

**MODERATOR'S LETTER  
RULING ELDER LARRY KEITH  
JANUARY 28, 2017**

Dear Friends in Christ,

In this, my first letter to the members of the Presbytery of Long Island, let me say what an honor it is to represent you. I'm particularly indebted to those women and men who came before me and to General Presbyter Mark Tammen and administrator Lorna Lisa.

It was wonderful to be installed in my home church, the Presbyterian Church in Garden City. Rev. Wanda Lawry Hughes, Music Director Carol Dort and many volunteers created a welcoming, worshipful and joyous atmosphere for all of us. And, of course, Flushing House always provides a terrific spread of food and drink to enjoy.

Special recognition is due to my predecessor, Barbara Messier, who led us this past year with characteristic care and consideration. Her final remarks as outgoing Moderator were personal and poignant. Rev. Kymerley Clemons Jones was installed as Second Vice Moderator, but First Moderator Peter Sulyok was unable to attend.

Of course, the meeting's docket and accompanying reports well describe the official business of the meeting, but a few items are worthy of special mention.

New Church Fellowship and Development is a hugely important undertaking. They need, they requested, and they deserve the voluntary efforts of congregations and members alike. God's people are at work in Oceanside, Glenwood Landing, Center Moriches and New Hyde Park! The Rev. Joshua Jong told us that his New Hyde Park church is raising money to install a chair lift.

The Rev. Kate Jones-Calone spoke and prayed with great passion about the Sanctuary Movement. An important partner in the Presbytery's commitment to the needs of immigrants on Long Island is Jobs With Justice. Setauket Presbyterian Church has dedicated \$10,000 as a challenge matching grant for the entire Presbytery.

Our Presbytery concluded last year with a \$70,000 deficit. This is why the Rev. Jeff Prey, chairman of the Interim Budget Task Force, recommended profound changes in the way we address our financial needs. Per Capita and Legacy Giving are essential ways of addressing our problems.

We heard inspiring reports from our Cuban and El Salvador Mission teams. A special request was made for a device that can create potable drinking water, amazingly, for only \$40!

The meeting included a moving farewell to the Rev. Charles Cary, who is ending his long and distinguished ministerial career, most recently in Westhampton. We also remembered the Rev. William Edwards, formerly of the First Presbyterian Church of Smithtown, who died on December 16.

With gratitude,  
Larry Keith