

REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESBYTER
December 5, 2009

This has been an especially busy fall as, in addition to the normal operations of the presbytery the staff has been working very hard to prepare for the implementation of our new structure on the first of January. The new standing rules of the presbytery require the reorganization of virtually every committee. As you will see in the report of the Nominating Committee, we have fewer committees but they are organized differently. Every committee of presbytery will be dissolved December 31, 2009 with new committees taking office on January 1, 2010, so the folk in Nominating have been working overtime this fall.

Under our standing rules many of our committees have been combined into like categories. For example, the Preparation for Ministry and the Commissioned Lay Pastor committees have been put under one umbrella. Both of the former committees were working to help train and prepare future pastors. Similar combinations are seen under the umbrellas of the Mission and the Christian Formation committees. Much of my time this fall has centered on the task of helping these committees and their chairs prepare for the changes so we can move easily as possible into the new structure.

The New Year will also see the establishment of one entirely new body. Transylvania Presbytery will have a Stewardship Committee. That committee's primary responsibility will NOT be to raise money for the presbytery. The Stewardship Committee, like every committee in our new structure, will be responsible for meeting the needs of the sessions and congregations of our ninety-two churches. They will be working to help strengthen the stewardship emphasis in your church! You will first notice this change when you come to the March meeting of Presbytery at Beaumont Presbyterian Church in Lexington. That meeting will be the first of a number of "themed" presbytery meetings. At the March meeting we have arranged for the Rev. Karl Travis to be our keynote speaker and workshop leader as we offer an emphasis on stewardship. Rev. Travis has presented and led workshops on the national level for our denomination and we are excited that he can be with us. He is a dynamic speaker and brings a lot of great ideas and insights into the subject of the faithful use of our money. The hope is that, in addition to your usual commissioner, you will bring members of your session or your whole Stewardship Committee so they can get an early start in developing a good stewardship program in your own church.

As we move into the busy seasons of Advent and Christmas, know that I hold every pastor and every congregation in my prayers. May God bless you in this holy time!

Richard Smith