

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK
Presbytery of Transylvania
March 11, 2008

Correspondence:

1. Received the following correspondence dated February 4, 2008, from Ann Coleman, Clerk of Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Pikeville:

On January 28, 2008, the session of the First Presbyterian Church, by unanimous vote, hereby requests that Transylvania Presbytery adopt the following resolution:

“All constitutional requirements for ordination in the Book of Order are to be binding on this Presbytery. Fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman and chastity in singleness are requirements for anyone seeking ordination or installation within its bounds. The terms “shall”, “is to be/are to be”, and “requirement”, signify practice that is mandated in the Book of Order. Any failure to adhere to these mandates/requirements shall be a bar to ordination and or installation. Except in the situations specified by the Book of Order, this Presbytery will not waive any requirements for ordination. This statement shall be provided to any person seeking ordination and/or installation within the bounds of this presbytery.”

This information has been forwarded to the Judicial Business Committee of Presbytery for their consideration.

2. Received the following correspondence dated February 20, 2008, from Ann Coleman, Clerk of Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Pikeville:

On February 18, 2008, the session of the First Presbyterian Church, by unanimous vote, hereby requests the withdrawal of its Session Resolution (approved at its January 28th, 2008 Stated meeting) and sent to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery on February 4, 2008.

With the recent three rulings made by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (Remedial Case 218-10) on Monday, February 11, we believe the resolution would be mute.

The rulling can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/gapjc/decisions/pjc21810.pdf> . Here is an excerpt from that ruling.

“As finally adopted by the General Assembly, the Authoritative Interpretation does not equate ‘polity’ with ‘behavior.’ Nevertheless, the church has required those who aspire to ordained office to conform their actions, though not necessarily their beliefs or opinions, to certain standards, in those contexts in which the church has deemed conformity to be necessary or essential. Section G-

6.0106b contains a provision where conformity is required by church officers ‘ to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman(W-4.9001), or in chastityin singleness.’ The church has decided to single out this particular manner of life standard and require churchwide conformity to it for all ordained church officers. Thereford, the specific ‘fidelity and chastity’ standard in G-60106b stands in contrast to the provisions of G-60106a, including those concerning faith, discipleship, belief and manner of life in the church and the world, and also the remainder of G-60106b. The candidate and examining body must follow G-60108 in reaching a determination as to whether the chandidate for office has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity, but that determination does not rest on distinguishing ‘belief’ and ‘behavior,’ and does not permit departure from the ‘fidelity and chastity’ requirement found in G-60106b. Accordingly that portion of SPJC decision that stated: ‘no presbytery may grant an exception to any mandatory church wide behavioral ordination standard,’ was correct. We agree with the SPJC that, ‘Under our polity, violations of behavioral standards are to beaddressed through repentance and reconciliation, not be exception or exemption. The freedom of conscience granted in G-60108 allows candidates to express disagreement with the wording or meaning of provisions of the constitution, but does not permit disobedience to those behavioral standards.’ The fidelity and chastity provision may only be changed by a constitutional amendment. Until that occurs, individual cnandidates, officers, examining and governing bodies must adhere to it.”

The session appreciates all of the hard work done by the Judicial Business Committee and the Coordinating Council regarding this matter.

Information:

1. The 2007 Statistical Reports have been filed with the General Assembly.

Summary of Membership Statistics for 2007

	Dec. 31, 2006	Dec. 31, 2007	Change
Active Membership	10,972	10,588	-384
Gains in			
Profession of Faith under 17	96	78	
Profession of Faith over 18	129	125	
Certificate of Transfer	149	132	
Other	25	14	
Total Gains	399	349	
Losses in			
Certificate of Transfer	109	119	
Death	195	138	
Other	342	476	
Total Losses	646	733	
Change in Membership	Dec. 31, 2007		-384
Prior years net gains/losses: 2006 (-247); 2005 (-497); 2004 (+27); 2003 (-20); 2002 (-321); 2001 (-36)			
Average attendance at Sunday worship	4,717	4,322	
CE enrollment incl. Teachers	3,987	3,638	
Adult Baptisms	38	30	
Infant Baptisms	96	76	
Asian	42	122	
Black/African-American	37	45	
Hispanic	17	11	
Native American	5	6	
Other	6	51	
Total racial-ethnic members	107	235	

Summary of Congregational Financial Statistics for 2007

Receipts		Expenses	
Contributions	20,531,904	Local program	8,236,881
Capital/Building	849,907	Local mission	1,134,135
Investment Income	2,267,746	Capital expenses	3,024,786
Bequests	289,415	Investment	49,423
Other income	874,094	Per capita	843,337
Subsidy	28,366	Validated Mission	1,148,660
		Theological Education	7,322
		Other Mission	84,948

57 out of 92 churches submitted Annual Statistical Reports. The membership numbers reported on the 2007 reports is used to base the 2009 Per Capita Assessment. If a church did not submit a report, the last submitted statistical report is carried over to the next year for membership purposes.

The following churches did not submit Annual Statistical Reports:

*** Denotes that reports were not submitted in either 2006 or 2007.**

Ashland, Normal
 Augusta *
 Beattyville, McGuire Memorial *
 Berea, Whites Memorial *
 Booneville, First *
 Canada, Highland
 Catlettsburg, First *
 Cow Creek *
 Cranks *
 Drift
 Dryhill, Anna C. Brush Memorial
 Flemingsburg, First *
 Garrard, Westminster *
 Grayson, Bayless Memorial *
 Harrodsburg, Mt. Pleasant *
 Lancaster, First
 London, First
 Manchester, Greenbriar *
 Manchester
 Mays Lick *
 McVeigh *
 Muddy Ford, Bethesda *
 Owingsville, Old Springfield *
 Paint Lick, Old Paint Lick
 Paris, Hopewell *

Ricetown, Indian Creek *
Salvisa, New Providence
Stanford *
Stopover, Shepard Memorial
Tollesboro, Ebenezer *
Vicco *
Washington *
Whitesburg, Graham Memorial
Wilmore
Winchester, First *

2. The following dates are open for invitations for hosting presbytery meetings:
 - Saturday, December 6, 2008
 - Tuesday, March 10, 2009
 - Saturday, June 6, 2009
 - Tuesday, September 8, 2009
 - Saturday, December 5, 2009

3. In accord with Book of Order G.11.0101b the Stated Clerk has reviewed the statistics of the Presbytery and determined that the number of ruling elders entitled to vote is greater than the number of resident ministers entitled to vote.

Recommendations of Stated Clerk:

- 1. As per the request of the Peter Creek Presbyterian Church of Phelps' session on December 18, 2007, recommend that the Presbytery grant Relief of Conscience to the church based on their opposition to the Benefits Plan of the PCUSA making payments for abortions, and hereby request that the Board of Pensions of the PCUSA grant relief.**

The Board of Pensions has a process that recognizes differing views among participating employing organizations about the appropriate response to problem pregnancies. The intent is to make sure dues contributed by employing organizations that object to any medical coverage for abortion-related expenses will never be used to reimburse such expenses.

At the same time, reflecting the church's affirmation of each woman's right to make a moral choice when confronted by a problem pregnancy, the Medical Plan provides coverage for abortion-related services, funded by the dues of those employing organizations that have not requested relief.

Established in 1992 and revised in 1998, the "Relief of Conscience" process separates the incoming dues stream between employing organizations that have not sought relief and those certified by their presbytery of jurisdiction to be Relief of Conscience employing organizations. Medical claims for abortion procedures are paid from the non-Relief of Conscience dues stream. A dollar amount equal to the cost of abortion claims from the prior year is set aside from the Relief of Conscience dues stream and given to parents of adopted newborn dependents to assist with not-covered medical expenses for the infant (deductibles, etc.). Then, the dues streams are merged and all other medical claims and costs are paid from the merged dues stream.

The presbytery of jurisdiction grants Relief of Conscience to the employing organization and notifies the Board of Pensions to implement it. Sessions representing their congregations as employing organizations and minister members of presbytery who are self-paying Benefits Plan members may seek Relief of Conscience. Relief of Conscience is granted to the organization that pays the dues.

The action continues for any succeeding incumbent of the church granted Relief of Conscience. If the pastor of a Relief of Conscience church changes service, the Relief of Conscience does not follow to the new position. The full coverage protection of the Medical Plan is available to all Plan members whether or not the church of service is a Relief of Conscience church.

- 2. Recommend that the Presbytery accept the resignations of Peter Jones and Barrett Milner from Burnamwood Camp and Conference Center committee.**