

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL (GAMC) – Winter 2010

The General Assembly Mission Council met during the week of February 22nd in Louisville, KY. The first portion was spent meeting with members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (OGA). There were presentations and dialogue covering a number of topics which explored the future of the church and its leadership needs. There were three primary points that were considered: 1) Phyllis Tickle's book, *The Great Emergence*, A study of Commissioned Lay Pastors and The Report of the Joint Committee on Leadership Needs.

During the GAMC plenary and then in the various committees, strategic directions for the Council and its various ministries were discussed. These directions, along with the "Guiding Principles for Planning Decisions" paper that was approved by the GAMC, will provide guidance for and the context of the 2011-2012 budget plan that will be brought to the May GAMC meeting for action.

Some of the ideas discussed for possible directions for GAMC ministries are:

- The GAMC role is to connect, equip, and inspire – shifting to be broker, connector and facilitator – a partner with expertise to bring and best practices to share; and cultivating broad participation in Presbyterian mission
- We engage in communities of mission practice – a short-hand expression, "3-dimensional mission engagement," means that GAMC will engage in multi-party partnerships focused on Christ's mission
- We will focus on the health of congregations and other communities of faith – fulfilling our unique role with congregations and middle governing bodies
- We will focus on leadership development – including ordained and other leaders
- We will embrace a global perspective – recognizing that national and international are interconnected

The 2010 GA Mission Budget was revised to \$93.8M (a reduction of \$7.3M); this included an insurance savings of \$800,000 and DID NOT INVOLVE ANY STAFF REDUCTION! This year, there will be four women who will receive the Women of Faith Awards rather than the usual three. The theme is "Women with a Peaceful Heart: Guiding Paths to Peace." The women are Margaret E. Howland (Yonkers, NY), Elizabeth Knott (Indianola, Iowa), Elona Street-Steward (Eagan, MN), and Joyce Uyeda, (Sacramento, CA). Two videos were viewed on Growing Christ's Church Deep and Wide: "Evangelism is Sharing God's Heart" and "The Holy Spirit Wants Us to Grow in Diversity."

Several matters were approved and recommended to the 219th General Assembly (2010):

- A covenant between Presbyterian Women and GAMC
- The Mission Responsibility through Investment (MRTI) response to GA referral regarding corporate engagement on issues of non-peaceful pursuits in Israel/Palestine
- A covenant between GA and Historically Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Institutions
- A paper for study and reflection, "Christians and Jews: People of God"

- A paper for study and reflection “Toward an Understanding of Christian-Muslim Relations”
- A renewal of Growing Christ’s Church Deep and Wide for 2011-2012
- The GAMC Executive Committee, meeting with COGA voted to recommend a per capita budget

Additionally, GAMC approved proxy voting recommendations of MRTI and request the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation and Board of Pensions to vote accordingly and added the Truth Commission on Conscience in War to the affiliates list.

I invite each of you the access the “Report of the Joint Committee on Leadership Needs” and use it for discussion with your governing sessions. It is available on the Office of Vocation PCUSA website. It invites the church to dream again, to have hope, to be in conversation about the questions that the report raises, and partner to empower leaders for the mission of God in the world.

Linda Valentine was re-elected to a second four-year term as GAMC Executive Director. Mike Kruse, current vice-chair of the Council, was elected chair and Carolyn McLarnan was chosen as vice-chair. Two at-large member of the Council were elected for representation and each of the mission committees elected their chair and vice-chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lynn Walters