

Synod Meeting Highlights  
Carol McDonald - Synod Executive

The Synod of Lincoln Trails held its first stated meeting of 2013 on Friday, March 22, at First Presbyterian Church, Urbana, IL. The Synod's Moderator, Teaching Elder Cheryl Montgomery, Presbytery of Whitewater Valley, called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. CDT. Ruling Elder commissioners Brenda Taylor, Presbytery of Chicago, and Bob Song, Presbytery of Midwest Hanmi, were welcomed to their first Synod meeting. It was noted that the Presbyteries of Blackhawk, Chicago, and Great Rivers could claim 100% attendance by their commissioners!.

The Synod spent about 90 minutes concluding its study of The Art of Possibility by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander. After viewing the Zanders' DVD, small group discussion focused on the questions, "which concepts can make a difference in the life of the Synod and what am I willing to do to make this happen?" Total group reflection "mapped" the conversation and a strong common thread of "communication" emerged.

The Synod also:

- Installed Teaching Elder Jennifer Burns Lewis, Presbytery of Chicago, as Moderator for 2013, and Teaching Elder David W. Jones, Presbytery of Blackhawk as Vice Moderator for 2013. Out-going Moderator Cheryl Montgomery was thanked for her service.
- Celebrated the sacrament of the Lord's Supper preceded by a powerful sermon from "Palms to Passion" from out-going Moderator Cheryl Montgomery.
- Adopted revised Standing Rules which eliminate the Nominating Committee and assign its process and work to the Committee on Representation.
- Received reports from the Stated Clerk and Synod Executive.
- Concurred with the Board of Directors in several actions:
  - That the insurance coverage provided by The Insurance Board is adequate for the Synod's needs;
  - That communication be initiated with the Board of Directors of University Church in West Lafayette, IN – requesting, by May 1, 2013, a plan for repayment of money advanced to them by the Synod – or the Synod will seek a buyer for the property.
  - That the Synod loan on a short-term basis - 18 months at 1 ½% interest - \$500,000 to the Presbytery of Chicago.
  - That the Synod set aside funds to be used for the transition activities and events related to the July 31, 2014, retirement of Carol McDonald as Synod Executive.
- Concurred with the Standing Committee on Mission Coordination and Administration that \$1,500 each be granted to the Presbyteries of Southeastern Illinois and Wabash Valley to assist in their presbyteries' planning and visioning processes.
- Heard good news about the Synod's year-end, 2012, finances – including the celebration of 100% payment of per capita by the Presbyteries of Chicago, Ohio Valley, Southeastern Illinois, and Whitewater Valley – and receipt of 100% of shared mission projections by the Presbyteries of Chicago and Ohio Valley.

The Synod will meet next on Saturday, June 15, 2013, at the Philo Presbyterian Church, Philo, IL.