

**PRESBYTERY OF ALASKA - GENERAL COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES**  
**SEPTEMBER 2, 2009**

The General Council of the Presbytery of Alaska met at the Chapel by the Lake in Juneau on September 2, 2009. The meeting began with a scripture reading from the First book of Kings and prayer led by the Council Coordinator, Elder Fred Baxter at 9:04 AM.

**ROLL CALL**

Following the prayer, the Council Coordinator declared the meeting open. In addition to Elder Baxter, the following voting members of the Council were present: The Rev. Ron Horn, COM Coordinator; The Rev. Linda Wescott, NW M&M Representative; The Rev. George Pasley, South M&M Representative; Elder Sheryl Dennis, Finance Coordinator; Elder Isabella Brady, Native American Consulting Committee Representative and Elder Bonnie Sharnbroich, NE M&M Representative. The Rev. Dr. John Zimmerman, Presbytery Moderator-Elect, participated by teleconference. Elder Roger Fitzjarrald, Trustee Representative, joined the meeting later. Also attending the meeting were the Stated Clerk, Elder Guy Warren; The Rev. Dr. David Dobler, Pastor to the Presbytery; and Venus Zink, Presbytery Treasurer.

A quorum was declared.

**PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The Council voted to approve as distributed the minutes of the March 4, 2009 meeting of the Council.

**PASTOR TO THE PRESBYTERY REPORT**

The Pastor to the Presbytery, the Rev. Dr. David Dobler, spoke on the issues facing the Presbytery. In his opinion the number of ministers that the Presbytery will be able to obtain will become limited and that we must work to enhance the training available to our elders. He noted that in many of our churches we will need to have elders leading the churches and that to do this they must be trained. We need to support those we will be asking to teach the Bible. In this effort we cannot rely on the support we have received in the past from the Synod or General Assembly. Both of these organizations are facing severe funding and staffing issues of their own. He believes the Presbytery will also need to work towards eventually eliminating most of its own paid staff.

Rev. Dr. Dobler, who also serves as the President of Sheldon Jackson College, spoke on the efforts to reopen the college. A delegation from Dubuque Seminary in Iowa traveled to Sitka and is interested in opening the college as a subsidiary of their main institution. Dobler considers this a very good fit and is hopeful that the debt issues facing the college can be resolved so this merger can take place.

Elder Isabella Brady, who is an alumnus of Sheldon Jackson, spoke on the history of the college, its role in the creation of the Alaska Native Brotherhood/Alaska Native Sisterhood, and how important the school is and expressed her sincere hope that the school can find some way to reopen.

## **GENERAL COUNCIL MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 2, 2009**

### **STATED CLERK'S REPORT**

The Presbytery Stated Clerk, Elder Guy Warren, presented a written report of his activities since the last meeting of Presbytery. This included handling the paperwork for two of our ministers who have left the Presbytery (The Rev. Randy Russom and the Rev. Jesse Perry) and reporting the passing of the Rev. Bob Cameron. He also reported he had worked on developing several proposed amendments to the Presbytery By Laws and Manual of Administrative Operations.

### **PRESBYTERY TELECONFERENCE MEETING**

Due to the probability that funding for Presbytery Meetings will be limited in 2010, Warren presented the text of a temporary change to the By Laws used to permit a teleconferenced Presbytery Meeting in 2008. The General Council VOTED to request that the Stated Clerk submit similar permanent wording to the Fall Meeting of Presbytery for their consideration. The Council further VOTED, that if this change is adopted by the Presbytery, that the Spring 2010 Meeting of Presbytery will be conducted via teleconference.

### **PRESBYTERY FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Presbytery Treasurer and Bookkeeper, Venus Zink, presented a report of the revenues and expenditures made thus far in 2009. The Council VOTED to receive the report.

### **PRESBYTERY BUDGET**

The Coordinator of the Presbytery Finance Committee, Elder Sheryl Dennis, presented a draft 2010 Presbytery Budget. Following discussion and several amendments, the Council VOTED to recommend the amended budget to the Presbytery for its consideration. *The full text of the Budget as adopted by the Presbytery will be included in the minutes of the Fall 2009 Presbytery Meeting.*

### **PRESBYTERY RESERVES**

The Council heard reports on items which will have an impact on the amount of reserves the Presbytery should keep on hand. These include the recent closure of the Covenant Presbyterian Insurance Program and the possibility that we may find ourselves needing to pay a somewhat larger deductible if we have any insurable claims and being called upon to pay a small portion of other claims against the program.

*Elder Roger Fitzjarrald arrived during this discussion.*

### **RECESS/RECONVENE**

The Council recessed for lunch at 11:30 AM. The recess began with a prayer for the meeting and the meal. Following lunch, the meeting was called back to order at 12:05 PM.

### **NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Council discussed possible names for a layman term on the Presbytery Nominations Committee expiring on December 31, 2012. Individual members were designated to obtain the permission of the proposed nominees. The Council VOTED to nominate Elder Crystal Badgley of Haines as the Coordinator.

## **GENERAL COUNCIL MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 2, 2009**

### **STATED CLERK SEARCH COMMITTEE**

The Rev. Ron Horn reported that the Stated Clerk Search Committee had sought nominees for the office of Presbytery Stated Clerk and would be presenting a nominee for the Presbytery's consideration at the Fall 2009 meeting. The actual term will not begin until the end of the Fall 2010 meeting, but it was thought best to provide a transition period to allow the incumbent Stated Clerk to work with the Stated Clerk Elect. At the request of the Search Committee, the Council VOTED to dismiss them with thanks.

### **HOONAH COMMISSION**

The Council heard a report from several members of the Hoonah Commission on the work they are doing ascertaining the situation with the Hoonah Church. They found the church did not have enough active elders to form a session and are working to obtain additional elders for the church. They are also working on reestablishing the relationship the church has with the Native Alaskan population of Hoonah. With regards to the physical structure of the church, they found the roof in extreme need of repair and have arranged for this to be done.

The Rev. Dr. Henry Fawcett will be leading a communion service in Hoonah on World Communion Sunday.

The former Missouri Synod Lutheran Vicar who had served in the community and had been living in the Presbyterian manse has vacated the manse.

### **PRESBYTERY MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS AND BY-LAWS**

The Stated Clerk presented several changes he had drafted to the Presbytery By Laws and Manual of Administrative Operations to deal with the revisions made by the Presbytery at the Spring 2009 meeting and the effective discontinuance of the office of the General Presbyter. The Council VOTED to recommend these revisions to the Presbytery.

Per a recommendation from the Finance Committee, the Council VOTED to recommend the replacement of that section of the Manual of Administrative Operations with new text developed by the Finance Committee.

Per a recommendation from the Personnel Committee the Council VOTED to recommend that the Presbytery remove the job description for the General Presbyter from the Manual, add a job description for the Office Manager, and add a section giving the duties of Committee and Task Force Coordinators.

*The full text of these revisions will be included in the minutes of the Fall 2009 Presbytery Meeting.*

### **SITKA MANSE SALE**

Acting on behalf of the Presbytery and per a request from the Sitka Session, the Council VOTED to permit the congregation of the Sitka church to seek to sell the church manse.

**GENERAL COUNCIL MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 2, 2009**

**FALL 2009 PRESBYTERY MEETING**

The Council reviewed the items to be discussed at the Fall 2009 Presbytery meeting and the schedules of the transportation services serving Ketchikan and voted to set the starting time for the meeting at 7:00 PM Friday, October 9. Arrangements for workshops to be held before and after the meeting will be developed.

**OTHER REPORTS**

Written reports were received from the Committee on Ministry, the Presbytery Trustees, and the Synod Commissioner Elder Paul Wescott.

**SYNOD LOAN REVIEW**

Elder Warren reported that as of last report, all of the loans made by the Synod to churches within the Presbytery are current. No action by the Council was required at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Council adjourned with prayer led by the Rev. Ron Horn at 1:25 PM.

Guy Warren  
Stated Clerk