

REPORT FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER
Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy
Craig N. Palmer (August 27, 2011)

My visits with pastors and tours of church facilities continue having completed visits with pastors at over half of our 90 congregations. My plan is to visit every church before Thanksgiving Day in order to have a clearer sense of the unique ministry and mission engaged in by our congregations as well as gaining a better understanding of the challenges they face. Judy Picket is coordinating the scheduling of these visits. Because of the time spent during the week on these visits and the primary goals guiding my time with you, I am not accepting invitations to preach on Sundays.

The three primary goals guiding my time with you are:

- A.) Provide leadership for the Design Team, in consultation with the co-moderators, to achieve presbytery ownership of the purpose/mission and priorities and adoption of the structure, staff design and budget in support of the purpose and priorities.
- B.) Provide ongoing staff support for Mission Council and the Council Committees in support of the purpose/mission of the presbytery.
- C.) Develop a cohesive and effective staff team in support of the mission/purpose of the presbytery.

The report of the Design Team and guide for small group discussions in the afternoon represent the work of the Team thus far and your opportunity to engage in the process moving us toward the adoption of priorities for our work as a presbytery. The sixteen areas of emphasis are drawn from the summary document of "What We Have Heard." The Design Team will consider the work of each of the small groups as we begin to narrow our focus to the priorities guiding the work of this presbytery in the near future. Prior to the November Presbytery meeting, the Design Team and Council will work together in this process. The work they are able to complete prior to the November meeting will be presented to the Presbytery.

The changes in the responsibilities of Mission Council and the Executive Committee are intended to focus the work of both groups and clarify their leadership roles on behalf of the Presbytery. They will be taking an active role in moving the Presbytery forward as we clarify our priorities and set a budget for 2012. In addition, the leadership of the Presbytery is in conversation with the leadership of various congregations as we work through the implications in the changes in the Book of Order related to ordination and the new Form of Government. Such conversations could easily increase given the meeting August 25-26 of nearly 2,000 Presbyterians in Minneapolis organized by The Fellowship of Presbyterians in response to the passage of amendment 10A and the passage of the new Form of Government and the meeting of the Fellowship August 26-27.

Our Presbytery Staff Team meets each Wednesday morning at 10:00am for an hour or so of reflection on scripture, prayer and checking in with one another about our lives. Once a month we have an extended meeting that includes lunch to discuss in more depth issues facing us as staff and/or the presbytery. Earlier this month we moved all of our staff and the Resource Center to the second floor and the Partners for Just Trade to the first floor to make better use of our space and to enhance the work of our staff team. Finally, we will be at the Mercy Center during the days of September 14-15 for a retreat led by a senior consultant of the Patrick Lencioni Table Group. Our time will focus on team building using content from two of Lencioni's books: *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* and *The Four Obsessions of an Extraordinary Executive*.