

INFORMATION REGARDING THE 219th GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2010 of the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

The following information about the General Assembly of our Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination to be held in Minneapolis from July 3-10, 2010 has been excerpted from the witness of Bill Marsh, an Elder member of our congregation and a Lehigh Presbytery delegate to the General Assembly, at our worship services on June 19 and 20.

“The General Assembly is the highest governing body of our denomination, the Presbyterian Church USA. The delegates who will be considering and voting on changes and issues coming before the Assembly are pastors and elders elected by each of the 173 local Presbyteries throughout the United States. Lehigh Presbytery is our local presbytery with 35 churches and about 10,000 Presbyterian members. Lehigh Presbytery is sending 4 voting delegates to this Assembly, two pastors and two elders. I am one of the elder delegates and Elder Dave Boltz of our church is the alternate for our elder delegates.

This Assembly will be considering and voting on many important and sometimes contentious issues. Major issues that will be considered at this Assembly include the following:

First, a sweeping revision to our denomination’s form of government and how we act and relate as a denomination, presbyteries and churches will be considered.

Second, the Assembly will consider the continuing issue of our denomination’s ordination standards for our pastors, elders and deacons. The debate continues on removing the present fidelity or chastity standards. A related issue is the denomination’s position on the institution of Christian marriage and civil unions for same sex couples and their celebration in the church.

Third, new translations or additional historic confessions that shape our reformed theology and which form part of our denomination’s foundation will be considered.

Fourth, the Assembly will also deal with a number of proposals connected with international and peacemaking issues, including Israel, Palestine, and relations between Christians, Jews and Muslims. The war in Afghanistan and our continued presence and responsibilities in Iraq will also be considered.

Most major actions of the Assembly will require approval by a majority of the presbyteries before they become effective.

After General Assembly, there will be opportunities to share our experiences and the actions of the Assembly. We will have information in the Heartbeat and our website linking you to additional information about this Assembly.

Please pray for us as delegates from our Lehigh Presbytery and for all the people attending this General Assembly – that we may faithfully follow God’s leading and Word and that we may do that with the love and grace that Jesus commanded and exemplified. We need your prayers.” Bill Marsh.

These are online links to additional information about the issues to be considered by the General Assembly and its daily activities. These are provided as sources of information, and do not necessarily reflect the positions or views of our church's staff or leadership.

<http://www.pcusa.org/ga219/> Link to the official Presbyterian Church (USA) website with information on the 2010 General Assembly. For detailed information, go to the PC-BIZ links, the primary resource of our delegates. This site will also carry daily news from the General Assembly.

<http://www.lehighpresbytery.org/> Link to our local Presbytery website and a daily General Assembly blog by our Presbytery Teaching Presbyter.

<http://www.thepresbyterianleader.com/leaderreader/060910.html> Link to Presbyterian Leader (a resource for pastors and leaders) article summarizing the major issues before the General Assembly.

Many other resources, often with particular viewpoints, can be found by searching online for **Presbyterian GA219** and **Presbyterian 2010 General Assembly**. Many of these resources are presented by organizations or individuals having very pronounced viewpoints, from very conservative to very liberal.