

The Maury River Mission Community Planning Committee

New Monmouth Presbyterian

January 8, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

The following members were present: David Dax, Ken Mohler, Linda Koogler, Janet Mayo, Malcolm Brownlee, Christina Tutterow, Skip Hastings, Jeanie Cash, Becca Cash, Jerry Close, Janet Scott, Carl Moore, George Chapman, & Martin Stokes. Presbytery Staff: Dan Williams (Stated Clerk) and Randy Webb (Acting General Presbyter. Visitor: Russel Thompson.

Requesting to be excused were: Glenn Coleman (report attached), Bonny Wilson, and Keith Cornfield.

Call to Order - *Carl Moore*, convener, called the meeting to order with prayer.

Election of secretary - Christina nominated Martin, who accepted the job “pro tem.”

Introductions were made around the table.

Report of Treasurer - Bonnie Wilson (Attached as Appendix 1)

Community Table Program - *George Chapman*

George then introduced Russell Thompson who explained *The Community Table*, a program to feed the poor and bring the community together in a “dignified atmosphere.” Meals will be prepared and served restaurant style by volunteers from the community. **Anyone** from the community may come and dine and will be given the opportunity to make a donation to help support the program. Due to the generosity of various community organizations and businesses, meal will cost approximately 50 cents each. The meals will be prepared and served in the old rescue building near Carilion Stonewall Jackson Hospital. The program will also offer educational programs on purchasing and cooking healthy meals while also saving money on the cost of each meal. The greatest need for now is for volunteers who will help serve. They hope to begin serving in March.

Presbytery Staff - *Dan Williams*, Stated Clerk,

1. Annual Statistical Report is now being done on line. (Clerks will need to add an explanation point to the church password, which is the church’s pin number)
2. Clerks need to send list of elders who died in 2012 to Kim at presbytery for the necrology report.
3. Randy Webb will be our new *Acting General Presbyter*, pending council’s approval on Tuesday 1/10.

Sub-Committee

Carl reported on the subcommittee meeting. (Minutes attached as Appendix 2)

Regarding the possibility of a mission community newsletter, the group was reminded that the mission community would have to take full responsibility for the letter and not put that extra work on our already very busy presbytery staff. A finished copy could be sent to Doug to be forwarded to the KCCs.

Disaster Response Team

Glenn Coleman sent a letter describing PDA cleanup bucket project. (Attached as Appendix 3)

Sub Group Planning

We then separated into our sub groups (Mission, Education, Worship, & Youth) for additional planning.

Mission - Carl

Carl reported on upcoming trip to Guatemala. April 10-April 16

Martin shared a letter from Ethiopia Mission Co-workers Michael & Rachel Weller. (Attached as Appendix 4)

Education - Carl

We will hold our annual mission community officers training workshop at New Monmouth October 27, 2012. In our advertising we need to remind trainees that they are to bring their own copy of the *Book of Order*. Evaluation of the 2011 event was provided by Keith Cornfield. (Attached as Appendix 5)

Worship -

Pulpit Swap - Christina

Do we want to have a pulpit swap in 2012? The date for this is ordinarily the Sunday following Easter which in 2012 would be April 15. Churches will be contacted as to their willingness to participate in 2012.

Holy Week Services - Carl

Discussed the possibility of opening it up to all of the mission community. Several of the church are already involved in services in their local area.

Mission Community Joint Worship

Discussed possible October 28, 2012, mid-afternoon worship at Lexington Presbyterian. Theme *The Reformation*. Idea will continue to be explored.

Youth

Report on Youth Rally

Our mission emphasis rally was held December 29 at Bethesda Presbyterian Church with 25 in attendance. Three young people shared their recent experiences in mission work. Their presentations were well received. The young people were then challenged to become involved in at least one mission project during the year of 2012.

Other ideas explored

- Move events from church to church.
- Possible lock-in.
- Another youth rally in Dec.
- Possibly have some of our youth do a mission trip.
- Youth package the mission buckets for the presbytery project.

Reports from Churches

- New Monmouth - new organ to be dedicated
- Lexington - building project is almost completed.
 - Haiti - Living waters/ solar under the sun
- Mt Carmel - will celebrate 175th year on 26 of August
- Collierstown - Session retreat yesterday.

Presbytery Council Representative --Skip agreed to represent the MC at council this year.

Next meetings - April 15th - Fairfield; July ?? - (Bath County); Oct 14 - Mt Carmel; January 13 2013 - BV

The meeting was adjourned with prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Martin L Stokes, Jr. Secretary Pro tem

Maury River Mission Community Budget 2011

Contributions

January '11 - Presbytery

\$ 4,000.00

Expended

Date: 12/31/11

Total Budget

\$ 4,000.00

Presby

Code

DateBudget5935.1 **MISSION SUPPORT** \$ 3,000.00

Windy Cove Haiti Mission

\$ 750.00

Adult Wksp Massanetta Spgs

\$ 250.00

Balance

\$ 2,000.00

\$ 1,000.00

5935.2 **YOUTH** \$1,000.00

Windy Cove Haiti Mission

\$ 250.00

Balance

\$ 750.00

\$ 250.00

Balance

\$ 2,750.00

\$ 1,250.00

Budget**Expended****\$2,750.00 returned to presbytery December 2011.**

Bonny Wilson - Treasurer

Maury River Mission Community - Subcommittee Meeting Minutes December 10, 2011

Present:

Carl Moore (Pastor and Community Convener, Timber Ridge/Fairfield), Bonny Wilson (Community Treasurer, Becca Cash (Secretary Pro Tem, Fairfield), Janet Scott (Collierstown), and Jerry Close (Fairfield).

The meetings began with muffins and coffee provided by Jerry, prayer given by Carl, and personal introductions.

The purpose of the get together was to talk about increasing awareness of **MRMC**'s activities and advantages throughout the **MRMC** (District 7) church community and to discuss new ways to promote **MRMC** events through more marketing and advance planning. It was felt that church representation in **MRMC** activities and missions could be increased and improved for the benefit of the entire community.

To get discussion going, those who had been on the committee the longest, Janet and Bonny, gave brief history of some community-wide events **MRMC** had sponsored over the years: all county church worship event at the Horse Center, the family weekend and worship at the Young Life Camp, Mission Fair, Hymn Sings, Guatemala Mission through Living Waters, and Elder Training Workshops. The group also discussed exciting events individual churches within the community had sponsored that were open to the entire community, such as blood drives, health days, mission fairs.

These ideas surfaced as possibilities for engaging the entire **MRMC** community in **MRMC** activities:

- heightened marketing in the form of a newsletter, brochure, and specific bulletin inserts that would describe what **MRMC** is and what the community does.
- having a 3-tier plan in place for activities scheduled out 18 months, 3 years, and 5 years with chairpersons and committees for activities and events in place for each scheduled activity and deadlines for preparations to be completed.
- having less focus on budget and more on program/mission
- considering a fund-raising plan for support of **MRMC** activities outside of the **MRMC** presbytery budget
- having a subcommittee that meets between the once-quarterly full **MRMC** group meetings - a variation of the idea of using the 'coordinator' to keep **MRMC** events on track. It was felt that limited meeting times (4 times a year) might inhibit maximizing the community's best interests

Respectfully submitted, *Bonny Wilson*, taken from notes of Secretary Pro Tem, Becca Cash

PDA Cleanup Buckets

From Glenn Coleman

Our Disaster Response Team has come up with a plan for a Presbytery Clean-up Bucket project to be completed at the Feb. 11th Presbytery Meeting. The supply of Clean-up Buckets was exhausted by the many disasters that happened in 2011 and the Church World Service warehouse is nearly empty. The goal of the project is to help replenish the supply by completing 100 buckets to be taken to New Windsor. It has been our experience that when people have a “hands-on” encounter, they are more aware and become more active in disaster response. It is our goal to give the members of the Presbytery that encounter and increase their disaster awareness.

Clean-up Buckets are the most needed, hardest to complete and the most expensive. We hope that by making this a “group project” we can reduce the work and cost for each congregation.

We have created a plan that we hope will work for you. We are asking each Mission Community to contribute seventeen 5 gallon re-sealable buckets and \$51 for the processing fee. We also have assigned each Mission Community two or three items to bring in volume. Maury River M. C. has been assigned the following.

- 17 five gallon buckets with lids and \$51. for shipping expense
- 100 pair of work gloves
- 500 dust masks

It will work this way.

- Information should be sent to each church as soon as possible.
- The church can then decide how they want to handle their donation.
- Each congregation will be asked to pledge what they think they can give and report that pledge to me.
- They can then either purchase the items from their available funds or ask members of the congregation to bring the items to the church no later than February 5th.
- Someone from the church should then contact me to let me know how many

Ethiopian Mission Co-Workers
Michael & Rachel Weller

4 January 2012

Dear Friends,

“Christmas is coming the chicken’s getting fat ...” Yes, Christmas is not yet past, and yes, it’s the chicken, not the goose, getting fat here in Ethiopia. Saturday, Jan 7 is Christmas Day in Ethiopia and “doro wat”, a unique chicken stew, is the celebratory meal of choice. I’m not sure the chickens are really getting fat, though; Ethiopian chickens are free-range, organic chickens – rather skinny but very tasty!

Michael and I celebrated Christmas on Dec 25 in two different countries. In Ethiopia, I enjoyed a Christmas service at the International Lutheran Church on Sunday morning and then gathered with the Presbyterian missionaries and a few others in the evening for a Christmas meal. Michael was in Sudan, where Christians celebrate Christmas on Dec 25. That day he was in Yei, visiting PCUSA mission co-workers, Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mathers who have recently arrived there to work with RECONCILE an organization developing programs of Peace and reconciliation. They attended the local Sudanese worship service in the morning and shared a simple meal together in the evening.

Our Christmas was simple, but we received many wonderful gifts. As you know, all our children are in the States working their way into adulthood. It has not been easy, but just before Christmas we received several gifts in the way of decisions about our kids’ futures. Amira has been looking for a satisfying job using her skills and training in art and industrial design. She had recently taken a job as a nanny for a couple who “coincidentally” are both industrial designers. In the meantime, we decided to give her some frequent flyer miles from Michael’s travels and send her to South Africa, where she attended high school, to visit friends. It turned out that Eric, the dad of the kids she watches, works for a company that designs a product they would like to market in Africa, so that company is paying her to do some research while she is in SA and then, perhaps when she visits us in Ethiopia later. The week before Christmas, Thomas was hired by Dassault Falcon, an aircraft company in Delaware. He will start Jan 16 after he moves there from Pittsburgh. And lastly, we decided to bring Lydia to Ethiopia to stay with us till the summer. The cost of college prevented us from enrolling her anywhere in the Fall, we thought we had something worked out to allow her to start in Jan, but when that didn’t materialize, we decided to bring her here and find something for her to do. She was excited about that and we will be glad to have her around and breathed a big sigh of relief at having made a decision! So those were our big Christmas gifts, for which Michael and I are very thankful. Brian and Sheila had no such major decisions to work through this fall, but are enjoying being together following Brian’s four-month deployment to Qatar last summer. They celebrated Christmas with Sheila’s family whom they don’t see often because of the distance. We thank God for his faithfulness to each of us and for the Gift he gave us which allows us to live as his sons and daughters enjoying the most Gracious Inheritance.

During our years of service, Michael and I have repeatedly struggled with our Call. While we are more and more assured of God’s guiding hand in bringing us to Ethiopia, and now Sudan, to serve him through the PCUSA, we recognize that every Christian parent is called to raise their children in faithfulness to God, giving them opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge so that they can serve God in the way He calls them. Our call limits our abilities to offer our children stability, opportunities, and resources. There have been times when we have considered finding jobs that would allow us more financial freedom, but every time we start a “serious” search we have been quickly called back to the work God has asked us to do. So we repeatedly put our children in God’s hands (and way too often yank them back into our own hands) yielding them to His care and guidance. While I would prefer to fill my newsletters with the wonderful things

God is doing through us in Ethiopia and Sudan, I see that often the most important work God does in missionaries is the work He does in their own lives. Day by day, God is teaching Michael and me to trust Him with the lives of our children and prods us to follow the path He designed for us. The gifts He gave us this Christmas are signs of his promise to provide, encouraging us to continue serving Him in Africa.

God is, however, at work in Africa as well as in our own lives.

Jan 4 was a tense day in our house. After living apart for nearly two months, we always go through a series of re-adjustments learning to live together again. Adding to that tension, Michael spent most of the afternoon on the phone and on Skype helping to arrange a safety plan for Sharon Curry, PCUSA mission co-worker living in Akobo, Sudan. I won't go into the details of the problem (you can find them on the internet readily enough), but the generations-old conflict between the Murle and Luo Nuer of South Sudan has affected several towns in the area and is threatening to raise its very ugly head where Sharon was living. Sharon arrived in Akobo shortly before Christmas; Michael had escorted her there to introduce her to the church leaders and help her begin to get settled. We are grateful for good communications – phone, skype, email, facebook – allowing knowledgeable people in several countries and states to confer, advise, and pull strings. The final string was pulled, though, by the pilots of the UN evacuation flight who bent the rules to allow Sharon and some kids on the flight, though they had not been cleared. At the end of the day, we breathed a sigh of relief gave thanks to the real String Puller, and enjoyed a supper together with our friends and colleagues, John & Gwen Haspels, who were in town. We continue to pray for real Peace to take hold in South Sudan.

Michael and I have just made arrangements to drive to Gambella next week taking enough belongings to make a guesthouse there look like a home, temporary though it will be. Our plan is to stay through Feb; I may stay into March or longer, unless there's a reason I should return to Addis for anything. We hope to begin moving on building a permanent place to live while we're there. I am eager to begin working with Akwata and the Abobo CHE work and to help teach the CHE method in the Baro Bible School (Nuer). In addition, I will spend time at the clinics to help strengthen their services and learn what the real challenges and strengths are at each.

If my last stay there was typical, I should have better internet connection from Gambella than I do from Addis. Electricity is the problem, but I will be getting a new battery for my computer soon, which should allow me a bit more freedom, too.

I thought I was going to drag some Sudan stories out of Michael before I sent this letter off, but I could only come up with the one I witnessed as I worked at my desk and he worked at his! Next time ...

As usual, we would not be here without your encouragement and support. We thank God for you who are faithful to pursuing His call in the world.

Sincerely,

Rachel – for the two of us.

Maury River Mission Community: Elder Training (10/29/11)
Feedback: Conference Evaluation Summary (25 attended, 19 completed evaluations)

1) Overall, the amount of information presented was too much, too little, or about right. 95 percent said "about right" five percent (1 person) said "too little."

2) Relevance of training to your role at church: 4.47 out of 5

3) Overall teaching and leadership style of the presenters: 4.74 out of 5

4) Overall quality of training was: 4.79 out of 5

5) Did the training content meet your needs/expectations? If not, what needs to be changed regarding the curriculum? The majority said that it did.

-Many attendees suggested that all participants need to have a current Book of Order going forward.

-Also, some felt that the presentation needs to keep in mind that some participants are brand new officers, and need to have very basic information about organization, polity, and current "political" issues (e.g., 10A) within the denomination.

6) What was most beneficial, challenging or thought provoking about this training?

-"There are problems yet to be solved"

-"The training on historical background."

-"Qualities of good leadership, and the reminder to read all of what the Bible has to say on a subject, not specific verses."

-"Meeting other people."

-"Spiritual aspects of leadership (3),"

-"Duties of elders (3)"

-"How to deal with changes in the church in a Christian manner."

-"The connectional church."

7) What was most frustrating or disappointing about this training?

-The mission portion of the historical training was good, but too much information

-Not having Book of Order available

-Small attendance

8) What other training topics would you like to see covered in the future?

-conflict resolution training

-networking on outreach ideas

-Spiritual vs. business aspects of leadership.