

**MINUTES OF
THE THIRD ANNUAL
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S MINISTRY
CONVENTION**

IRVING, TEXAS

JUNE 21-24, 2004

Monday, June 21, 2004

Regional Council Breakfast and Meeting

Delegates from each region met at 8:00 a.m. for breakfast and to choose the recipients of the monies for the special projects and offering for 2005-2006. Patricia Smith, Convention President-elect, welcomed the delegates and agency representatives and then offered prayer.

Before blessing the meal, Tana Sue Lawson, Convention Past President, introduced the other members of the Convention Executive Officers, President Carol Medley, President-elect Patricia Smith, Secretary Alison Coleman and Secretary-elect JoAnn Shugert. The theme scriptures were read by Convention President, Carol Medley

After enjoying breakfast, Patricia Smith introduced Bob Watkins, Director of Global Ministries, who spoke on "Learning the Art of Shepherding" using scripture from John 21 where Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love me"? Everyone in our particular Women's Ministry group and church needs personal attention. He pointed out that in John 10, a good shepherd knows each sheep by name and leads that sheep with love and temperance. We, as shepherds, need to meet the needs of others. Dr. Watkins concluded his talk with a reference to Ezekiel 34:16 - a good shepherd searches for the lost, brings back the strays, binds up the injured and restores the weak.

Alison Coleman, Convention Secretary, made announcements. Carol then introduced the following agency representatives who explained their proposed project:

Bob Prosser, Bethel College – Lobby Furniture for Prosser Hall
Claudette Pickle and Frank Ward, Board of Christian Education– Howell G. and Martha Jo Mims CPYC Endowment Fund
Mike Sharpe and George Estes, Board of Missions - a Youth Evangelism Conference
Elinor Brown, Board of Stewardship – Scholarship for Women Clergy to attend the Conference on Christian Philanthropy.
Judy Keith, Children's Home – 12-Passenger Van
Memphis Theological Seminary (representative unable to attend)– Window Treatment

After a short break the Regional Council, chaired by Marcine Cook and co-chaired by Libby Aden, met to decide which projects to be recommended to Convention delegates.

General Assembly Opening

General Assembly opened at 2:00 p.m. The Reverend E.G. Sims was elected Moderator and Reverend Linda Glenn was elected Vice Moderator. Convention President Carol Medley participated as a liturgist in the opening worship service.

Moderator's Reception

A reception honoring the Moderator, Reverend E.G. Sims; Vice Moderator, Reverend Linda Glenn; Retiring Moderator, Reverend Charles McCaskey; Convention President, Carol Medley; and Convention President-elect, Patricia Smith was held at St. Timothy's Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Bedford, Texas.

Tuesday, June 22, 2004

Opening of Convention

The Convention opened at 8:30 a.m., with a prelude by Courtney Stubblefield from Fort Worth, Texas, Red River Presbytery, pianist for the Convention.

Parade of Banners

Tana Sue Lawson, Convention Past President, was in charge of the parade of banners. The beautiful banners were carried around the room as Tana Sue announced the region, maker of the banner and who presented it.

Welcome

Carol Medley, Convention President, welcomed everyone to Convention and introduced the Executive Committee. She thanked Patricia Long and the Red River Presbytery for all their hard work in making the Convention successful. The bags were made by CAM (Coalition for Appalachian Ministries) with Red River Region providing the favors. Becky Crawford from Missouri Region painted the mural used as a backdrop for the Convention. Carol declared a quorum and the third annual Convention in session. Motion made and carried to accept the program with necessary changes.

Constituting Prayer

The constituting prayer was given by Janey Edwards, Seekers of Joy Region.

Keynote Address

Carol Medley introduced MaryJane Pierce Norton, team leader of Family and Life Span Ministries, the General Board of Discipleship, The United Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee. MaryJane based her address, *From Generation to Generation: Sharing the Faith*, on John 21:15-17. Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me" and told Peter to, "feed my lambs, tend my sheep, feed my sheep." Ms. Pierce Norton shared with Convention participants that the new generation (children and youth) is searching for answers and we must pass on our faith and beliefs from generation to generation. Life circumstances affect how children and people form their views. Participants were given the opportunity to explore the different generations and their characteristics. In conclusion, she challenged all to give particular attention to feeding the young lambs of the Millennial generation (those borne between 1982-1999).

Theme Hymn

Carla Bellis, Missouri South Region, who graciously filled in as song leader, led the theme hymn, *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*. We thank Carla for being a willing shepherd of song.

Greetings

Susan Humphrey of Tulsa, OK, brought greetings from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She is a leader in global education and an advocacy speaker. Their women's ministry group is working to form relationships through cooperation and conversation with other denominations.

Bread for the World

A presentation on Bread for the World was given by Rita Clarke, a representative of the organization. Bread for the World is an organization that feeds the hungry in this country and globally. Their 30th anniversary is this year. They lobby Congress, participate in community outreach, educate the public, and have an annual offering of letters.

Informal Singing

Carla Bellis led the group in singing *His Name is Wonderful*.

Touch the Future

Davis Gray showed the video, *Touch the Future*, a celebration of what is going on in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church now and in the future. Claudette Pickle, Board of Christian Education, shared her feelings about Touch the Future and the discernment process.

Worship Center

Patricia Smith recognized Josh Ogden Davis, one of the youth in the Marshall Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Marshall, Texas, who transported the life-size shepherd figure from the Marshall Church and set it up. She also thanked her family and friends for their assistance with the worship center.

Announcements

Convention President-elect, Patricia Smith, made announcements and recognized Jean Garrett who spoke on behalf of the Children's Home regarding the afternoon 100th birthday celebration at the Cumberland Presbyterian Children's Home. Some changes were made due to rain. Other announcements included a meeting of the youth delegates, availability of Bible studies and other resources, and a reminder about the evaluation forms found in the Convention packet.

Recess

Carol closed with prayer and adjourned until 1:30 p.m.

Informal Singing

Carol Medley called the afternoon session to order at 1:35 p.m. We enjoyed a time of informal singing.

Credentials Report Number 1

Patricia Long, chairperson of the Credentials Committee, reported 122 voting delegates, with a total registered of 139. It was marked "Appendix A" and filed.

Missionary Speaker

Carol Medley introduced Wendy Skinner from the New Hope Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama. Wendy is a nurse in the orphanage, Casa Oracion, in Guatemala. Wendy spoke on *Shepherding God's Flock in Guatemala*, using 1 Peter 5:2-3. The home has grown tremendously since Wendy began working there. They try to make life as normal as possible for the children, many of whom come from a horrible home life. All staff people are volunteers, none are paid. They receive no support from the Guatemalan government. The home has grown to 450 children with 6-20 children in each room in the dorms. The children make \$4.00 per week and their tithes have built five churches in as many years. The on-campus school is called the Colegio Aleluya. Wendy shared that many of the children are brought to the orphanage by the police. Most of the children cannot be adopted because of governmental corruption and parents will not give up rights because they use them for financial exploitation. Wendy is an advocate for the children, representing them when they must go to court to try to keep them from being returned to their parents who only abuse them. In spite of her own life threatening health problems, Wendy also runs a clinic for surrounding villages, provides oversight of the kitchen, and coordinates feeding 500 children/adults three times a day, seven days a week! Wendy asked for prayer as well as monetary support.

Announcement

The praise band, *Watchman* will begin singing at 8:15 a.m. in the morning

Recess

The afternoon session recessed at 2:30 p.m. in order to participate in the 100th birthday celebration at the Children's Home in Denton, Texas.

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Morning Worship

The *Watchman* praise band, of Red River Presbytery, glorified the Lamb with a number of praise and worship songs.

Convention in Session

Carol Medley declared the Convention in session at 8:45 a.m.. Appreciation was expressed for the celebration at the Children's Home. Carol also mentioned the beautiful flowers given to the Convention from the Children's Home in recognition for the support from the Women's Ministry over the years. She recognized Helen

Wynn for searching out and providing jewelry for each Convention and thanked the *Watchman* praise band. She then pointed out information contained in each person's folder which should be shared with local and regional groups.

Prayer

The opening prayer was given by Carla Bellis, Missouri South Region.

Convention Business-Reports

The Regional Council and Nominating Committee gave preliminary information for the delegates' consideration. Actual voting will take place on Thursday morning. Marcine Cook, New Hope Region and co-chair of the Regional Council presented the report. Copies were distributed to all delegates and the report was read, marked "Appendix B", and filed. Joann Alexander, Seekers of Joy Region and chair of the Nominating Committee, presented that committee's report. Nominees were asked to stand. The report was read, marked "Appendix C", and filed. Joann then introduced members of the Nominating Committee.

Bible Study

Carol Medley introduced The Reverend Sharon Melton, pastor of St. Paul Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Austin, Texas. Reverend Melton spoke of celebrating the contributions that women make in God's church and wherever we gather. The participants divided into groups and read text from the Old Testament and New Testament. Reverend Melton noted that the primary duties of a shepherd are to lead, feed and meet the needs of the sheep. When we stop caring for people we relinquish the right to lead. Servant leadership pertains to the task, shepherding has to do with people. We were asked several reflection questions for our own spiritual life and how we care for those God leads us to lead. She then challenged us to let God lead us as we shepherd His flock.

Banners

Carol presented the winning banners:
Southwest Tennessee Region, first place
Cumberland Region, second place
Mountain Valley Region, third place

Worship Music

The *Watchman* praise band provided an interlude of praise and worship songs.

Fellowship of the Least Coin Offering

Susan Horner of First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Longview, Texas, provided a wonderful explanation of the Fellowship of the Least Coin offering. She pointed out how God brings abundance from simplicity. Each coin is given with a prayer by the giver for the recipient. Following her presentation, Ms. Horner offered prayer and an offering was collected.

Membership Presentation

Mary Jo Schnorbus and members of the Marshall Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Marshall, Texas, presented a humorous look at the different memberships that are available to honor women who have given so much of themselves in service to God and the Church.

Heifer Project

RheAnn Fuller spoke on behalf of Heifer Project International. In an effort to alleviate hunger, poor families throughout the world are given an animal to meet their daily survival needs. The family will then give the first offspring from that animal to someone else in need. This allows the family to care for themselves and give back to others. The people are also educated on how to care for the animal and build feeding pens instead of allowing the animal to overgraze the area and cause erosion. There are three Heifer Ranches in the United States that people or groups can go to live like a recipient of a Heifer gift.

Memorial Service

Martha Fletcher, Springfield, Tennessee, honored those whose names had been sent for the memorial service. Sally Allen of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Clarksville, Tennessee, who was unable to attend, provided the powerpoint presentation. More than 100 Cumberland Presbyterian women that passed away

during the past two years were honored for their contributions to the flocks they tended during their lives. Martha used the scriptures Proverbs 31:30, Isaiah 40:31, and Matthew 5:4. A touching litany *We Remember Them* was read before the presentation listing names and pictures of those that passed away.

Recess

Carol declared the Convention in recess until afternoon.

Glorifying God Through Dance

After lunch, Convention participants enjoyed *The Sacred Psalm Dancers*, an ecumenical dance group that gracefully and beautifully glorified the Lamb through dance. They have different dance groups made up of children through adults that present their testimony through movement.

Focus Groups

The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to eight different focus groups (offered at two different times):

Bread for the World - Jan Sanders

Model for Parenting and Family Intervention - Laura Patterson

It's Not a Brady Bunch World Anymore - Amy Pape

Bible Study - Beth Cole

Rotation Model: Is It for Crops or Children? - Ricky Page

Shepherding Through Mentoring - Jenann Leslie

God's Not Through With Me Yet! - Laurie Sharpe

Yikes! I'm a President – What Now? - Pam Phillips-Burk.

Thursday, June 24, 2004

Prelude

Selections were played by pianist Courtney Stubblefield beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Convention in Session

Carol Medley declared the Convention in session. Patricia Smith made announcements regarding resource materials, t-shirts, letters to missionaries, and luncheon tickets. Patricia also read a letter of greeting from Church Women United. Betty Jacob is the new denominational representative to Church Women United. Door Prizes were given away by Terry Wright of Marshall Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Marshall, Missouri, who used different creative ways of distribution.

Prayer

The opening prayer was given by Janet Turner, Cumberland Region.

Devotion

Stacey Calvert, Hope Presbytery in Alabama, gave the devotion based on Psalm 23, also reading Revelations 7:17, Isaiah 43:2, Luke 2:8, John 10:9-16, and Hebrews 13:20. She spoke of her great friend and shepherd, who cares, comforts, guides, forgives and lives in our hearts. She then offered prayer for guidance to be good shepherds. Following the devotion, Johanna Smith of the Marshall Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Marshall, Texas, beautifully sang *Oh, Lamb of God*.

Convention Offering and Blessing

Mike Sharpe, Director of the Board of Missions, thanked the Convention participants for all the past contributions that have supported the life of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He thanked the Women's Ministry not only for money given but especially time and work. The 2004 Convention Offering goes toward a van for Choctaw Presbytery. The van will replace the existing van, provided by CPW almost 20 years ago, to use for denominational and presbyterial functions, CPYC, camps, conferences, local transportation, etc. Rev. Sharpe indicated the difficulty of adequate transportation in Choctaw Presbytery. He then presented a slide show featuring the Choctaw Presbytery and concluded the presentation with prayer. An offering was collected following the prayer.

Opportunities for Giving

Tana Sue Lawson, Past President, explained the following 2004-2005 opportunities for giving: Special Project: *Bring Home Our Records* – The Historical Foundation plans to retrieve records from the partial union of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with the Presbyterian Church USA that are now in possession of the Presbyterian Historical Society either at Montreat, North Carolina or Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Special Project: *The Growing Edge: Continuing Education for Clergy* – which will enable clergy to continue their education through continuing education events held in their presbytery or regions.

Convention Offering: *Cauca Valley Nursing Home* - Many Cumberland Presbyterians in Colombia have limited or no resources to provide care for themselves as they age. This offering will provide the seed money for a suitable building for nursing home care.

Theme Song

The Convention participants joined voices together to sing the Convention theme song, *Glorify the Lamb*, led by Carla Bellis.

Choctaw Region Presentation

Women's Ministry of the Choctaw Region presented Miss Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Nicole Billy, a sophomore at Southeastern State University. Nicole provided sign language while Van Lynch sang *The Lord's Prayer*, accompanied by her husband Jerry Lynch. Nicole gave a history of Choctaw women and the Choctaw Nation. She spoke of how her grandmothers and other women have been role models. Faith Jacob Parra, Choctaw Presbytery, shared how important women have been in the work of Choctaw Presbytery. They have been, and continue to be, strong leaders. Representatives of the presbytery then shared two traditional Choctaw dances.

Business Meeting-Reports

President Carol Medley, beginning with prayer, called the business session to order.

Credentials Report Number 2

Patricia Long, chairperson of the Credential Committee and from Red River Region reported 128 voting delegates and 46 non-delegates and visitors making a total of 174 registered. It was marked "Appendix D" and filed.

Regional Council:

Marcine Cook, co-chairperson, presented the Regional Council report. On motion, the report of the Regional Council was accepted and its recommendations were adopted. (See "Appendix B

Nominating Committee

Joann Alexander, chairperson of the Nominating Committee, presented the Nominating Committee report. (See "Appendix C") The following were nominated to the Executive Committee:

President: Pat Smith, Columbia Region, Tennessee Synod

President-elect: Nancy McClung, Alabama Grace Region, Southeast Synod

Secretary: JoAnn Shugert, Missouri River North Region, Synod of Great Rivers

Secretary-elect: Debbie Hayes, Covenant Region, Midwest Synod

Past President: Carol Medley, Middle Tennessee Region, Tennessee Synod

Nominated for a three year term on the Nominating Committee were Gaye Wood (Past Officer) and Linda Galvan (Member-at-Large). Joann then recognized and thanked the committee for their work. The report was accepted. Carol ask for nominations from the floor. There being none, nominations ceased and the slate of officers was elected by acclamation.

Executive Committee

Patricia Smith gave the Executive Committee Report. It was marked "Appendix E" and filed.

Theme Song

Carla Bellis led Convention participants in singing *Hallelujah, Praise the Lamb*.

President's Message

After being introduced by Patricia Smith, President Carol Medley presented her message, *A Shepherd – The*

Perfect Metaphor. Using the words to the theme hymn, *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*, Carol began her message saying that Christ is our guide throughout the Bible. She used illustrations of the great shepherds of the Bible. We are like sheep and need a shepherd to lead us. We wander from God like straying sheep and Jesus, the Good Shepherd, carries us back to the flock. We must stay close to the Shepherd. Shepherding involves leadership and caring and that is what the Cumberland Presbyterian Women's Ministry does through our commitment to the purpose of the church.

Carol also noted that there has been a decline in numbers women's ministry groups and as leaders in our denomination. She encouraged us to reflect on those who have been shepherds and role models to us during our lives. We need to reach out to others and be remembered for how we cared for our flock. She challenged us to follow the example of the Good Shepherd as we nurture, encourage and challenge those in our care and beyond.

Commissioning and Blessing

Donna Heflin encouraged us to relax and listen to life, recall images of this Convention, and recall images of God as a protector. We listened to a recording of Psalm 23. Using volunteers she led in a call to worship. Donna challenged us to follow the Good Shepherd as we go back to our local and regional organizations.

Adjournment

Carol reminded everyone to fill out the evaluation form before adjourning until the luncheon.

Convention Luncheon

Mistress of Ceremonies for the luncheon, Meredith Bybee from Columbia, Tennessee welcomed everyone to the luncheon and blessed the meal. Darryl Girard, music director at St. Johns Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Red River Presbytery, and a professional musician who also composes, arranges, and produces music accompanied the meal with lovely piano music.

It was announced that the 2004-2005 Beverly St. John Bethel College Scholarship Recipient is April Watson, a sophomore Liberal Arts major at Bethel. April is a candidate for the ministry from Hopewell Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Marion, Kentucky.

Johanna Smith, a sophomore vocal performance and music education major at Stephen F. Austin State University, sang *Lamb of God*. She is a member of the Marshall Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Marshall, Texas.

The luncheon entertainment was provided by Hannah Bryan, a candidate for the ministry in Choctaw Presbytery. She shared a story in both Choctaw and English languages. Hannah spoke of her shepherding experiences using Psalm 23 and the "Chief Shepherd" that leads and restores us.

Tana Sue Lawson presented gifts to Carol Medley and Alison Coleman for their time and work on the Executive Committee.

Past President, Tana Sue Lawson, installed the following Convention officers for 2004-2005: President, Patricia Smith; President-elect, Nancy McClung; Secretary, JoAnn Shugert; Secretary-elect, Debbie Hayes; Past President, Carol Medley.

Carol Medley then presented Patricia Smith with the Convention President pendant and the Marshall Cumberland Presbyterian Church presented her with a bouquet of yellow roses. Patricia thanked the Executive Committee and her family for all their help. She recognized Pam Phillips-Burk for all her hard work and leadership. She challenged all to nurture others where we are planted at every opportunity. After giving the benediction she adjourned the Convention with an invitation to attend the 2005 Convention in Franklin, Tennessee.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Coleman
Secretary