

Moderator's letter

Grace to you and peace. I hope you are enjoying the summer and, perhaps, a chance to slow down a bit until the busy season arrives.

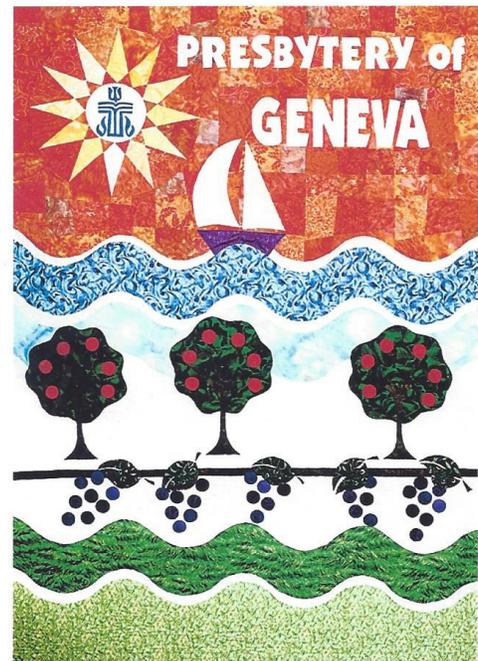
In this Moderator's Letter you will find articles on:

- Where we are in the discernment process
- The SARC report
- Some church anniversaries
- Commission to install Kirianne Weaver Riehl

Along with this email are three PDF fliers:

- West Virginia mission trip
- A Synod event - *Come to the Table*
- Presbyterian Women Fall Gathering

-David Kilgore



Where we are in our discernment and discovery

I'm not sure if this should be a statement (*Where we are*) or a question (*Where are we?*)

It seems like ages ago, but you will remember the Presbytery retreat the end of April where, under the leadership of Dr. David Olsen, we identified four core values we think describe our presbytery, and began to dream about goals and programs that could further those core values. Then, at the May Presbytery meeting, we shared those core values with the whole Presbytery and invited further dreaming about goals and programs.

Some modification of the core values was suggested at the May meeting: that we move from words like "Relationships" and "Mission" to words like "Relational" and "Missional" that would better describe what we are about/what we would like to be about.

The retreat and the Presbytery meeting left us with a massive amount of newsprint that needs some organization. So the transition team, which had led the discussion in May, agreed to meet again this summer. At our first meeting we did some reflection and asked ourselves some questions: What is a presbytery, anyway, and what should it be doing? What, in a general sense, should our presbytery be about? Are there assets in our Presbytery, and are there negative factors, that could assist or hinder our mission? That transition team will meet again in August to review all the dreaming and goal planning of the retreat and the presbytery meeting in light of our discussions about the function of presbytery. We might be able to consolidate some of the ideas that were shared and lift up some that we think are priorities.

Then in September the transition team will hand all this stuff off to a design team which will be charged with coming up with a way to implement these ideas and goals. It is my expectation that General Council will in September choose the members of this design team.

In the meantime there is also frustration in Council about the day to day operating and decision making in the Presbytery office while there is no executive leadership. There is a real leadership vacuum here that is becoming more apparent. The Personnel Committee has said that it can report to General Council names of people who have agreed to be on a search committee for a transitional leader. Assuming that happens, the council could, at the September meeting of Presbytery, be presenting a search committee for election. As it goes about its work, that committee will obviously be informed by this journey of discovery and dreaming that we have been on.

-David Kilgore

The SARC report

The Special Administrative Review Committee made its report to the Synod Ministry and Mission Commission (the body that had created the SARC) in June. At the July General Council meeting that report was shared with the whole Council. It should be up on the website on September 1.

Back in March 2014 Presbytery's General Council asked the Synod for assistance as it struggled with the tumult in the Presbytery. Synod appointed this special committee in May 2014. In June Presbytery dissolved the relationship between itself and its executive presbyter Joelle Davis, so some of the focus of the SARC's task changed.

The SARC is an independent committee and did its work independently of anyone in the presbytery; however, members of the committee often met with General Council, and the Council have appreciated that committee's wisdom and guidance through this past year.

There are five sections to the report, plus some general observations.

- I. Community Building. Recommendations were about visiting congregations, listening, and the type of future executive leadership the presbytery will elect.
- II. Governance. Recommendations include leadership training, decision-making authority, and the interim rules we will adopt in September.
- III. Finances. Some recommendations were made about accountability in spending and the budgeting process.
- IV. Mission. The SARC recommended the re-establishment of a mission committee and pointed to changes in the operation of Camp Whitman.
- V. Synod. The fifth section has to do with encouraging the Synod to clarify and publicize a crisis protocol when presbyteries experience conflict and trouble.

Please study the report on the Presbytery website. We will discuss it at the September Presbytery meeting.

Church Anniversaries

Two churches are celebrating bicentennial anniversaries this year: Howard Union Church and the Pulteney Church.

In Howard, a group of citizens met on July 5, 1815, and formed a Presbyterian Church. The Baptist Church was organized in 1826, and in 1929 the two congregations formed the Howard Union Church. The congregation worships in the former Baptist building, which

was completed in 1915. So this is the bicentennial of the organization of the Presbyterian Church and the centennial of the building in which the union church worships.

And First Presbyterian Church of Pulteney is celebrating its bicentennial. On July 29, 1815, the Presbyterian Union Society was organized. The early church used school houses to worship in until a building was built in 1835. The present building was built in 1851. There will be a homecoming celebration at the church on Sunday, September 27 at 3 PM.

Are there other church anniversaries or celebrations that we could acknowledge? Please let me know at moderator@presbyteryofgeneva.org.

Installation of Kirianne Weaver Riehl

This is the commission to install Kirianne as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca. From left: John Peeples, Tom Bailey, Cheryl Peeples, David Kilgore, Jeff Kellum, Betsey Crimmins, Susan Wade, and Kirianne Weaver Riehl. The service was held on July 19.



Don't forget to open the two PDF fliers announcing the West Virginia Mission Trip and a Synod Event – *Come to the Table*.