

STARK CLUSTER MEETING FEBRUARY 27, 2006

Northminster Church hosted a pancake supper for the cluster beginning at 6:00 PM, and Rev. Dean Myers shared about Shrove Tuesday. (The pancake race is on!) Scott Wulff moderated our meeting beginning shortly after 7:00 PM. There were 28 present from eight churches and the MVP office. (Plus some other Northminster folk helped with the dinner. Thank you!) Of those 28, nine were first time attendees, including our new General Presbyter, Dr. Debbie Rundlett, and our Stated Clerk, Rev. Virginia Birks. All were asked to introduce themselves and share why they came to their current church.

As we came to the business part of the evening, it was evident that we have many questions and challenges as we grow into our new structure. One could say that the old has passed away, and the new is still being born, and so we are experiencing birth pains. Of particular concern is evaluating and deciding what missions to fund, especially ones in our cluster which currently are being funded through June by the presbytery budget. (Bethany House for \$15,000 and Interfaith Campus Ministry for \$7,200 annually.) The process of being an advocate for them is somewhat obscure to us, yet, and the budget timeline seems too short. This is something which the Implementation Team will be asked to address. We also need to be creative in finding other means to fund these and other missions and ministries. Churches need to consider how they help, and tithing may be part of the discussion. Applying for grants may be helpful, too. We need to communicate our passions with each other and discern God's will in these matters.

A "Day of Prayer and Fasting" is being planned for March 18. Specific times and place(s) are yet to come from the newly formed Task Group organizing it. Members are: Tom Sawyer, Doug Patton, and Bill Sadler. Debbie Rundlett will help resource it.

Brian Whitaker reported for the Bus Tour Task Group that Saturday, May 6, 2006, will be the day for traveling around to each of the ten churches and to one of the camps. (Including the 2nd camp which is an hour away makes the day too long.) The Cluster Bus Tour will begin in Alliance at 8:30 AM and go to each church. A light breakfast and lunch will be included, plus combined travel. The cost is \$10 and reservations are needed. Contact Martha Gerber. A schedule for the day will come out later.

NEXT CLUSTER MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5 AT 7:00 PM AT JOHN KNOX CHURCH. Clancy Cherry will lead us in devotions and Martha Gerber will moderate.

Be sure to check previous minutes or info from your local church for upcoming events, including the AREA 2 MEETING on Thursday, March 30 at 7:00 PM at the Uhrichsville Church.

Debbie Rundlett led us in the closing prayer.

Your Scribe, Martha Gerber