



The Interpreter

PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY

MAY 2009

SPEAKING FROM THE HART

Keeping Our Eye on the Ball

During worship this past month, Kirkwood Presbyterian Church recognized Bill Hull as Pastor Emeritus. This designation is a well-deserved recognition of Bill who kept his eye on the ball for 28 years and gave faithful, effective ministry as the organizing pastor of that congregation.

One of the things Kirkwood does at the end of worship is to sing their vision/mission statement. I don't know how many years they have been doing that, but I thought what a great way to help the whole congregation keep their eye on the ball weekly...a reminder of why they are there.

Question: can you recite your congregation's vision or mission statement? The churches that are participating in the Acts 16:5 Initiative were reminded again at the recent workshop of the importance of a meaningful, well-aimed, concise vision/mission statement. However, if a vision/mission statement, no matter how well-written, is just something on the back of a bulletin, the navigation system for your church will be ineffective. It would be similar to your family planning a summer trip, but, as you are about leave on that vacation, leaving the maps at home, and just starting to drive without regard to what you had decided and planned.

I would encourage all of us to look at our weekly church activities in the bulletin and ask: is this program aligned with our vision/mission statement? Are we accomplishing week in and week out what it is we set out to do? Stan Ott reminded the Acts 16:5 churches that this exercise is critical if we want to be faithful to the mission Christ is calling us to.

One church's mission statement is "to glorify God, to make disciples, and to meet human need". Every group in the church, including Presbyterian Women, the Men's Bible study, the mid-week prayer service, and small group ministry, was invited to ask the question: how are we specifically helping our members glorify God, make disciples, and meet human need. If we are not, how can we align our program and activities to fulfill our mission?

I am grateful for the many churches in Peace River that, in spite of the economic issues we are facing, nevertheless are keeping the mission and vision of their congregations in the forefront.

As a kid, my Dad at so many times in my life would say, "keep your eye on the ball". May we as pastors, elders, sessions, groups, and Presbytery keep our eye on the ball, and so fulfill the vision/mission God has for us.

With gratitude,
Graham

Please join us in prayer:

May 3 – Palma Sola, Bradenton
May 10 – Westminster, Bradenton
May 17 – Faith, Cape Coral
May 24 – Community, Englewood
May 31 – Buckingham, Fort Myers



Upcoming Stated Meeting



May 28, 2009

Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota
9:00 a.m.



The keynote speaker at the May 28 Presbytery meeting at Pine Shores Presbyterian Church in Sarasota will be the Rev. Hunter Farrell.

Rev. Farrell is a career missionary with the PCUSA who has served in Africa and South America as well as with the national staff of the denomination. Last year he was selected as the director of the General Assembly Council's World Mission program area. Rev. Farrell oversees all aspects of the PCUSA's mission service and recruitment, including national and international calls, as well as other forms of direct mission involvement. In addition, he coordinates the denomination's missionary work with ecumenical and international church partners.

You are also invited to attend an evening with Rev. Farrell at Church of the Palms on Wednesday, May 27.

If you have questions about Presbyterian World Mission, **you are invited to come to Church of the Palms for a dinner from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the Campus Center. At 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary, Rev. Farrell will speak and there will be a question and answer time.** The dinner will be \$8.00 per person and Church of the Palms would like you to make **reservations for the dinner by calling the church office (924-1323) by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 22** so we will be sure to have enough food for everyone.

If all goes well, the Rev. Haitham Jazrawi, pastor of the Kirkuk Presbyterian Church in Iraq, will also be a guest of Church of the Palms and will be present at the Presbytery meeting.

If you have questions, please call the Presbytery office.

Presbytery Highlight of the Month

Disaster Preparedness and Response Task Force

By Mr. Gayle Morris

The Disaster Preparedness and Response Task Force originated as a result of Hurricane Charley. It was called the Hurricane Task Force and had an urgency that was of utmost importance since prior to Charley we did not have any type of plan or sense of need. Currently, the Task Force has developed into an organization interested not only in responding to emergencies but also in helping the Peace River churches themselves to be prepared for emergencies. In 2006 the Council approved our current organization. The Task Force consists of Jim Kirk (Moorings/chair), Al Knox (Church of the Palms), Polly Land (FPC Arcadia), Linda Fahnestock (FPC Bonita Springs), Richard Polk (FPC Port Charlotte), and Gayle Morris (Burnt Store). Bruce Wismer (Pine Shores) and Graham Hart (PRP Staff) are ex-officio members.

The Task Force is the primary coordinator with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), coordinating all of the requirements that Peace River has in responding to disasters. During the past five years, the Task Force has been responsible for justifying and managing over \$1.65 million of disaster relief funds. This included money for rebuilding after Hurricane Charley and rebuilding homes in Immokalee after Hurricane Wilma. To learn more about how PDA is involved and responds to emergencies, visit their web site www.PCUSA.org/pda. The Task Force is also a member of the Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN). This is a group dedicated to coordinating requirements among the six Florida Presbyteries.

To facilitate preparing each of the churches, the Task Force has recommended that each church develop a Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee. Over the past four years, training sessions have been held to help each church develop a plan modeled after the Peace River Disaster Preparedness Plan. This will insure that we are all responding in a like manner. A copy of the Presbytery Plan can be found on the Peace River Presbytery Web site, www.peaceriverpresbytery.org, and clicking on Hurricane Plan & Relief. Training sessions will be given this summer, so identify your requirements and let the Presbytery office know so we can include you

on the list. Annually, the Task Force holds a seminar to keep everyone up-to-date. In March we enjoyed a tour given by Wayne Sallade, Charlotte County Emergency Director, showcasing the new Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This gave everyone a good idea how an EOC functions. We also received a presentation by Ed McCrane, Sarasota County Emergency Director, on



Wayne Sallade, Charlotte County EOC Director, fielding questions during a break at the annual Disaster Preparedness Network meeting

emergency preparedness. The meeting was packed full of valuable information.

The Task Force is committed to continue to prepare Peace River Presbytery for future disasters and to be ready to respond as the need arises.

Pentecost Offering



The youngest of our PCUSA special offerings, the Pentecost Offering provides a direct way to meet the needs of children at risk, youth, and young adults. 2009 Offering materials are available and can be ordered until the offering is received on May 31. The Pentecost Offering offers congregations the opportunity to designate 40 percent of what they receive to help children at risk in their own communities. Through General Assembly ministries, the Pentecost Offering supports the faith journey of Presbyterian young people, develops a new generation of church leadership, and advocates on a national level for children at risk. None of these vital ministries would be possible without the Pentecost Offering. We hope you will give generously.

A Message from PRP Mission and Justice Committee

Many of the churches in Peace River Presbytery are committed to the sponsorship and support of our mission workers all over the globe. We rely on the Medical Benevolence Foundation (MBF) to support health ministries in more than 100 hospitals and clinics. MBF has been working in conjunction with The International Medical Missions PCUSA for 40 years. Medical missionaries are asked quarterly for a list of supplies and equipment they need to carry on their work in some of the most impoverished regions of this world. When the requests are submitted to MBF, they in turn are sent to Project C.U.R.E. which acts as the delivery arm of MBF. C.U.R.E, operating from 5 large depots in this country, fills the wish list and sends it by container ship to the designated mission hospital. Project C.U.R.E (Commission on Urgent Relief and Equipment) is the largest supplier of donated medical supplies and equipment in the world. It supplies not only MBF but also hospitals and clinics at the request of governments, other church affiliated organizations, and private individuals in 127 countries.

Five years ago, at the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in Sarasota, the Mission Committee adopted C.U.R.E. as a project. We started with a blood pressure cuff and a pair of crutches. With the help of volunteers, we are now sending a 53-foot donated Wal-Mart semi to our nearest depot, Nashville, Tennessee, every 3 months. It is filled to the tailgate with shrink-wrapped skids of supplies: beds, gurneys, anesthesia machines, etc. Addis Ababa in Ethiopia received 2 donated Cardiac Cath. Labs. Trucks



full of equipment are also rolling to Southern Mexico. Last week we packed 4 containers for the Ukraine, and the list goes on. We can use anything from Band-Aids to MRIs.

We are asking you to help. Please ask your physician, a friend with a connection to a hospital, or someone who no longer needs their wheelchair or crutches to donate. Everything is vitally needed.

“And wherever he went, into villages or cities, or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplace, and begged him that they may touch even the hem of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.” Mark 6:56

For more information, call Presbyterian Church of the Covenant at 1-941-922-5509.

Article by: Judy Kraut, C.U.R.E. S.W. Florida Rep and member of the Mission and Justice Committee

Mission Outreach at Buckingham

An integral part of our Mission Outreach at Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers, is our “Stitch ‘n Stuff” Sewing Circle. It was started in 1998 with three avid servers. “For where two or three are gathered together in my name there I am with them.” Matthew 18:20.

Their first project was for Project Linus at Lee Memorial Health Park. They make all sorts of handmade clothing, blankets and toys for hospitalized infants and children. They also sew for Hope Hospice of Lehigh Acres, making quilts, afghans and pillows for the clients’ comfort.



Since 2003, when one of the group’s family members became ill and was admitted to Shady Rest Nursing Home in Fort Myers, they adopted the people there and made gifts for all of the 180 clients there.

There are now 21 active members in the sewing group, which includes several men. They cut, stuff, sew, knit and crochet. They are able to work mainly from donations from church members of thread, stuffing, yarn or money. They also collect aluminum cans to help purchase the material for their projects.

Last year the sewing group made 8,095 items such as afghans, receiving blankets, hats, caps, bibs, booties, layettes, sweaters, pillows, lap robes, quilts, slippers, walker bags, aprons, Project Linus bags, and many more items. All of these items are donated to various groups and organizations. What a wonderful example of giving back to the community.

Article by Beth Day

Burnt Store Presbyterian Church Returns from Haiti

The Haiti Mission Team from Burnt Store Presbyterian Church returned to Punta Gorda on March 14, 2009 after spending a week doing the Lord’s work and sharing the love of Christ with the people of Haiti, in Cite Soleil,

through Haiti Outreach Ministries (HOM). The 12-person team was a group of dedicated volunteers with a variety of “talents” and huge hearts for making a difference.

We started the week by attending a worship service at the HOM church in Cite Soleil, along with 1000+ regular worshippers. Our own associate pastor, Dr. Valerie Bell, preached the sermon, translated by Pastor Leon. What an awesome worship experience! The Haitian hope and trust in the Lord is evident in every face; and we clearly felt the Lord’s presence in this church, and in this city, the worst slum in the western hemisphere!



Children coming out of the lunch room at Blanchard Church School.

During the week we ran a health clinic for the children at Blanchard Church School - three nurses (and a support team who took height, weight, pulse rates, temperatures, and, more importantly, taught about “FROGS” (Fully Rely on God), the “hokey-pokey” and a variety of happy songs)! We did 383 physicals on students and 16 on teachers! The team also painted 11 class rooms in the school at Cite Soleil, worked in the library at Blanchard School, put a new roof on a house in Cite Soleil (which had been destroyed in the hurricanes of the fall of 2008), and visited with our 30 sponsored children (26 who are being supported by individuals within the church, and 4 by the Mission Ministry of BSPC.) The BSPC team was also privileged to visit the new 4-year nursing school in Leogane, (the only BSN program in Haiti), whose funding was made possible largely through the work of **Medical Benevolence Foundation, associated with PCUSA.** **Presbyterian Women** have also donated generously to the student library and for a bus to allow the students to experience “clinical training” in nearby hospitals, sending teams to help in villages without access to medical care.

We brought 22 suitcases filled to bursting with supplies for the health clinics and schools, and added to the ongoing “roofing fund” for HOM to continue to replace roofs, as future mission teams arrive. All this was purchased with funds from our generous congregation, who absolutely went the “extra mile” to help this mission team “make a difference” in Haiti. The smiles of the children, the dusty little hands that crept into ours, the knee hugs by the little ones, the big hugs from the older ones, the beautiful eyes, the laughter and the hope...will never be forgotten by this BSPC team. They will be sharing hopes and plans for future involvement with Haiti Outreach, and a return trip is being planned for 2010.

For the Mission Ministry of BSPC – Kathy Tardy

Bruce blogs Bay Area

By Bethany Furkin

From Presbyterian News Service, April 13, 2009

When it comes to being in tune with social media, Bruce Reyes-Chow is on top of things. The moderator of the 218th General Assembly is active on Facebook and



BRUCE REYES-CHOW
Picture by Danny Bolin, PCUSA

Twitter. Mission Bay Community Church, where he is pastor, has an engaging Web site, complete with a group blog. Reyes-Chow also has several blogs of his own - one for general posts, one for moderator-related posts and a new one through the *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper.

The latter, which Reyes-Chow started posting to on March 26, is part of City Brights, a group blogging initiative on the Chronicle's Web site. The 21 bloggers are "public figures, the recognized experts in their fields (from science to the arts) and the local notables that make the Bay Area what it is," according to the Web site. They encompass a wide variety of careers, including a talk show host, a ballet master and a political comedian.

Reyes-Chow is the only participant blogging as a pastor - and that's what drew him to the project. "I just couldn't resist because the mainstream religious voice is nowhere to be found in San Francisco media," he said, adding that although he acknowledges his role as moderator in the biography that goes with his blog, he is writing as himself and is not speaking on behalf of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

NEWS ABOUT OUR MINISTERS



The Rev. William (Bill) Hull, long-time and beloved retired pastor of Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Bradenton, received the honorary title of Pastor Emeritus on Sunday, April 19. His 28 years of ministry to Kirkwood and the community were celebrated.

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is honoring four distinguished alums and welcome nearly 200 returning grads to Alumnae/i Days, April 29-May 1. Highlights of the event include presentations by distinguished alums, reunions for the 50-year, 25-year, 10-year, and 5-year classes, tours of the city, a book signing with faculty, and three special lectures. Alums receiving awards this year include the Rev. William (Bill) Anderson '50 (Missions); the Rev. Dr. James E. Davison '69 (Academia); the Rev. St. Paul Epps '42 (Specialized Ministry); **and the Rev. Dr. Myles W. MacDonald '55 (Pastoral Ministry).**

Article by Jerry L. Van Marter

Presbyterian News Service, April 13, 2009



Rev. Dr. Edward T. Wimberley is a professor of ecological studies at Florida Gulf Coast University and a member of Peace River Presbytery. His new book will be published in May 2009 (see below).



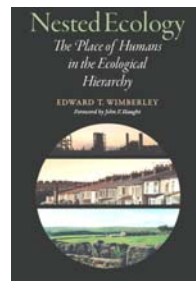
Nested Ecology

The Place of Humans in the Ecological Hierarchy

Edward T. Wimberley

foreword by John F. Haught

Nested Ecology provides a pragmatic and functional approach to realizing a sustainable environmental ethic.



Edward T. Wimberley asserts that a practical ecological ethic must focus on human decision making within the context of larger social and environmental systems. Think of a set of mixing bowls, in which smaller bowls sit within larger ones. Wimberley sees the world in much the same way, with personal ecologies embedded in social ecologies that in turn are nested within natural ecologies.

Wimberley urges a complete reconceptualization of the human place in the ecological hierarchy. Going beyond the physical realms in which people live and interact, he extends the concept of ecology to spirituality and the "ecology of the unknown." In doing so, Wimberley defines a new environmental philosophy and a new ecological ethic.

"[Wimberley's] wise, readable, and convincing book awakens us to spheres of concern that even the most sensitive ecological treatises have often ignored or underemphasized. He has in mind a much more integral and nuanced ecological vision than is customary. Readers of many backgrounds and interests will find herein a carefully coordinated range of reflections on the multiple nesting and nested levels that make up the universe. Wimberley's sophisticated study of the plurality of ecological strata challenges us to develop a wider ecological awareness than even some of the most celebrated ecological visionaries have provided." -- John F. Haught, Georgetown University, from the Foreword

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