

Press Release

Report on the Covenant Presbyterian Church's Third Presbytery Meeting

Spirit of Brotherhood and Christian Charity Noticed by Visitors

Peoria, IL, May 29, 2007: Elders of the Covenant Presbyterian Church (www.covenant-presbyterian.org) convened together earlier this month in Central California to participate in the denomination's third national presbytery meeting. The focus of the gathering was the examination of elder candidates, the reception of a new candidate congregation, and the discussion of home and foreign missions projects. Visitors to the meeting commented on the spirit of Christian charity and unity present during the meetings.

William Heyne and Carl Schroeder from the Central Valley Evangelical Church in Ceres, CA were examined for the office of elder. This examination focused on their Christian character, doctrinal knowledge, ability to teach, and competency to shepherd. Both men passed their examinations and were ordained in a special service May 18th, 2007. Commenting on the process, Bill Heyne noted the words of encouragement he received from other elders. "I was exhorted to remember that God has a special plan for covenant households, and that our children are part of God's covenant community. We must view families the way God views families." Elder Heyne continued, "By God's grace our denomination will continue to grow and spread the gospel message. I believe it is our responsibility to champion the beautiful doctrines of the reformation and the lost emphasis on the covenant home to the broader evangelical church." Focusing on the unique distinctives held by in the Covenant Presbyterian Church denomination, Carl Schroeder mentioned, "Without doubt, I believe that the biggest differentiator between the CPC and other denominations is the application of the role of the covenant family in God's plan of redemption. Our children are embracing the faith – challenging the trends seen in other denominations where children are fleeing the church."

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The denomination also received Reformed Family Fellowship in Birmingham, AL as a candidate church. Elder candidate Tom Keen noted why his church selected the Covenant Presbyterian denomination, "We decided to join the CPC because its church constitution combines the confessional stability of the past with an understanding of the unique challenges facing the church in the present – namely an attack on Sola Scriptura and the government of the family."

The denomination also discussed new mission programs. Individual churches were encouraged to support specific mission works in Canada and the Philippines. The denomination also formally recognized a new home mission work, Heritage Presbyterian Church in Centerville, TN. Elder Marion Lovett, who relocated to the area earlier in the year, is pastoring this new work. Commenting on this work and the growth of the denomination, Elder Lovett said, "Mission works can be very challenging, but we are already making an impact in this new community for Christ. Also, the love and prayers of the denomination are a great encouragement. For me, it is very exciting to see the pastoral spirit that was so important to the founding elders in forming the denomination, and I am pleased to observe its maintenance and cultivation."

The presbytery welcomed visitors from potential churches in Idaho and Illinois. Pastor Roger Erber of Christ's Church in Capron, IL said of the meeting, "I have attended a number of presbytery meetings of different denominations, but this meeting was very unique. The unity and focus of this group encouraged me. While others seem focused on ecclesiastical courts and doctrinal debates, the men of the Covenant Presbyterian denomination were obviously concerned about building lasting friendships and healthy congregations."

Elder Scott Price from Providence Church in Peoria, IL was elected the new moderator of the denomination. Speaking of his vision of the denomination, Elder Price said, "As the CPC establishes its presence in the constellation of other denominations of Christ's Church around the world, we desire to do so with a catholic spirit of goodwill, to live at peace and do good unto all men, especially those of the household of faith. As a college of presbyters, we seek to take heed to ourselves by giving attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; to meditate in these things and give ourselves wholly to them that our profiting may appear to all. Our distinctives are not intended to be points of contention with other Christians but rather that our congregations, individually and collectively, might be shining lights in their own communities and to the world."

Elder Garry Mayes of Wise County Southern Presbyterian Church in Aurora, TX as elected the new stated clerk. Also, Providence Church in Peoria, IL was selected as the host church for the May 2008 Presbytery meeting.

For information on joining the Covenant Presbyterian Church, contact Elder James McDonald, chairman of the home missions committee, at pastormcdonald@providencepeoria.org. For general correspondence to the denomination, contact Elder Garry Mayes, stated clerk, at mayer@coe.unt.edu.