

Western New York PPG

April 25, 2009

- PRESENT:** Anne Waasdorp (Geneva), Dick Petersen (WNY), Donna Call (GV), David Kilgore (Geneva), Stuart Buisch (WNY), Graham Wightman (Geneva), David Norton (GV, Moderator), Jim Renfrew (GV, Secretary)
- OPENING:** The meeting began with prayer at 2:09 PM at the First Presbyterian Church of LeRoy. On motion, the docket was approved.
- MINUTES:** The October 17-18 minutes were approved, on motion
- CRITERIA:** Dave Norton suggested a review of PPG grant criteria. Ann Waasdorp reported that the General Assembly has placed on indefinite hold matching funds that were expected for the Synod's Faithful Servant Initiative - could the money that Synod committed be used for campus ministry and other things outside of existing PPG priorities? There may be more pressure on PPGs to be using dollars for transformation and New Church Development. Dave noted that the PPG block grant has been cut by \$6,700 in 2009. It was agreed that the PPG cannot redesign priorities until an evaluation of the block grants that have given to the three presbyteries has been completed. Another question was raised: can the PPG make grants to single congregations? At the end of the discussion it was agreed, on motion, to retain the existing criteria until the block grant evaluation process is completed.
- PEACE:** Peacemaking funds are not governed by the criteria mentioned above, At one of our earlier meeting Mary-Diana Pouli had agreed to develop criteria and a process for granting peacemaking funds. The PPG is not certain about the status of that effort.
- BUDGET** Funds currently available to the PPG include the following amounts:

Block Grant	\$28,169.12
Ministry Support	\$41,500.00
Peacemaking	\$7,047

Pending expenditures:

Ecclesiastical Integrity Fund	\$6,500
Early Ministry Institute	\$1,000

A motion was offered to approve the EMI request, but then withdrawn. A motion was then approved that the PPG needs to see a grant form from EMI before that expenditure can be authorized. Upon receipt of the grant form the PPG could review and approve it by e-mail. It was noted that the PPG is willing to commit \$6,500 to the EIF once the PPG's concerns from October are addressed by Synod. The PPG has not received any communication in this regard, so, for the moment, the expenditure has not been authorized by the PPG.

GRANTS:

Chinese Koinonia Administrative Commission (\$10,000) for 2010. FPC Corning's Swenson Endowment is not able fulfill a financial commitment to Chinese Koinonia Church Planting Project. The Fellowship is located in the FPC of Corning, and that congregation is directly involved with the project, and as many as five other congregations have expressed a desire to become involved, as well. There are approximately 50 adults and 15 children involved in the Fellowship, many of them "professional" families. . The grant request to the PPG was approved by Presbytery Council. The Presbytery is very involved. A Chinese pastor has been installed by the Presbytery as a mission worker in cooperation with the Administrative Commission and he is now leading weekly services. There was considerable discussion about the future of the Fellowship, e.g., whether it can become self-supporting and whether it is expected to become a Presbyterian congregation. According to Presbytery members of the PPG, the participants in the Fellowship have already raised significant sums. They also emphasized that work with a fellowship group does not lend itself to easy

predictions of the future, so the emphasis is on birthing baby Christians, and not trying to put them in a Presbyterian "box". Granted funds would be sent to the Presbytery of Geneva to support the work of the Administrative Commission that is guiding the Fellowship. **On motion, it was agreed to grant \$10,000 for 2010 to the project, to be sent at the end of 2009.**

Seekers Church Administrative Commission (\$7,500 in 2009 and \$7,500 in 2010). The Seekers Church (their own name for themselves, not the name of a larger network) began at the First Presbyterian Church of Attica through the efforts of the Rev. Bill Hockey. Meanwhile, the traditional Attica congregation, also served by Rev. Hockey, has declined, and Hockey's work there will be concluding at the end of June. He will continue with the Seeker's Church. The Presbytery has appointed an Administrative Commission to conclude the ministry of the Attica Church, but the congregation is apparently balking at that prospect. A second Administrative Commission has also been appointed to strengthen the Seekers Church as a separate endeavor of the Presbytery, and it is for the work of the Seekers Church that the grant is requested. The Presbytery Council has approved the grant request. **On motion, it was agreed to give \$7,500 in 2009 and \$7,500 in 2010.** There was a considerable discussion about the nature of this kind of New Church Development, since it does not follow a traditional model of a steepled church in the center of a single community. Instead, Seekers Church draws from a wider area than a single community, and follows a form of "Celtic Spirituality" that makes a strong appeal to people not easily drawn into the life of a traditional congregation.

Interfaith Campus Ministry at Corning Community College (\$2,000 Peacemaking Grant). FPC Corning's Swenson Fund is not able to maintain an existing financial commitment for 2010. The project involves students in a

new way of looking at differences and diversity. The request was approved, on motion. The grant request comes with the Presbytery's endorsement. **On motion, it was agreed to grant \$2,000 in 2009 from the Peacemaking budget.**

REVIEW:

The results of the \$20,000 grants to the three presbyteries need to be reviewed. This review was included in the original proposal. The purpose is to identify common themes and approaches. Through Ministry Support grant money the PPG would contract with a coach or consultant to review the grants with presbytery staff and selected key people from each presbytery for a day of evaluation. Ann suggested the Rev. Judy Hay, from Rochester, who has been deeply involved in church transformation at the General Assembly level of the PCUSA. **On motion, it was agreed to authorize up to \$2,000 for this consultation.** Ann will contact Judy on the PPG's behalf, to discuss the design of the evaluation, scheduling, and fees.

OUTREACH:

The question was raised as to how the PPG might be more pro-active with the funds it has to expend. Dave Norton agreed to develop for the three presbyteries a brief outline of the funds available, criteria for grants, and the relevant deadlines. David Kilgore reminded the PPG of his wish to see more thought around opportunities for migrant ministry in the PPG area.

NEXT MEET:

Monday, July 20, 1:00 - 3:00 PM at the First Presbyterian Church of LeRoy. Donna will make the arrangements, and she was thanked for her preparations for today's meeting.