



Mission Presbytery

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Mission Presbytery serves God as a unique expression of the body of Christ in South Texas. As faithful stewards of God's gifts, we proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ by

- Fulfilling the mandates of the Book of Order
- Encouraging and supporting congregations in mission and ministry
- Doing together what we cannot do alone.

To: Ministers, Clerks of Session, Interested and Concerned Members of Mission Presbytery

From: Rob Mueller, Chair of General Council
Hilary Shuford, Executive Presbyter
Miles White, Stated Clerk

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Since the passage of Amendment 10 A and our meeting which adjourned June 18, Mission Presbytery has experienced a wide range of responses to the change ranging from joy to despair, from crisis of conscience to a sense of justice, from resignation to action. In these varied reactions, it is obvious to most that there are deep disagreements among us. This is not new: these differences have existed for years, yet we have, together, remained the church by practicing "mutual forbearance". We continue to pray for such forbearance at this pivotal time.

We are also aware of the pain, distrust, confusion and angst among us as we seek to engage with one another in conversation, dialogue and consultation. As was announced at our meeting in Kerrville, your General Council – ministers and elders elected by the Presbytery – is hard at work to bring brothers and sisters to the table for these conversations. We write to inform you of the progress being made.

A specially called meeting of the General Council will take place on July 30 with representatives of Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church to listen as they present their concerns and early proposals. The Trustees of Mission Presbytery will also be represented at this meeting.

Additionally, the expanded General Council representing the various units of Mission Presbytery is scheduling a meeting on August 20 for a wider dialogue with presbyters and representatives from churches seeking ways to relieve their issues of conscience with the Book of Order G- 2.0104 a & b .

Both of these meetings will happen prior to the Presbyterian Fellowship Gathering in Minneapolis at the end of August. Hopefully our discussions here will be carried forward as this larger group struggles with what it means to be Presbyterian. Following the Minneapolis meeting, the General Council is prepared, if helpful, to call a special meeting of Mission Presbytery to exchange information in the weeks following the gathering, seeking dialogue and Christian fellowship within our body as we seek to know God's will for our way forward. Further, your Pastoral Care Division is arranging gatherings of pastors for sharing and discussion.

We, the undersigned, urge you to share this information with all concerned members of your congregation. Most importantly, we ask you to be in constant prayer for our congregations, members and leaders as we seek to discover God's plan, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the wholeness that comes from knowing Jesus Christ.

Finally, as we move forward, we remind each session that they may, by submitting an overture, seek any necessary change to our Constitution or remedy by the 220th General Assembly. The deadline for submissions to the Stated Clerk is **September 15, 2011**. This date allows time for consideration and recommendation by the General Council prior to the October stated meeting of Mission Presbytery.

Rob

Elder Hilary Shuford
Executive Presbyter

Hilary

Rev. Dr. Miles H. White
Stated Clerk

Miles

Elder Ruben P. Armendariz
Church Development Consultant

Elder Lita Simpson
Youth Ministries

Rev. Kathy Anderson
Executive Director - John Knox Ranch