The 162nd meeting of the Shenandoah Presbytery was hosted by the Moorefield Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, May 13, 2014. Moderator Rev. Betty Dax opened the meeting with prayer. Our wonderful opening worship service was led by Rev. Katherine Jackson. Jon “David” Shearer and Jonathan Ytterock gave the sermons as part of their requirements by the Committee on the Preparation of Ministry. Rev. Barb Johnson and commissioned ruling elder Linda Reece conducted the Sacrament of Communion. During the distribution of elements by intinction, the youth of Moorefield Presbyterian Church provided wonderful piano and vocal special music. This year’s Moorefield Church confirmation class was in attendance.

In attendance at the meeting were 148 voting members of Presbytery: 80 ruling elders, 68 teaching elders, and 46 guests for a total of 194 attending the meeting.

After a quorum was determined and the welcome of guests and first time commissioners by Moderator Betty Dax, the following as assistant clerks:

Tom Forbes, commissioned ruling elder of Piedmont Church
Ken Johnson, ruling elder of Bloomery Church
Beverly Keadle, ruling elder of Romney Church

Transitional Presbyter Roy Martin reported that the Transition Team is working and that committees are preparing updates to the Manual. Then he shared his meetings with individuals from three administrative commissions (ACs) who have used the presbytery’s church dismissal guidelines. The purpose of these meetings was to review the guidelines for possible revision. Upon doing research on dismissal guidelines, Roy found a recent General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) case that indicated that some of our present guidelines were not in complete compliance. Our current policy allows congregational voting on deciding to leave the Presbyterian denomination. The PJC decision clearly rules against congregational voting formulas because the presbytery by the trust clause owns the church property. A presbytery has to determine property values and having a congregation vote on dismissal by a certain percentage replaces a presbytery’s fiduciary responsibility and is not permitted by the Book of Order. Members of the ACs who have used the current guideline are making revision to be presented to COM and then PLT.

H. Richard (Dick) Travis, Temporary Stated Clerk publically thanked the Rev. David Witt for his generous help and patience with all of Dick’s questions during this transition period. He also recognized the General Assembly Commissioners who were present and thanked them for their conscientious efforts in preparing for the General Assembly Meeting in Detroit, Michigan June 14-21, 2014.

The docket notes that we need hosts for the February 14, 2015 presbytery meeting which in our normal rotation would come from the Highland-Augusta Mission Community and for the May 12, 2015 meeting which would come from the Eastern Panhandle Mission Community. Dick Travis, Temporary Stated Clerk, asked conveners of both of these mission committees to put these requests on the agendas of their next meeting.

Temporary Stated Clerk Dick Travis reintroduced the issue concerning our Dismissal Guidelines that Transitional Presbyter Roy Martin had discussed and then referred to the Supplemental Stated Clerk’s report that stated:

percentages such as the current VI. in our guidelines. Revised Guidelines are currently being developed and will be presented possibly at the August presbytery meeting. Any recommended changes will go through COM and PLT before presentation at a presbytery meeting.

Dick Travis moved the motion: “Since the Dismissal Guidelines for Shenandoah Presbytery, http://shenpres.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Dismissal-GuidelinesApr2012rev1.pdf, are not in compliance due to a recent General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) case, Tom v. Pby of San Francisco (GAPJC Remedial Case 221-03), future administrative commissions dealing with church dismissal will have the flexibility to follow those portions of the dismissal guidelines not inconsistent with the GAPJC decision until new guidelines are approved by the presbytery”. This motion was seconded, discussed and passed.

Doug Sensabaugh, Presbytery Staff, described the internet upgrades at the presbytery and how there will now be the opportunity to have direct online communications with locations having high speed internet.

We were once again entertained by the youth of Moorefield Presbyterian as they responded and made announcements from a remote location during the welcoming comments of Rev. Katherine Jackson.

Rev. Beth McCrary, chair of the Committee on Ministry, gave the Committee’s report and Presbytery approved the recommendation “that Shenandoah Presbytery recommends to its churches that they assume the cost for the increase in the member plus dependent Board of Pensions dues (from 23% to 24.5% of the effective salary) for 2015.”

Then Rev. Jonathan Bunker led an engaging, informative and spiritually uplifting examination of candidates and honorably retired ministers who are joining Shenandoah Presbytery.

The following candidates had their examinations sustained and membership in Shenandoah Presbytery granted:

Jon “David” Shearer, candidate of New Castle Presbytery. His terms of call beginning March 23, 2014 were approved. A commission was approved to ordain and install David as pastor of Bethel Church on Sunday, May 25, 2014 at 3:00 p.m.

Jonathan A. Ytterock, candidate of Lake Huron Presbytery. His terms of call were approved beginning May 14, 2014. A commission was approved to ordain and install Jonathan as pastor of Mt. Horeb Church on Sunday, June 15, 2014 at 3:00 p.m.

The following honorably retired ministers were examined and granted transfer to membership in Shenandoah Presbytery:

Rev. James Atwood transferring from Presbytery of National Capital.

Rev. Roxana Atwood transferring from Presbytery of National Capital.

Rev. Charles ‘Steve” Cathcart transferring from Presbytery of Charlotte.

Rev. Martin Stokes, Chair of Presbytery Leadership Team, gave the report of Greg Trobaugh, chair of Budget and Finance. Most of the churches (93%) have returned the 2014 benevolence commitments, and he reminded chairs of presbytery committees to get their budget requests in soon.

Rev. Melissa Harmon, Chair of Office and Personnel, reported on the new Monday through Thursday presbytery office hours, maintenance on the presbytery office building and that the search for a stated clerk has resumed as Dick Travis will complete his temporary stated clerk position on September 30,
Rev. Amy Fetterman of New Worshipping Communities showed a video on 1001 Worshipping Communities, [http://www.onethousandone.org/](http://www.onethousandone.org/). This site has stories of new worshiping communities across our denomination.

Lynette Johnson shared the work of the Society of St. Andrew, [http://www.endhunger.org/](http://www.endhunger.org/), which was formed in 1979. It is a gleaning organization, working with farmers, volunteers and feeding agencies to help feed the hungry. Often the gleaned food is provided to people within 24 hours.

All attendees enjoyed a wonderful lunch prepared by the Moorefield Presbyterian Church and received great care and hospitality by the staff, members and youth.

The Nomination Committee’s report was presented by Rev. Fred Holbrook in place of Rev. Christina Tutterow. The following were elected by the presbytery: Beth McCrary, Chair of Committee on Ministry; Carol Miller class of 2014 to replace Glenn Coleman on Communications; David Witt class of 2016 to replace Carl Moore; Dick Travis as chair of Professional Development; and alternate GA commissioners Don Roll and Hannah Bush.

After lunch, Rev. Phil Sieck led us in intercessory prayer.

Ann Tubbs described some of the 50th birthday celebration of Camp Paddy Run, the arrangements for the August 23, 2014 presbytery meeting, and other offerings at the camp this summer. Dean Greenwood, who was a camper for many years and is now a counselor, thought of the theme: “Come to the meeting, stay for the fun”. Anyone is welcome to come to Camp Paddy Run on August 23 and enjoy camp activities as the meeting is going on or after the meeting.

The Small Church Task Force started their report by passing out small candy bars to the congregation because we are a “fun size” congregation. Rev. Phil Sommer reviewed the many activities of Piedmont Presbyterian Church as an example of a fun size church. In the 1960s, Piermont had 450 members and now with the loss of population associated with a mine and paper mill closing, the membership is 48. However, they have multiple mission activities that use 18% of their annual budget. Their first priority in giving each year is to their presbytery allocation. They have their worship service on their website, it averages 80 hits per week, and there are families in North Carolina that follow the worship on the web each week.

The Committee on Ministry celebrated the ministry of Rev. Ann Reed Held who will be Honorably Retired on May 31, 2014. Fred Holbrook taught the congregation a version of the song Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious from the movie Mary Poppins inserting Ann’s name in the refrain. Mary Lou McMillin prepared and read a poem that took us through the life cycle of Ann’s life and service, and this was interspersed with Fred’s leading us in the modified version of Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious. This wonderful celebration of Ann’s life of service to Christ concluded with Ann’s sharing her journey of becoming a Presbyterian minister at a time in history when few women had this position. Her family and congregation members have given her the support to follow God’s leading to be a minister.

The Transformation Sub-committee is led by Rev. Malcolm Brownlee, and ruling elder Karen Thatcher highlighted some of the many activities of the Tuscarora Church which was organized in 1740 and currently has around 150 members. The church prides itself on being friendly and puts visitors on the church email list after a few visits. The children have opportunities to participate in the life of the church in mission programs and children’s church. The Presbyterian women make and deliver prayer shawls for adults and babies. There is a very strong music program that has a much anticipated Christmas program each year. Malcolm plans to share what other churches are doing at future presbytery meetings.
Rev. John Cushwa attended the meeting of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic on March 17-18, 2014 in Richmond, VA. The Rev. Warren Lesane, Jr. was installed as the executive and stated clerk at this meeting, and they have a new website, http://dev.synatlantic.org/. John’s complete report will appear in the minutes.

Rev. Carl Howard reported for Rev. Randy Tremba on Shepherdstown Church’s program, Caring Cupboard, that received a grant from the Moffett Fund.

The Communication Committee has been exploring technological means for having off-site interactive meetings. Rev. Patrick Lanaghan indicated that FUZE is the video conferencing system of their choice, and that it has HD capability anywhere high speed internet is available. The committee has also been performing web site trainings in which you leave the training with an active web site. Email Rev. Patrick Lanaghan to see how to set up interactive conferencing or a website.

Being that there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m. with prayer by Moderator Rev. Betty Dax.

Summary prepared by H. Richard Travis
Temporary Stated Clerk