



Presbytery of Charlotte

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*To Ruling Elders, Teaching Elders, Christian Educators, and others who will attend the Presbytery of Charlotte meeting on Saturday, February 11, 2012 at Hopewell Presbyterian Church
From Sam Roberson, General Presbyter/Stated Clerk*

I begin by thanking all of you for supporting my Sabbatical during the autumn of 2011. The Sabbatical time was restorative for my prayer life, physical health, perspective on the past and present, and hopeful future expectations. Again, thank you.

We gather as the Presbytery of Charlotte at historic Hopewell Presbyterian Church on Saturday, February 11, 2012 at one of the most challenging times in recent PCUSA memory. I cannot remember a time when the Holy Spirit has been more active in many strong and outreaching ways, and some of our churches have been in lock-down mode, anxious, angry, and focused narrowly. In a different time and a different Republican Party, the old Presbytery of Mecklenburg was sometimes referred to as the Republican Party at prayer. Today, regardless of your political affiliation, the divisive and often destructive politics of the culture are too often reflected in our local congregations. I pray that Jesus will lead us through these times in the gospel ways of peace, justice, forgiveness, and love.

The Presbytery meeting will focus on where your Council believes the Presbytery is being called by the Spirit. Council Moderator Robert Austell and I will bring a short message during worship which will include Communion and the naming of those who have joined the Church Triumphant. An early, working lunch will feature three workshops plus a conversation area for those simply seeking friendly table discussions.

The afternoon will feature a sharing by our 29 African-American Churches as to how they are being called to transformation as they meet the demands and opportunities of these times. They began this new journey with an all day "Summit" on October 15, 2011. Finally, we will spend 20 minutes at the February meeting and the May meeting asking questions to our Presbytery's Moderator Candidate Robert Austell. If he's going to answer the questions of the General Assembly in Pittsburgh this summer, he needs a healthy warming up by our Presbytery.

We will, of course, have to work in some necessary business such as the Annual Meeting of the Corporation; however, we plan to begin at 9:30 AM and be on way home by 2:00 PM. I pray it will be a good day to be a Presbyterian!