

“A family thing”

by Emily Enders Odom

COLUMBUS – Nineteen-year old Megan Story is passionate both about ranch dressing on dinner rolls and her youth group at the John Knox Presbyterian Church in North Olmsted, Ohio.

A junior at the University of Toledo, this spirited redhead from Fairview Park, Ohio, has long awaited an opportunity to serve as a youth advisory delegate (YAD), ever since she first applied for the 211th General Assembly (1999) in Fort Worth, Texas.

“I was a little young then,” Story said about not having been selected.

As she continued to receive encouragement by family members and pastors alike, Story persevered and was elected as a YAD to the 214th General Assembly by her home Presbytery of the Western Reserve.

“When I first got here,” she said, “I was very intimidated, overwhelmed by the hugeness of it all.”

She has since hit her stride, however, uplifted by her fellow YADs, already a close company not unlike the youth group she left at home, some 150 miles from Columbus.

Story describes her home church as “open, friendly, and very accepting,” their new pastor, Tom MacMillan, as “amazing,” and her youth group as “a family thing.” Through mission, study and play, the group’s members have all “stuck together.” Firm in their faith, the young people help each other through times of trial. Her mother, Carol Story, is currently the church’s youth advisor.

Summoning the necessary courage and finding a voice to speak up in her assembly committee is a challenge Story stands ready to face this week. Her model and inspiration is the John Knox Presbyterian Church, which has always taken the input of young people seriously. Story has served on the board of deacons, and one of her three brothers, Bryan, is currently the church’s youth elder.

“The presbytery will expect me to talk about my experience,” she said, admitting to a lack of confidence in her public speaking ability. “But it will be neat to go around and tell everybody.”