

MODERATOR'S LETTER
RULING ELDER LARRY KEITH
June 27, 2017

Dear Friends in Christ,

The June 27 Presbytery meeting, at Old First Presbyterian Church in Huntington, introduced us to the recently installed pastor, the Rev. Matthew Means. He not only graciously welcomed us, but conducted the worship service, which featured a message on giving by Past Moderator, Barbara Messier.

A highlight of the meeting was a lively discussion on the use of church facilities as sanctuary locations. Ultimately, the Presbytery passed a motion offered by the Rev. John Carrick of Mattituck, to support and endorse those churches that choose to become sanctuary locations. The Presbytery then agreed to proclaim that endorsement on its website.

Another highlight was the joyful ordination approval for Ms. Beatrix Weil. Her ordination will take place on Sunday, July 23 at Community Presbyterian Church in Malverne. She will then begin serving as campus minister at Presbyterian College in Clinton, S.C.

It is always a pleasure to commission missionaries, which we did with the blessing that, "Their work be a witness to God and bring glory to your name."

Approval was given to the Shepherding Council motion to merge the Peacemaking, Justice and Hunger Work Group with the Salt and Light Team. It is extremely important that the newly constituted committee honor both of the important missions now under its purview.

The Presbytery also approved a Board of Trustees motion "to encourage congregations to work with the Long Island Progressive Coalition to explore solar panels to their buildings." Obviously, each congregation needs to look closely at all aspects of this proposal before making a final decision.

I'd also like to commend the good work of the new church development programs underway, especially, First Presbyterian Church in New Hyde Park, which has opened a free pastoral care and counseling center.

Two pre-meeting workshops were also held. One discussed creating food pantries at our member churches. The other drew special attention to our budgetary problems. We need to spend more time on this vital issue at the next meeting, especially since it includes compensation issues for our permanent staff.

As always, many thanks to our host church and to Flushing House, for helping to make our meeting successful.

With gratitude,
Larry Keith