

Synod Commissioner Report
Synod Assembly, November 5-6, 2010
Synod Offices in Maumee, OH

At its November assembly, the Synod of the Covenant elected the Rev. Raafat Zaki, as its new Transitional Synod Executive. “Rev. Zaki was licensed for ministry first by the Presbyterian Church in Sudan, completed several internships and field education in Sudan and Egypt, and was ordained a Minister of the Word and Sacrament by the PCUSA. He served in three pastoral capacities in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio; served two offices with the General Assembly, as Associate with the Churchwide Personnel Services, and as Area Coordinator with the Worldwide Ministries. He then served with Habitat for Humanity International as the Director of Global Faith Engagement and Church Relations, and most recently as the Stated Clerk and Associate Executive with the Synod of the Sun, PCUSA.”*

Rev. Zaki offered the sermon at the evening assembly worship setting the tone for the work that lay ahead. The synod is pleased to welcome Rev. Zaki and looks forward to ministry together.

The assembly elected William (Bill) Sorensen as its vice-moderator. Bill is the elder commissioner from Lake Michigan Presbytery. The clergy commissioner, Rev. Christine Barnes, completed her term as moderator of the synod at this assembly.

The assembly heard a report from Karen Nottelmann, Coordinator of the Mission to the USA program. This program brings leaders from other countries and denominations to have a residency in congregations here in the USA. The leaders share their culture and experience of what it is like to live out being a Christian in their area of the world. This year the leaders came from the Middle East. Due to the difficult nature of that part of the world, only 4 people were able to participate this year. One came from the Syrian Catholic Church that was raided in Baghdad on November 1. Following the attack, he asked that other Christians pray and make their voices heard so that the struggling Christian communities in the Middle East would not be forgotten. Mission to the USA had been a joint project between the synod and General Assembly (GA). Word came that GA had cut their part of the program funding. The synod took action to fund the entire project in 2011 so that this opportunity for exchange and transformation may continue within the synod.

The synod heard that there was a surge in applications for its racial/ethnic scholarships and distributed awards to African American and Korean students this year.

New Covenant Grants totaling \$27,000 were awarded to four new ministry projects. One was a first ever joint project between two presbyteries. Two projects from Lake Michigan Presbytery received grants:

Partnership for a Racism Free Community - \$10,000

Refugee High School Equivalency Project, \$5,000.

Synod per capita for 2011 and 2012 was set at \$3.25.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Barnes
Synod Commissioner

* quote from biographical material distributed to the Synod Assembly