

## Synod Meeting HIGHLIGHTS

By Carol McDonald, Synod Executive

The Synod of Lincoln Trails held its final stated meeting of 2011 on Saturday, October 29, 2011, at the Philo Presbyterian Church in Philo, IL. Gracious hospitality was extended to the Synod by The Rev. Cindy Shepherd, pastor, and the women of the Afternoon Circle who provided a fabulous lunch! Read on...to discover what a great day it was!!

Prior to Saturday's meeting, 65 persons from across the Synod gathered on Friday, October 28, at First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, IL, to hear from author and consultant Gil Rendle. Throughout 2011, the Synod has been reading Rendle's book, Journey in the Wilderness. Rendle's insights about future possibilities and necessities for both congregations and denominations offered all those gathered questions for conversations long into the future.

Immediately after convening the Synod meeting on Saturday, Moderator Christina Berry introduced Rendle – who again spoke with us about current realities and future potential. Energy was high as commissioners and guests raised questions and shared insights.

Another highlight of the day was the presence of very special guest, Ruling Elder Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator of the 219<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Cynthia preached for worship using the text Mark 2: 1-5. Her sermon titled "Breaking Through" challenged us to break through roofs, walls, doors, and anything that needs to be removed in order to let people see Jesus. At the end of the day, the Moderator shared her perceptions of current life in the PC(U.S.A.) and engaged commissioners and visitors in conversation about the whole church.

In addition to learning, experiencing the larger church, and eating wonderful food, the Synod:

- Received a report from the Synod Administrative Commission for Midwest Hanmi Presbytery that progress is being made towards restoration of original jurisdiction to the Presbytery;
- Adopted the budget for 2012 which projects income of \$805,069 and expenses of \$748,277;
- Heard from the Leadership Development Standing Committee about programs involving newly ordained pastors, Commissioned Ruling Elders, and those preparing to be ministers for congregations in transition;
- Affirmed the 2012 meeting dates of January, 27 at First Presbyterian Church, Urbana; July 21 at Philo Presbyterian Church; and October 26-27 with the Saturday portion at Philo Presbyterian Church. The Friday event will be an educational opportunity – topic and location to be determined.
- Approved the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Personnel regarding salaries for 2012, revisions to the Personnel Policies, and revisions to the job descriptions for the Synod Executive and the two Executive Assistants.
- Heard reports from the Synod Executive and the Stated Clerk.
- Thanked the commissioners who completed their terms with this meeting: Ruling Elders, Millie Hankla (SEI), Mary Marg Karty (WWV), Krista Phillips (POV), Nick Shargo (CHI), and Teaching Elder Laura Reason (WaV.)
- Elected The Rev. Cheryl Montgomery (WWV) and the Rev. Jennifer Burns Lewis (CHI) as Moderator and Vice Moderator for 2012, and elected at-large members to the Standing Committee on Personnel, the Board of Directors, and the Permanent Judicial Commission.

SYNOD OF  
LINCOLN  
TRAILS