

GENERAL PRESBYTER'S REPORT

January 28, 2012

1. I have now been with the Presbytery of Long Island for just over seven months; I have now visited over half of the member churches and over forty of the pastors. I am also almost half-way through meeting all of you. I am interested in being invited to lead worship, attend events and meet with your Sessions in this second half of my first year. I am hopeful of making it all the way through the Presbytery by the end of my first year. I covet invitations prior to next July. I will visit my daughter in Ireland the first two Sundays in March, otherwise my schedule is open.

2. In my first half year on Long Island I have seen a great deal, for you are a vibrant and exciting Presbytery. As we can see in this meeting, all manner of things are happening both in our congregations and in the Presbytery. It is indeed an exciting time to be a member of this Presbytery and I sense it has only just begun.
It is exciting to see the Shepherding Council create the structures to carry out the priorities that you have called for at your visioning retreat last fall: youth, poverty, and immigration - Three areas where you are already heavily involved and three areas where your possibilities are virtually endless. Your focus on these areas will change you as much as it will the communities around you.

3. Presbyterians are often described as a connectional people. What I have seen since I arrived are examples of partnerships involving youth, oversea mission, even worship. Our connections are one of the most significant aspects of our theology and structure, for it makes us more effective Christians than we could ever be if we were just a group of local congregations.
We stand on the cusp of a whole new era in our world's history – this is causing unending challenges for all around us, but I wonder: Where can we, together, touch the lives of our neighbors? What new needs do you see arising in your area and how might your neighboring congregations help yours in addressing those needs? What partners are connected to your church family that can help? Perhaps what comes to mind here may seem mundane, or unimportant, but helping our neighbors live into a new world may go a long way in helping that new world experience the Message that makes us Presbyterians in the first place?

4. I am excited about our future together. I pray you will invite me to assist you in your continual opportunities to touch those you see every day with the wondrous message that so touches our lives. Together, the Presbytery of Long Island can continue to change the Long Island we know.