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November 20, 2009

Allison Park, PA

Ocean City congregation gives \$20,000 gift to PPL

“This was God’s idea. This is a gift to PPL from God,” said Larry Tormey, an elder of First Presbyterian Church of Ocean City, NJ as he presented a check for \$20,000 to Marie Bowen, Executive Director of Presbyterians Pro-Life. About 30 members of the congregation, including elders, members of the missions committee, and their spouses were present on Saturday, November 14 when the gift was presented



following a covered dish supper and a presentation about the work of PPL by Mrs. Bowen.

L to R: **The Rev. John Sheldon**, FPC Pastor & President of PPL; **Marie Bowen**, Executive Director of PPL; **Larry Tormey** & **Phyllis Martinson**, Elders of FPC

Mr. Tormey shared with those present how God had led him repeatedly to bring up to the FPC session the proposed gift to PPL of this large amount. Though others, and at times even Tormey himself, felt the gift was “too extreme,” “God would not let me go,” he said. After discussing the gift in several session meetings there came a meeting when God seemed to move on the hearts of those present. A motion was made and the gift approved.

The gift amounts to a 10% tithe of a bequest given to FPC Ocean City by the Sutton family in an amount slightly over \$200,000. Rev. John Sheldon, pastor of the church, is the President of the Board of Directors of PPL. “This gift was not initiated by me,” he clarified. “This came from the session of this church.” Sheldon noted that it is not as though the church has no other needs for these funds, but this is an expression of “our commitment to stay in this denomination and stand as a witness calling the PC(USA) back to a biblical position on abortion.” “It is our session’s hope that many other pastors and churches throughout our denomination would be inspired and challenged by this gift to begin regular financial support for the work and witness of PPL within the PCUSA.”

Sheldon’s comments echo the Statement of Purpose of Presbyterians Pro-Life, “to be a prophetic witness to the Presbyterian Church (USA), upholding the sacred value of human life and the family.” PPL has been a pro-life presence at every General Assembly for 30 years and works to educate and equip the denomination through its publications, displays, workshops, and ministry training.

The sizable gift comes just as Presbyterians Pro-Life is preparing for the 2010 General Assembly in Minneapolis and planning to launch a Bible Study, *Pregnant Women of the Bible*. The presentation of the check was repeated on Sunday morning during the worship service. Marie Bowen thanked the congregation for their generosity. "Your partnership in giving witness to biblical truth on life issues means more to me than this check," said Mrs. Bowen. "But I am also grateful for your financial support. It is important. We need your help to do the work that God has called us to do."

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