a **Parliamentarian** in March from the National Association of Parliamentarians.

The Stated Clerk received correspondence the day before the presbytery meeting from **Rev. Shirley Hill** whom the presbytery ordained as a missionary to Cameroon, Africa. Rev. Hill submitted a written report that will be available to the presbytery in the next Heartland Connections e-newsletter. Rev. Hill praised Heartland Presbytery for being the largest percentage donor (2.75%) in the entire Mission Challenge 2007. Individuals and congregations from Heartland Presbytery contributed \$25,164 to the \$915,034 total dollars raised which are new dollars supporting worldwide missionaries. Heartland Presbytery currently has six missionaries in the global mission field.

Rev. Leslie King, Moderator of the Administrative Commission for Churches Seeking Dismissal gave a brief update while copies of the Hillsdale Full Release and Settlement Agreement” were distributed to the presbytery.

First, Paola had 162 in worship on Easter Sunday and their attendance continues to increase weekly. They have elected elders and deacons who are working along side of the Administrative Commission. Annual statistics for the church as of December 31, 2007 reported 303 active members.

The **Gashland Presbyterian Church** (KCMO) Session administrative hearing did convene on April 10th in accordance with G-9.0505b.

Rev. King made a few corrections to the “Full Release and Settlement Agreement” between Hillsdale Presbyterian Church, Church Development Corporation and Heartland Presbytery. The presbytery moved into a five minute silent reading time. The reading time was extended another five minutes.

Rev. King moved on behalf of the administrative commission that Heartland Presbytery dissolve the Hillsdale Presbyterian Church effective April 14, 2008, and approve the sale of the Hillsdale property to the Hillsdale EPC congregation according to the “Full Release and Settlement Agreement” between Hillsdale Presbyterian Church, Church Development Corporation and Heartland Presbytery.

Rev. King stated there were 5-7 members at Hillsdale who wish to remain PC(USA) but do not wish to inhibit the Hillsdale congregation’s departure to the NW-EPC. The Administrative Commission will assist those members in finding new church homes within the PC (USA).

Clarification was offered on the separate agreement between the Church Development Corporation (CDC) and the Hillsdale congregation which involves legal fees incurred by CDC in the default of the church on the loan as well as the loan balance. It is a written agreement between the church and CDC concerning the amount of \$187,659.94 listed in 2.B.

The payment to Heartland Presbytery in the agreement will occur at closing on April 14, 2008.

The motion was approved with three dissenting votes.

Reports from other Administration Commissions were included in the packet from the commission at **First, Kansas City, KS** and the **Neema Fellowship**.

The Stated Clerk included a list of **Overtures before General Assembly** as of April 1, the final copy of the **Overture on Ending the War in Iraq**, the Report on the **Winter Meeting of the Synod of Mid-America** in the packet.

The Stated Clerk reported that the Synod PJC decision in Elder Robert Sundquist, First, Paola; Rev. A. Kirk Johnston, First, Paola; Rev. Laurie Johnston, Hillsdale; Rev. Mark Hawke, First, Olathe; Rev. Elise Hawke, Member at Large; Elder Di Lupton, First, Olathe; Elder Chuck Lupton, First, Olathe; Rev. Doug Burford, Ward Parkway, Kansas City; Elder Thomas Neff, Westminster, Ottawa; Rev. Jodi H. Mathews, Leawood; and Rev. R. Kent Mathews, Westminster, Ottawa; v. Heartland Presbytery, **a remedial case concerning the Committee on Ministry motion that was adopted on June 16, 2007, has been appealed by Elder Robert Sundquist, First, Paola, KS; Rev. Mark Hawke, First, Olathe, KS; Rev. Elise Sharrett-Hawke, Member at large; Elders Di and Chuck Lupton, First Olathe, KS.** The General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission has taken no action concerning this appeal as of this date. The committee of counsel in this case is Rev. Chad Herring, Southminster, Prairie Village, KS, Moderator; Rev. Landon Whitsitt, First, Liberty, MO; and Elder Stacey Gunya, Village Church, Prairie Village, KS.

Rev. Maryann Farnsworth presented the **Consent Agenda** as follows:

(1.) From Council, the Council recommends approval of the **Presbytery Statistical Report** as of December 31, 2007, as follows:

194 ministers	(gain of 7 ministers or 8%)
107 churches	(loss of 1)
23,510 members	(loss of 680* or 2.9%)

* 263 (38%) were FPC Paola members who terminated their PC (USA) memberships

(2.) From Council, the Council recommends Heartland Presbytery approve the **Equalization Formula** effective June 10, 2008 through June 19, 2009:

Church Membership (as of 12/31/2007)	Elder Commissioners	
1-99		1
100-250	2	
251-450	3	
451-1100	4	
1101-4500	5	
4501-6000	10	

This provides for 190 elder commissioners. This formula unchanged from 2007-8. Letters confirming each church's number of commissioners will be sent in the US Mail.

(3.) From Council, the Council recommends **Heartland Presbytery approve the minutes of the February 9, 2008, stated meeting of presbytery.**

The presbytery was welcomed by Host Pastor Rev. Eric Laverentz.

Rev. Craig Holstedt moved the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. It was seconded and approved.

The Report of the **Stewardship and Mission Committee** was presented by Elder Mary Jorgenson. The presbytery was encouraged to do a “Minute for Mission” every Sunday and provide copies of Item 7 in their newsletters or bulletins.

Elder Ginnie Wirtz presented the report of the **Presbyterian Women**. The Spring PW Cluster meeting will be April 19 at First, Independence. Laurie Anderson, USA Mission Experience “Beyond Border” will focus on mission work on the border along El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Mexico. The Bible Study “Jubilee” is available for order. PW is paying the postage for churches who order the bible study. The PW Birthday Offering supports innovative opportunities around the world including New Orleans and the Congo. Elder Wirtz invited the presbytery to participate in “Net-Workers” through the Mother’s Day card fundraiser that supports the purchase of mosquito nets to prevent malaria throughout Africa.

Rev. Doug Kelly, our regional representative from the **Board of Pensions** updated the presbytery on pension credits and then introduced the presbytery to the new website that went online Friday, April 11. Visit www.pensions.org for more information.

Elder Dan Scheneman reported on behalf of the **Heartland Presbyterian Center**. He reminded the presbytery that camping season is upon us. The presbytery was reminded of the joys of nature, swimming, horseback riding, campfire, stargazing, marshmallow roasts, good meals, Bible study, the high ropes course, and zinging along the zip line through the trees. Heartland Presbytery has supported camping for fifty years and camping fees cover only \$245,000 leaving the HPC with \$192,000 to develop in mission dollars. Churches were urged to become Covenant Partners with the camp by including the camp in the church’s mission budget annually. TLC Day is April 26 for cleaning up the camp for summer use and everyone was invited to participate. The annual camp picnic will be June 14. The presbytery was invited to enjoy the amenities of the camp and have a free dinner. Visit www.heartlandcenter.org for more information.

Mr. Walter Olker from the **Presbyterian Foundation** updated the presbytery. The Foundation helps churches and individuals raise money for mission: your congregation’s mission, validated missions of the PC (USA) and ecumenical partners. The Foundation practices socially responsible investing as defined by the PC (USA). Walter serves ten presbyteries in two different synods. Visit www.presbyterianfoundation.org for more information.

Elder Don Spencer presented the report of the Committee on Nominations.

Elder Spencer moved on behalf of the Committee on Nominations that the following persons be elected to serve in Heartland Presbytery:

HEARTLAND PRESBYTERIAN CENTER BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Class of 2010:

Rev. Eric Laverentz (1) (WMC) Presbyterian Church of Stanley

Rev. Alex Wales (1) (WMC) First, Warrensburg, MO

Rev. Larry Wheeler (1) (WMC) HR

Matt Germann (1) (WML) Village, Prairie Village, KS
Ilse Smith (1) (WFED) Pine Ridge, Kansas City, MO
Amy Ramirez-Spears (1) (WFL) Chapel Hill, Blue Springs, MO

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT DIVISION:

Rev. Jim West (1) (WMC) Colonial, Kansas City, MO – Class of 2008

Elder Spencer then added the following names to the slate:

PRESBYTERY COUNCIL:

Rev. Jill Linn (1) (WFC) Member at Large – Class of 2008

HEARTLAND PRESBYTERY BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Mardy Cottrell (1) (WFE) Ward Parkway, KCMO – Class of 2009

Paul Gault (1) (WME) Parkville – Class of 2010

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY:

Rev. John Williams WMC, HR - Class of 2008

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRIES DIVISION:

Rev. Duane Stephens, (1) (WMC) First, Independence – Class of 2009

Rev. James Wilkins, (1) (BMC) St. Paul, KCMO – Class of 2010

Susan Luce, (1) (WFE) Blue Ridge, Raytown, MO – Class of 2010

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT RESPONSE PANEL:

Rev. John Williams, (1) (WMC) HR – Class of 2008

Susan Slaughter (1) (WFE) First, Tarkio, MO – Class of 2010

STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION INTERPRETATION:

John Walls (1) (BME) Belton – Class of 2010

WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP DIVISION:

Rev. Ryan Kapple (1) (WMC) Leawood – Class of 2009

Each committee or division's nominees were placed in nomination by Elder Spencer. The Moderator asked for nominations from the floor. There were none. The full slate including those added was approved.

Rev. Charles Spencer presented the **Report of the Executive Presbyter**. Rev. Spencer requested that churches consider inviting members of the presbytery staff to their session meetings, special events, etc so members can learn about the presbytery, its missions and ministries that all congregations actually participate in whether they know about them or not.

As a moment of personal privilege, Rev. Scott Cervis invited members to sign a petition for the state of Missouri to reinstate Medicaid to the fullest extent.

Rev. Tom Thomas reminded the presbytery about engaging in table talks during lunch and in completing their evaluations of the presbytery meeting prior to their departing the meeting.

Rev. Eric Laverentz offered grace for the presbytery's meal.

The Moderator Rev. Tamara Miller reconvened the presbytery with prayer at 1:03 p.m.

Reports from the Table Talks on "caring for one another" included the fun things congregations are doing: Heartland Presbyterian Center's family camps, PUMN meetings, presbytery lunches, finding joy and fun in routine meetings like going out for lunch after Bible study, Camino weekends, choir, Ghost Ranch seminars, food distribution in the community, eating out on Saturday nights for fellowship, Peacemaking Festival, participating in local community festivals as fundraisers, small group fellowships, potlucks in small groups, musical opportunities, participating in mission studies, Dinners for Eight, learning to party without a spiritual agenda, Church-wide Game Day, when we get to know each other, the fun begins; pie auctions, special events on 5th Sundays and visiting another Presbyterian Church while on vacation and finding that you are actually at home.

Rev. Dan McKnight presented the report of the Church Development and Redevelopment Division. Rev. McKnight reported that CDR is having a retreat to work on their strategic plan for new church development and redevelopments.

Rev. McKnight moved that on behalf of the Presbytery Council, CDR moves that Heartland Presbytery recognize Neema Fellowship as a new church development of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Neema ("Grace" in Swahili) Fellowship has applied to the General Assembly for a matching New Church Development Grant. Presbytery's support improves the possibility of receiving that grant sometime in 2008-9.

Rev. Nzioka spoke to the presbytery about the growth of Neema from 0 to 75 worshippers in two years working with support from Village Church. Rev. Nzioka and his family arrived in the US to attend seminary five years ago. Through the seminary, they met Village Church who welcomed them into their family and have shared the vision of an immigrant fellowship of Kenyans in Kansas City. Neema desires to become a mission center for the Presbyterian Church helping to establish churches in the US and abroad. They ask for the presbytery's blessings as they seek to become a blessing to the world.

Rev. Dwight Tawney, Moderator of the Neema Fellowship Administrative Commission, reported that their work has been to establish a financial foundation, bylaws, identifying and training key leadership for session and a long term implementation of their mission plan. Neema will continue to meet at the 99th and Mission Road center of Village Church. One day, Neema hopes to have a building of their own for worship and mission.

The motion was approved.

Rev. Kirk Perucca, moderator of the Social Justice Ministries Division introduced Laurie Anderson as Daniel Romero, Interfaith Worker Justice could not join the presbytery today. Laurie Anderson is a member of Presbyterian Church of Stanley and also represents the **New Sanctuary Movement**. The New Sanctuary Movement is 26 congregations representing five different denominations. Their mission is to make the invisible immigrant visible and shed light on the injustices of the current immigration laws and other issues around being immigrants in the US. Laurie Anderson can be

reached through the Presbyterian Church of Stanley or the New Sanctuary Movement website (www.newsanctuarymovement.org).

Presbyterian Conservation Corps represented by Brian Frick of the Heartland Presbyterian Center talked about caring for creation. This is the combination of efforts between the Presbyterian Association of Camps and Conference Centers and the Presbyterians for Restoring Creation. Highland Camp in Colorado will be their first stop then they will come to Heartland Presbyterian Center this summer.

The presbytery was encouraged to lift up **Earth Day 2008** on April 20th. Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church is having an Earth Day Fair on April 20th. Earthkeepers of Heartland Presbytery were recognized for their work in teaching congregations how to be more “green”.

Rev. Landon Whitsitt presented the report of the **Church Order and Listening Division**. **Rev. Whitsitt moved on behalf of the division that Heartland Presbytery approve the following overture to the 218th General Assembly on Prayerful Discernment in the Examination of Church Officers:**

The Presbytery of Heartland respectfully overtures the 218th General Assembly (2008) to:

Commend presbyteries and Sessions that have incorporated serious theological reflection and prayerful discernment into their examination procedures, as recommended by the 217th General Assembly through its adoption of the report of the Theological Task Force on the Peace, Unity, and Purity of the Church, and the Authoritative Interpretation adopted by the 217th GA (2006).

Direct the Stated Clerk to collect and/or develop models of such procedures that honor the Authoritative Interpretation and follow the Book of Order and make them available to the whole church.

Remind Sessions and presbyteries, as they carry out their constitutional responsibilities under G-6.0108,

- a) That the purpose of ordination and installation examinations is to discern whether God has called and equipped persons for particular service, in order to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed, engage in faithful ministry in the world, build up the church of Jesus Christ, and bring glory to God; and**
- b) That in light of this purpose, all persons being examined should be treated with respect, recognizing that God’s Spirit blows where it chooses; (John 3:8)**
- c) That theological questions should offer the opportunity for the ordination candidates to demonstrate knowledge of the Reformed tradition and insight in application;**
- d) That personal questions on all topics should be posed with discretion, respect, and sensitivity, and that specific inquiry cannot be made into the sexual orientation or practice of persons being examined if the persons have not, on their own initiative, made a declarative statement. If such inquiries are not made into the sexual orientation or practice of all persons being examined, then**

such inquiries may not be made into only select persons' orientation or practice. (See GAPJC rulings in Presbytery of San Joaquin v. Presbytery of Redwoods, Rem. Case 215-8 [2003] and Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church, GAPJC Re. Case 214-5 [2002])

Rationale:

Actions of the 217th General Assembly invite us to be church in a renewed and more faithful way. Building on the example of Jesus Christ, who prayed that we “may all be one ... so that the world might believe”, (John 17:21) the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) now has a unique opportunity to witness to unity without requiring uniformity.

While built upon tradition and history dating back to the first century, the church we are becoming needs to be shaped and guided if it is to be faithful to the principles and mission envisioned by the 217th General Assembly.

Some presbyteries and sessions have moved forward by implementing the recommendations passed by the 217th General Assembly. They are now practicing a healthy, faithful openness to the new thing God is doing (Isaiah 43:19) while others await assistance from those sisters and brothers in the church who are further along in this journey of discernment. Learning from these “pioneers” would be beneficial to the health, life, and mission of the denomination.

The 217th General Assembly's commitment to both unity and diversity within the church sets a high standard, for we live in a time when divisions related to issues such a peace, global warming, economic disparity, Biblical interpretation, ordination and inclusion and religious pluralism threaten to pull us apart. Learning how to speak and to listen to one another with regard to the matter of ordination can and will serve as a model for conversations about other issues that challenge us to be church God calls us to be.

The Division considers this overture is a “best practices” document and it does not have financial implications. The Division understands that this overture may become a concurrence if other presbyteries have previously submitted similar overtures. There were a few questions for clarification

Rev. Craig Holstedt moved that debate be limited to 12 minutes with a 2 minute per speaker limit. It was seconded and approved. The presbytery then debated the overture well within the time limit.

Rev. Craig Holstedt moved to close debate. It was seconded. The motion to close debate was approved.

The overture was approved by a raised hand vote of 113 for the overture and 32 against the overture.

Elder Sunok Pai presented the Report of the **Presbytery Council** as follows:

The Presbytery Council met on March 24th and considered all the items on the Consent Agenda that were approved today in addition to several other items not requiring presbytery action including approval of the Council's January 12th meeting minutes which are in the presbytery packet. The Council reviewed the financial status of the presbytery and received a written report from Congregational Ministries Division which is in the packet today.

The Council re-elected Chad Herring as Vice-Moderator of Council. The Council had its second lengthy discussion about implementing the Vision Report from 2007. Each council meeting, we will spend some time on "Living Out the Covenant Values". Each meeting, the committees and divisions will report on how they have implemented the covenant values since the last council meeting. Many divisions and committees are finding creative ways to keep the covenant values before them in their work including the presbytery staff.

Two new council members were assigned to council committees. Elder Mary Jane Houston from the Linwood United Church will serve on Personnel and Elder Bond Faulwell will serve on Business Affairs.

The council referred a request to the Church Order and Listening Division from the Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church which is seeking understanding about how ministers and elders should and should not utilize the name of the presbytery when writing or speaking to the media.

The council approved a contractual agreement with Marr and Company for a full financial review of 2007 and welcomed Brian Hathhorn as the new Financial Administrator of Heartland Presbytery. Brian is a member of the John Knox Kirk and serves on the Heartland Presbyterian Center Board of Management.

The Council approved an evaluation form for presbytery meetings that will be a barometer for the council on how we live out the covenant values during presbytery meetings.

Lastly, the Council decided against having an overnight retreat in 2009 and will have an all day retreat in late 2008 or early 2009.

The presbytery was asked to review that information which the council received for information including the Financial Statement as of 2/28/2008; the Congregational Ministries Division Report and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report.

Elder Bev Barr presented the report of the **Committee on Ministry**.

Elder Barr corrected the COM report page 3, Item E. 5 should read "Appointed the **Rev. Al McDowell** as moderator of the **Freeman, MO Presbyterian Church**, effective March 1, 2008."

The Committee on Ministry recommends that the following examination be sustained and call approved as follows:

1. The Rev. Krista Kiger as Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, St. Joseph, Mo., effective July 1, 2008, according to the following terms:

Salary	\$35,000
Housing	\$15,000
Annuity	\$ 1,140
Board of Pensions	\$ 7,500
Major Medical	\$ 9,750
Prof. Allowance Exp.	\$ 2,400
Mileage	\$ 3,000

Study Leave: 2 weeks annually
Vacation: 4 weeks annually
AA/EEO Guidelines were followed

Rev. Krista Kiger's biography and Statement of Faith were included in the presbytery packet. Rev. Kiger was examined in the areas of call to ministry especially her call to a hiatus from full time parish ministry to teaching in the public schools; her understanding of the Holy Spirit in daily life; her understanding of the importance of polity in the structure of the Presbyterian Church and how she would explain it to a new or non-Presbyterian; and Rev. Kiger affirmed that she could answer all the constitutional questions for installation and she was willing to be governed by our polity and abide by its discipline.

Questions from the presbytery included what was her greatest concern about this call and what gifts does she bring to the call to deal with that issue which she described as changing the image of First Church from the traditional Anglo downtown church by helping the church expand its boundaries beyond its own "tribe" and build bridges across racial, class and economic statuses.

Elder Barr restated the Committee on Ministry motion to sustain the examination cease and the call be extended to Rev. Krista Kiger.

Elder Larry Thompson, Chairman of the Pastor Nominating Committee of First, St. Joseph spoke on behalf of the church expressing their joy in finding Krista with God's help and the gifts that she brings to their ministry. The congregational vote was 100% in favor of calling Rev. Kiger.

The moderator put the motion to the presbytery. It was approved.

Elder Barr asked that churches review their answering machine messages to be sure those messages include the location of the church, the times of worship and Sunday School and someone to call with their questions or emergencies.

Elder Terry Miller moved that the presbytery adjourn. It was seconded and approved with a standing vote.

After reminding the presbytery of the next stated meeting of Heartland Presbytery on Tuesday, June 10, 2008, at 9:00 a.m. at the South-Broadland Presbyterian Church in Kansas City, Missouri,

Moderator Miller adjourned the presbytery with prayer at 2:35 p.m.

Submitted by,



Rev. Maryann S. Farnsworth, Stated Clerk

Approved by Council: 5/18/2008

Approved by Presbytery: 6/10/2008