Dear friends,

Over two thousand years ago, the shepherds and, later, the magi did not have a GPS when they set out on their journey to find the newly born Christ child. But they had something infinitely better. The magi had a brilliant star, the shepherds had directions from not just one but a host of angels leading them directly to the stable where Jesus, God-With-Us, lay.

This king in a manager must have been a big surprise to them. The Bible is full of stories of journeys that have surprising endings. The overarching theme seems to be that God cares as much about what we learn on the way as God does the destination.

We are in one of those journeys as a church. Our travel seems to be focused on a horizon beyond our sight. What lies out there for us? Is there a surprising life-giving grace-filled gift? Will we have the open eyes and open hearts to receive this newness?

This is what I know on this journey. I can think of no better traveling companions that you. You are sisters and brothers committed to Christ and his church who give far more than gold, frankincense, and myrrh on a daily basis. Your imagination sees the possible every day.

I also know that God has much more mission for the PCUSA to do. So while we may get weary on our journey we have some additional road to travel.

May God bless you with a renewed spirit this Christmas.

Gradye Parsons

The January newsletter is dedicated to the conversation surrounding the difficult decisions facing members of the presbytery. Some of our churches are feeling called to leave while others are called to stay. Both have wondered why... why leave, why stay.... This is to give a forum to help express what is on our hearts. The February newsletter will be available for your comments and additional thoughts. The deadline for the February newsletter is January 15.
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Tropical Florida Presbytery,

In Amalie’s last report to the presbytery, she encouraged those who were discerning leaving the PC(USA) to help answer the “why?” question that is currently circulating around the presbytery, “Why are we considering leaving the PC(USA)?” I commend her for opening the dialogue in this written fashion as it helps people to think through what they are saying rather than reacting to what others are saying.

This is an emotionally charged time in the denomination and the presbytery. I heard several people at the November presbytery meeting talking about those who are considering “divorcing” those in the PC(USA). While I resist the analogy, I understand the frustration and hurt that many are feeling as a result of our decisions to consider departure.

Let me say first that I deeply love this denomination. I love my colleagues in this presbytery and the other presbyteries where I have served. I consider it a privilege to have friends on all sides of the issues in the denomination. I was baptized, confirmed, ordained as an elder, and ordained as a pastor in the exact same spot in my home church in Goleta, California, and so I am personally mourning the potential separation between myself and the PC(USA).

I feel, however, that we are at a Genesis 13, Abram/Lot moment, in the PC(USA). The herds and herders of Abram and Lot were in constant battle and Abram said (and I am paraphrasing), “There shouldn’t be fighting because we are brothers. So let’s go in two different directions.” I want to write this letter as graciously as I can. At the same time, in order to answer the “why” question, I will say things that many don’t agree with. Please know that my aim is to “speak the truth in love.”

What I see in the PC(USA), and even in our own presbytery, is constant and never ending battles. These battles are not glorifying to God and turn our attention away from mission and ministry. We have always had battles, and there will be battles in any denomination. However, the “big tent” has gotten so big that the two views, in my opinion, are incompatible with one another, and are beyond the point of agreeing to disagree.

The main strife is over the authority of scripture and, in my opinion that is the fundamental issue with a variety of ramifications. The greatest concern for me in the passing of 10-A wasn’t just the removal of fidelity and chastity, as troubling as that was, it was that scripture was relegated to guiding ordaining councils not the standard under which we have authority. So I see on the progressive side, scripture being authoritative, but subject to the Spirit’s move through culture. I can’t affirm that, and if that is the view of scripture then what is the theological and moral standards for officers? I will never vote to ordain or install someone who sees scripture in that light. And what I also see on the progressive side is a move not to ordain and install those like me who hold to a classic view of scripture and a Reformed Christian faith.

I will give you an example in Christian Askeland, a member of our congregation, who received his Ph.D. from Cambridge, England in early Egyptian manuscripts. He was recruited by the PC(USA) to be its missionary at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, Egypt. The week after 10-A passed, but before it officially was law, he was called by the PC(USA) and told that he had to publically support the view of scripture as “the guide” for ordaining councils as well as the ordination of those not living in fidelity in marriage or chastity in singleness. He said I can’t go along with that and resigned the position. I find it unsettling and frustrating that while those on the progressive end of the church have been allowed to say, “Jesus alone is Lord of the conscience” to not conform what I consider orthodox theology and practice. And yet, Christian Askeland could not claim the same right to have Jesus as Lord of his conscience in order to preach and teach to classical views of scripture and sexuality. How can I in good conscience be party to a denomination that does this?

This leads me to my other concern, which is the political landscape of the PC(USA). It appears to me that we seem to be most adamant about making rules to not make rules. Los Ranchos Presbytery and others have tried to make the former G-6.0106b the standard for their presbytery. They have also tried to specify essentials. These actions were taken to court, and so far the decision has been that you can’t specify any blanket standards for ordination. Ironically, at the same time, there seems to be a move to make a blanket standard that you must approve the ordination of people involved in sexual activity outside of marriage. The Covenant Network has issued their rationale and desire for the “Kenyonization” where pastors couldn’t refuse to participate in ordinations because of their own conscience. I assume in the not too distant future the participation in same sex marriages. Whether this happens or not is yet to be determined, but I predict this will be the conflict for the next decade in the PC(USA).

These concerns seem to be heightened with the new Form of Government. The idea that higher councils can “control and direct” lower councils concerns me. I am concerned about the removal of synods for the mere fact that the GA then becomes the next council above the presbytery. In the last five years, the GA commissioned the “Louisville papers” to show presbyteries how to bankrupt churches who are considering leaving. While I am thankful for the posture of Tropical Florida, I feel like I am looking over my shoulder as to when the GA is going to jump and “control” Tropical Florida in this matter.

At the local level, all of this is very disconcerting to our members and potential members. We have lost members and potential members, we have had people who say they can’t join while we are PC(USA), and others are saying if we don’t make a move in the next year they will need to leave. While we will probably lose some members if we leave the PC(USA), we will undoubtedly have a mass exodus if we don’t. So for the sake of the peace, unity and purity of our congregation we will most likely need to make that move.

I will conclude by saying again, that I love this denomination and I love our presbytery. I grieve over the personal feeling the denomination has left me. The “tent” of the PC(USA) hasn’t actually gotten wider, it has just moved to the left. I feel as if I am no longer even in that tent. I think as Abram and Lot affirmed for the sake of peace, we may need to go in different directions. This peace will allow more energy for all of us to focus on our mission.

In Christ,

Dana
In response to Amalie’s invitation to write for the newsletter, I offer a concern, a suggestion, an observation, a question, and a belief.

I did not attend the November presbytery meeting, as I was out of the state. I was surprised to learn that the presbytery had taken an action on the “Motion to have the PUPAC review denominations where congregations are wishing to be dismissed” without ever having heard or seen of it before the presbytery meeting itself. My concern is that sometimes we are taking action precipitously on matters that are delicate and complicated. My suggestion is that all actions, especially those related to gracious separation, at the very least be included in mailed presbytery packets. Perhaps they could/should be distributed via e-mail as well.

The observation is that we are attempting to function as a presbytery with a significant portion of our leadership considering leaving the denomination (and, therefore, our presbytery). My question is, How can we be healthy in such a circumstance? This is a real question, not a rhetorical one, and I welcome response.

I believe that the fact of ten churches requesting to participate in our gracious separation discernment process is cause for sorrow. I trust absolutely that renewal and new vision will come of it. At the same time, I believe it is cause for confession: we have failed to find God’s way to live well together.

Dr. Larry Schenk
Peace Covenant Presbyterian Church

Here’s why I am staying in the PCUSA. I support the changes we have made in our ordination standards. I believe they put an end to yet another form of discrimination in our church and society. The time has come for us to stop treating our gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and trans-gendered brothers and sisters as second, third, fourth, and fifth class citizens in the Kingdom of God.

It is time that we as a Church focus our attention on the calling, gifts, abilities, and preparation for ministry of those God has set apart for leadership as Deacons, Teaching-Elders, and Ruling-Elders. Many of our congregations are already doing this with regard to those we employ as choir directors, organists, educators, and in other positions of ministry, focusing on their God-given gifts of creativity and ability and not on their sexuality.

Many of those opposed to the new standards for ordination and who are subsequently leaving the denomination are doing so on what I believe is a literalistic and legalistic interpretation of a few passages of scripture. Let’s be honest, we all do the same thing at times. However, we do so selectively, ignoring similar prohibitions regarding a variety of other subjects in Leviticus; refusing to single out others listed in 1 Corinthians and labeling them as unfit for ordained ministry; ignoring the fact that the vast majority of Paul’s writings are about grace and not law; and turning a blind eye to the fact that Jesus has absolutely nothing to say on these matters. The author of Leviticus is not my savior; Paul is not my savior; Jesus is my savior, so I will listen most closely to him. Jesus did not read Scripture literally or legalistically – for proof I point you to the “You have heard it said, but I say to you...” passages in the Sermon on the Mount. He was decidedly aligned with the least, the last, the lost, and the lonely, and believed that love was the basis on which all things should be done.

The time has come for us, as Jesus did, as Paul did, as our church has done for centuries, to move beyond the selective application of Scripture which supports our cultural biases; to move beyond a literalistic and legalistic reading of Scripture; to move beyond “the law” and embrace the grace of God for all God’s people.

I have grown up in a time and a culture that has often treated some among us differently – African-Americans, women, immigrants, and those of varied sexual orientation. Thankfully, with regard to the first three of these groups I did not grow up in a church that felt or acted that way, and I’d like to be able to say that during my ministry, during my lifetime, the same could be said with regard to the last of these groups. The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. used to say: “The arc of history always bends towards justice.” For me this is a justice issue.

Finally, to quote Leslie Weatherhead: “It is not what we generally think of as sin which keeps us from the Kingdom, but things like supposed superiority, pride, vanity, intolerance, egotism, quarrelsomeness – really, of course, the worst sins of all – all those things which prevent the family feeling, the feeling that we are just like others, and all children in God’s family.”

This is why I am staying.
Randy Bare, Teaching Elder  
Presbytery of Tropical Florida.

I am grateful for Amalie’s invitation to share our thoughts on what is going on in our denomination and how it affects us in our Presbytery, our churches and each of us as teaching elders. I wanted to speak personally about this. My wife Carrie’s grandfather was a PCUSA pastor, her mother was the church organist at a PCUSA church for 30 years and Carrie is a PCUSA ruling elder and was a Youth Advisory Delegate to the 1969 UPCUSA General Assembly. I began to follow Christ as a college student through the ministry of First Presbyterian Church Berkeley, and became a candidate in the Presbytery of San Jose in 1984 and was ordained as a Minister of Words and Sacrament by the Presbytery of Twin Cities in 1990. I have been blessed to work with colleagues in the Presbytery of Twin Cities, the Presbytery of San Francisco and now the Presbytery of Tropical Florida for almost 25 years. For my entire adult life, I have been part of the PCUSA and have been enriched by relationships with colleagues with whom I agree but also with colleagues with whom I disagree. So, this is a wrenching time for me. Loyal members of our formerly PCUS congregation have shared with me that they cannot stay in the PCUSA in good conscience and have already resigned their membership. Others have quietly drifted away. Others feel just as strongly that the PCUSA is their spiritual home. As a parish pastor, I find myself in an extraordinarily difficult space in attempting to be a faithful shepherd to my entire flock.

As a minister member of Presbytery, the difficulties are also wrenching. The church where I now serve as a Teaching Elder and Pastor has entered the discernment process under our Presbytery’s gracious separation policy. That decision by our Session to enter this process means that I have therefore entered a parallel process of discernment with our Committee on Ministry. As I go through this process, I am grateful both for our Presbyterian tradition of doing things in a decent and orderly way and for our shared commitment to living under our polity. I am also grateful for these wise words from our Constitution. “To be one with Christ is to be joined with all those whom Christ calls into relationship with him. To be thus joined with one another is to become priests for one another, praying for the world and for one another and sharing the various gifts God has given to each Christian for the benefit of the whole community. Division into different denominations obscures but does not destroy unity in Christ. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), affirming its historical continuity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ, is committed to the reduction of that obscurity, and is willing to seek and to deepen communion with all other churches within the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. F-1.0302a.

It is my prayer, that my fellow Presbyters will be priests for one another, praying for one another during this season. Regardless of what decision our congregation takes, and regardless of what decision I make, I am committed to making real in my own life the words captured in our Constitution. I am committed to deepening communion with all of my fellow Presbyters, including those who reach may reach different conclusions in their discernment process. Our Lord Jesus calls us to very high standard of discipleship. Part of that discipleship is maintaining relationships with those with whom we disagree. We need time to deal with such a complex set of issues that involve deep and strong convictions and feelings on all sides. But I am confident that as we go through this process, our shared commitment to the bonds of fellowship will continue. Practically speaking, no matter what happens in our discernment process, all of us will remain part of member communions in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. But underneath that institutional community, we will have shared bonds of friendship forged through living into this current conflict. If we stay engaged with each other and work through these complex issues faithfully, I believe God will bless us richly.

Rev. Randall Gill  
First Presbyterian Church of Boynton Beach  
On A Jeremiah Journey

We believe that at this time we are called to remain in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. It causes us great sorrow that close friends are choosing to begin the process of leaving. As a pastor, I have always relied on these friends for counsel and support.

“Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored?”  
Jeremiah 8:22

We will stay within the PCUSA. Like Jeremiah, we want to be witnesses to the Truth, even during painful times. This issue is more than sexuality. It is about what we believe about Scripture and the call to serve Christ through mission. We believe we don’t live in a perfect world, and Christ reaches out to all people. Jesus was an untiring advocate for human dignity. He calls us to live lives of care and respect. Jesus says, “Come, still there is room at my Great Banquet.” There are Sundays when our congregation truly looks like the kingdom of heaven. In an urban setting, we are reaching a variety of people, poor and needy, who live in our immediate neighborhood. As a church, we want to hold together and keep our eyes on Jesus. We love the church, even those with whom we disagree. Pray for us as we work for renewal in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.
The situation in which our denomination finds itself is sad and difficult. I have friends on both sides of the issue, and I sense that the conflict has taken a toll on many of these friendships. Sadly, there are topics that we just can’t discuss. I wish there were another way to resolve the issue that confronts the PCUSA without separation, but that hope now appears lost. Another “Reformed Body” seems all but certain.

My own thinking over the years has been shaped in significant ways by Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Theological Seminary. Rich was one of my philosophy professors at Calvin College when I was a student there, and a few years later he preached at my ordination. I now count him a friend (and I would like to think he feels similarly about me).

Rich spoke last summer at the “Fellowship of Presbyterians” event in the Twin Cities, and he urged those in his audience to avoid separation. Among his arguments was that the evangelical voice is needed within the larger Presbyterian tradition. He challenged us to listen both to those who are more conservative than we are and also those who are more liberal. Rich, to his credit, has modeled this behavior for the church many times in recent years.

Recognizing that many of us are tired of fighting over ordination standards, and are therefore looking for a safe haven elsewhere, Rich warned his audience that “there is no safe haven. Our safety,” he said, “can only be found in that place of missional fidelity,” where Christians align themselves with what God is doing in the world. I’ve been trying hard these last few years to do just that. I would welcome the opportunity to do that with my new colleagues here in the Presbytery of Tropical Florida, and yet it seems likely that some of my newly formed friendships in this Presbytery will come to an end.

I did not grow up in the Presbyterian Church. I came to the denomination in the late 1970s as a seminary student who suddenly and painfully found himself without a denominational home. I didn’t know that by going to Princeton Theological Seminary I was closing the door on the tradition in which I was raised and which I loved. And so, today I am more grateful than I can say to the denomination that embraced me when I desperately needed an embrace, that provided for me a path to the ministry I felt called to do.

Beyond that, I helped to ordain my older daughter a couple of years ago as a minister of word and sacrament in the PCUSA, and she has found a ministry in this denomination where lives are being changed and where people are hearing the Word of God proclaimed fearlessly and with great conviction. So, this denomination is now something I share at an important level within my own family.

It would be an understatement to say that my feelings today are decidedly mixed. On the one hand, I feel deep appreciation and gratitude, but all of that is tempered by a growing unease with what our denomination has become. More than anything I want to get beyond the conflict that has consumed the 31 years I have been ordained in this denomination. What does the future hold for me? I don’t know, but for now I’m holding onto that “place of missional fidelity” described by my old teacher and friend.

And of course I am grateful to our friend, Amalie Ash, for asking us to speak to each other in this way. My prayer is that this conversation will be helpful to us as colleagues and friends. Much is at stake.

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Rev. Dr. Robert Lloyd Sullivan

Why am I staying in the PCUSA?

Ever since 1964 when I was ordained as a Presbyterian Minister the question regarding Gays has been brought to the General Assembly. And every year those attending General Assembly have consistently opposed the ordaining of Gays. Finally, this year the changing of a few words has opened the door a crack to let Gays into the leadership of our congregations. The pressure for this change remained incessant for the past 50 years.

Do most of our congregations oppose the ordaining of a Gay person? I know they do! And that is really where the decisions are made regarding this issue, not by the General Assembly. For the past 50 years the "Layman" has carried on a smear campaign against our General Assembly—which incidentally its voting members are not G.A. Staff but the Elders and Ministers we as congregations have sent to that gathering. I believe their negativism has contributed to unnecessary discontent within some of our congregations.

The issue of "Abortion" has also tended to divide us. Who is right and who is wrong? There isn’t time to work this one out in this writing but some people feel very strongly about their position. And there are countless other social issues. Where is the tolerance for differing perspectives?
We are living in a time of great change. Not only are we as individuals facing economic losses but losses in church membership. That is very upsetting to most of us! That makes some of us angry or depressed! We want to find someone to blame. The Government and Wall Street make good targets. But so does the Institutional Church.

I believe that those who have chosen to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church of the USA have done, and will do, much harm, not only to our denomination but also to the congregations who become caught up in controversy. I have seen over the years that it is often the larger and more affluent congregations that leave our denomination. Why is that? And what part does the Pastor of that church play? Is he the pawn of his congregation or does he offer the kind of leadership that keeps a congregation together and focused on the real work our Lord has asked us to do?

Then there is the issue about who gets the church property after a scism? In most cases generations of church members have financially paid for those church buildings and believed in the Presbyterian Church of USA. Now why should a particular group of people in this one moment of time snatch those church buildings away? I don’t think t’s right! It might even been considered thievery! I feel that any congregation who doesn’t want to remain within PCUSA should move out of that church building and go and start their own church from scratch like those who came before them.

In brief, I’m very upset about the divisiveness that is occurring within our Denomination! I think it is the wrong thing to do and the wrong time to do it!

James R McClean – Elder
Faith Presbyterian Church, Palm Springs, Florida

Why do people go along with the crowd, even when they know it’s wrong?

Simply stated, people go along with what they think is the popular opinion out of a desire to avoid reprisal or isolation—even if they object to that opinion personally. Instead of Silence.

This is exactly what is happening to us today—Christians are not immune from wanting to "get along." Think about it: We don’t want to ruffle feathers or seem confrontational. So instead of speaking out to defend traditional marriage or explain our position on the dignity of human life etc., we remain silent.

This shouldn’t be. Now is the time to break this "spiral of silence." Will you help us become a people who will not remain silent when they simply don’t want to be "out of step" with what is perceived as the majority opinion? I say "perceived" because, often, the "acceptable" opinion is actually a minority one. Its dominance flows from the way in which it is presented by the media and by strong-willed advocates. Many are being coerced into silence in the debate over so-called gay "marriage." Actually, "debate" is a misnomer. Most Americans oppose gay "marriage." Every voicing their own opinions, they remain silent. It leads to what can be called the "Spiral time the question is on the ballot, voters uphold its traditional definition. Yet people are often afraid to speak out. They are afraid of being labeled a "bigot", a "homophobe", or even a "monster". The result is the "spiral of silence."

Through our teaching we are a winsome case for biblical Truth. For example, we can explain and demonstrate how societies thrive when they develop a strong, healthy marriage culture. We have certainly seen the consequences of the breakdown of marriage in the faces of thousands of children. The good news is these kinds of spirals are fragile: Once exposed, they unravel. If brave people insist on speaking out, and do so in a winsome and appealing way: Then the fears and illusions that created the "spiral of silence" lose their power.

People begin to realize that they are far from alone.

Shelly A. Sands
Clerk of Session
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Key West Florida

The new Gracious Separation Agreement (GSA) I feel is another way for several people to find ways to satisfy their own selfish ambitions and not take into consideration the church as a whole in the way God would want us to be.

About a few months ago we as a body voted to transform Tropical Florida Presbytery from a "Reducing to a Reproducing Presbytery.
The goals set by the committee who formulated this new change in the way things are done at Tropical Florida Presbytery are as follows:

- Make new Christians and make new churches.
- Support churches in helping them envision and develop their futures.
- Support pastors and lay leaders through leadership development.
- Enable congregations to work together to nurture partnership in mission.

Apparently the same group of people who devised this new way of restructuring our Presbytery is the same group of people who is sitting on the commissions that makes all the decision and who are part of the churches that is planning their gracious separation agreement (GSA) under minding the same people who look up to them.

The name for this commission (PUPAC) which stands for Peace, Unity, and Purity Administrative Commission also called (Discernment AC).

There is no peace, no unity, no purity in this commission and I question their discernment which I feel is base on a evil spirit as opposed to a good spirit.

I would like to see that name change from PUPAC and the very same people who adopted the mission goals not served on this committee because of their plans to leave the denomination. I feel they do not have the whole church in heart but only looking to satisfy their own ambitions.

Dr. Leon Lovell-Martin  
Associate Missional Presbyter

**Congregations in a Period of Discernment:** Ten congregations within our presbytery have requested the opportunity to be involved in a period of discernment as they contemplate their future within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The decision by the leaders of these congregations to consider withdrawing their membership from the PCUSA resulted from the adoption of a constitutional amendment, which they felt rejects the authority of scripture and contradicts the confessions of the church. The amendment eliminated the sexual standard of “fidelity and chastity” for church officers. The new language outlining the requirements for ordained service is stated as follows:

*Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (G-1.0000). The governing body responsible for ordination and/or installation (G.14.0240; G.14.0450) shall examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.*

Let us join in prayer for the pastors, ruling elders, and members of these congregations as they seek to discern where the Holy Spirit is leading them in this time of uncertainty.

**ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION**

**HOW DOES THE GRATIOUS SEPARATION EFFECT THE ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION?**

What do I do if my church is leaving the denomination under the Gracious Separation Agreement and I am a member of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA)? Can I still remain a member of the association? And, why should I remain a member if my church is leaving?

The APA has a membership option for you if your church is leaving under the Gracious Separation Agreement. You can retain your membership and your certification credits by becoming an Affiliate Member.

The courses offered through the APA apply to many areas of your job as staff member in a church. Administrative classes cover such topics as Conflict Management, How to Run a Meeting, Newsletters and Bulletins, Personnel Issues, Risk Management, Stewardship Programs and Capital Campaigns, and many, many more topics that are relevant to your job. Spiritual Studies has classes on Bible history, Biblical Interpretation and Theology. And, of course, the Technology classes are a must for any church staff person. By continuing your membership with the APA, you can use the skills gained through the APA to help you and your church.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact Barbara Prieto, the Florida Region APA President at 305-666-8586 or rivierachurch@bellsouth.net.
Every January, many of us tend to make a new year’s resolution. Whether it is to lose weight, exercise more, spend more time with family and friends, reaffirm our commitment to God or grow as an individual by taking education classes, we look at January as a way of starting the new year with a commitment.

This sense of a new beginning also applies to our professional lives and with the lives of those who we work with each and every day. Your administrative support staff; your secretaries, day care workers, bookkeepers, office managers and administrative assistants, are counting on you to help them begin this new year with a new sense of commitment. The commitment of enhancing the skills that they already possess by funding their membership to the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as well as budgeting the funds for them to attend an APA conference. This investment for your support staff, a mere $75 for the membership dues and approximately $500 for attendance at an APA conference, is a great way to start off this new year.

This year’s Florida Region Conference will be held from May 16th through May 20th in Sarasota, Florida. After January 24th, the registration form can be found on the Florida Region’s website, www.floridaapa.org. This is a great gift that you can give those in your office who are most supportive of you. Allow them the opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to you and your organization by encouraging them to make the resolution that this is the year that they are going to start the process to become more educated about Presbyterian Church USA history, theology and polity.

Contact Barbara Prieto, Florida Region President, at 305-666-8566 or rivierachurch@bellsouth.net to find out how your staff can begin this new year right by becoming affiliated with this great association.

Nancy Fine
Membership Chair, Florida Region of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
www.floridaapa.org

SHARI’S SHOUT OUT
Happy 2012!

Truly hope your Christmas was especially blessed. Here we are with a clean slate to start anew – what will the year bring?

Statistical Reports were sent to all Clerks of Session on December 9th. Please keep in mind that the February 22nd deadline for submission will be here in the blink of an eye. Necrology reports are due the end of January. Churches are asked to respond (None) if no elder died during the year, so that I may hear from everyone.

Church Representation at Presbytery. A letter was included with the above mailing providing each church with the number of Commissioners having voting rights in 2012. Please let me know if the letter goes astray or you have any questions.

Boundary training sessions are currently being planned – two, perhaps three sessions – for 2012. In preparing the listing for the Committee on Ministry, it was surprising how many Teaching and Ruling Elders had never attended. When the dates become available, please register as soon as possible. In accordance with Presbytery policy, Ruling Elders serving on COM, CPM and PJC are to attend.

Thank you all for your friendship and for all you do. I can’t promise not to nag this year; but with your help, I won’t!

God bless us every one!

LET’S TALK ABOUT MONEY From Susan Carpenter

IMPORTANT NOTICE: To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, do not file your 2011 income tax return until you have received a written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church. Some of your contributions may not be tax-deductible if you file your return before receiving a written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church.
UNDERSTAND KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN HEALTHCARE REFORM

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), or federal healthcare reform, determines certain “dos and don’ts” for the Medical Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), with several provisions, such as the small employer tax credit and the prohibition against placing lifetime caps on healthcare benefits, already in place.

Additional provisions are scheduled to go into effect in 2012 and 2013, and the entire law will be in full force in 2014.

To help you, as well as plan members, understand what the PPACA requires of employers and consumers and how the law affects coverage under the Medical Plan, the Board of Pensions has created a new web page, Pensions.org/healthcarereform.

Here you’ll find descriptions of the major provisions of PPACA, listed by year of implementation. Those provisions that require you to take action are highlighted. By keeping track of and responding to these action items, you can see to it that your employing organization complies with the law and maximizes potential benefits from the legislation.

The Board will update Pensions.org/healthcarereform as the law and its implications unfold. Please bookmark the page in your web browser so you can refer to it quickly.

Questions? Please call Member Services at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

TECH TALK

This year we will be preparing our newsletters to go out on the 25th of the month. Please submit your articles no later than the 15th of the month.

BIRTHDAYS

02 Dr. Mack Sigmon – First, Delray Beach
02 Rev. David Kwon – Korean, North Miami
08 Dr. Maurice Stone - HR
09 Rev. Robert Coleman – Goodwill, Ft. Pierce
12 Rev. Jack Noble - First [Pink Church], Pompano Beach
14 Rev. Mardoqueo Munoz - HR
20 Rev. Michel D. Yonts- Faith, Pembroke Pines
21 Rev. Aaron Janklow – First, Delray Beach
22 Dr. Jacqueline Rhoades - HR
23 Rev. Suk Won Han – Korean, Palm Beach
24 Rev. Jefferson P. Rogers - HR

ORDINATIONS

01 Rev. Moises J. Senti - HR
01 Dr. Jacqueline Rhoades - HR
01 Dr. Raul Fernandez-Calienes - MOS
07 Dr. Dana Allin - Indian River, Ft. Pierce
15 Dr. David Massey - Plantation Church, Plantation
21 Rev. Robert Coleman – Goodwill, Ft. Pierce
22 Rev. Martin Anorga – HR

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<th>January 2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Office Closed</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Region 2 Gathering – 1st Fort Lauderdale</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Noon COM (Region 2&amp;3) 1:00 COM</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Deadline for GA applications</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>10:00 Covenant Group</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>10:00 CON/COR 4:00 Coral Gables</td>
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<td>Region 1 lunch First Stuart 1:00 Multicultural TF</td>
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<td>Newsletter Deadline for Submissions</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>9:30 – FRC Board of Pensions Retiree Luncheon</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Presbytery Meeting – Sunrise PC</td>
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Access the annual calendar online: [http://www.tfpby.org/calendar.html](http://www.tfpby.org/calendar.html)
OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO PARTICIPATE IN SOUPER BOWL OF CARING?

JOIN THIS MOVEMENT TO FIGHT HUNGER AROUND THE TIME OF THE SUPER BOWL!

Go to www.tacklehunger now to sign up!
Join today in this simple, youth-led movement to fight hunger.
All you have to do is follow these 4 steps:

1. Register your organization at www.tacklehunger.org NOW
2. Collect your donations on or near Super Bowl Sunday-February 5th
3. Report your collection at www.tacklehunger.org
4. Donate the collection to the charity that your church chooses

If you have questions, contact Emily Heeg, Florida Director, at emilyheeg@yahoo.com or 904-288-8414.

HAITI MISSION UPDATE

As we approach the second anniversary of the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti, it might be helpful for us to look at the world picture of response. It is heartening to know that the World Bank is continuing to work there. Last month it endorsed a new 12-month strategy. See the following update, obtained from http://reliefweb.int.

Read the full article online

WINTER COURSES IN CORAL GABLES BY EDEN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

- Dr. Christopher Grundy, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship at Eden Theological Seminary will be teaching a class on Christian Public Worship right here in Florida. The course will be taught during the evening at Coral Gables Congregational United Church of Christ January 17-20 and January 23-26. There will also be a class session on Saturday January 21 from 8:30-3:00pm

- Starting in February, Dr. Kristen Leslie, Professor of Pastoral Care and Theology, will be teaching the course Pastoral Theology and Care at Coral Gables. This course will be offered one week-end a month (Friday and Saturday) during the months of February, March, April and May. This will be a hybrid course involving on-line instruction and in class work. What congregation wouldn’t appreciate their pastor taking time to brush up on their pastoral care skills?

- Eden will also be offering an on-line course Biblical Studies 1: Torah and the Former Prophets taught by Dr. John Bracke. This course begins in February.

ATTENTION SEMINARIANS – SCHOLARSHIPS MONMOUTH

What college was meant to be.

We would like to introduce you to the new Presbyterian Scholarship available at Monmouth College. The Presbyterian Scholarship awards students who are interested in connecting their faith to an education at Monmouth College.

Two Presbyterian students per state are eligible for a $5,000 scholarship. These scholarships are renewable for up to three additional years. It is our hope that you will assist us in awarding these deserving students by nominating them at monmouthcollege.edu/scholarships. Students may apply for this scholarship at the aforementioned website or by submitting the enclosed scholarship form. Additionally, students must receive a letter of recommendation from you, their Presbyterian pastor, on church letterhead. Please address these letters to: ATTN: Vice President for Enrollment.

If you have any questions regarding these Presbyterian Scholarships, contact:
Monmouth College Admissions - 700 East Broadway, Monmouth, IL 61462 – monmouthcollege.edu 800-747-2687
For additional information on Monmouth College please use the following links:
General Information www.monmouthcollege.edu
Admission Application http://www.monmouthcollege.edu/admissions/apply
Scholarships (including this Presbyterian Scholarship) http://www.monmouthcollege.edu/admissions/financialaid/scholarships.aspx
Schedule a visit to campus http://www.monmouthcollege.edu/admissions/visit
RESPONSE LETTERS TO THE PRESBYTERY

WHY STAY IN THE PC (USA)?

I love this Christian denomination known as the Presbyterian Church (USA). I haven’t always agreed with its decisions and/or actions, but I don’t leave my family when we have disagreements. We are still family, even when we have different points of view.

For many years we have been immersed in a debate about the ordination of homosexual members. Even when the current Book of Order removes from ordination standards the specific language about sexuality, we are still debating a one-size-fits-all solution to the issue. Ordination is much more than issues of sexuality. It’s about gifts, abilities, “strong faith, dedicated discipleship and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord” (G-2.0104a). Ordination is not about adopting left/right worldviews, it is about learning by Jesus’ example and following it. Ordination is about joyful submission “to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life” (G-2.0104b), yet we have tied ordination to sexual orientation as the main aspect of life over others.

I’m deeply saddened by our practice of labeling everyone as liberal or conservative and the subsequent demonization of those in one side or another. I feel hurt when someone puts into question my fidelity to the Scriptures because I don’t embrace his/her understanding of what “biblical authority” is. My heart breaks every time someone tells me that in order to be faithful to Christ I have to leave the PC(USA). In this denomination I learned about God’s amazing grace. In this denomination I learned the humbling power of God’s love, a love that is deeper than my vices and more excellent than my virtues. In this denomination I learned to study the Bible to find in its pages the living Word of God, Jesus Christ. In this denomination I learned to rely on the Holy Spirit who constantly renews and transforms my life. In this denomination I learned that the heart and the brain are not enemies, but partners. In this denomination I learned that compassion is not a “feeling”, but concrete acts of love. In this denomination I learned that whatever I do, in word or deed, is for the sole glory of God, and not for my satisfaction or amusement. Nothing in our confessional heritage, as gathered in the Book of Confessions, nor in the current or former Book of Order changes what I have learned in this denomination, but affirms it.

I respect the points of views of those who are leaving. I respect their right to choose whether to stay or not. I’d rather they stay. «The eye can never say to the hand “I don’t need you”. The head can’t say to the feet “I don’t need you”» (1 Cor 12.21 NLT). I believe that we are better together. I am convinced that what we have in common is more valuable than the issues that divide us. We still have a mission to do, as expressed in “The great ends of the Church” (F-1.0304):

«the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world

So help us God
Jose Manuel Capella-Pratts M.Div.
"I know the plans I have for you...to give you a future with hope." Jeremiah 29:11

On January 2-3, 2012, Ruling Elder Cindy Bolbach, Moderator of the 219th General Assembly of the PC(USA) (2010), and her Vice-Moderator, Teaching Elder Landon Whittitt, gathered six elders of the denomination together in Chicago for a conversation. These elders represented the wide spectrum of the church, but they each shared a significant conviction in common: *The God we serve desires us to work together in unity.*

During their time together, these elders - Theresa Cho, Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri, Jack Haberer, Julia Henderson, E. Stanley Ott, Byron Wade - reflected on the Epistle lesson of the day, Ephesians 4:1-16, and shared their hopes for the church and where they saw God working.

In the hope that their time together might strengthen and encourage the whole church, the group drafted a letter and recorded a conversation. You can find both below.

It is the expectation of these six elders, the Moderator, and the Vice-Moderator that their’s is not the final word on the subject, and that everyone has seen signs of genuine hope for the PC(USA). Please take a bit of time to make a video of your own, or to write a blog post, and share with the church why you believe this to be the beginning, not the end, of what God has planned for us. Also feel free to email the Moderator and Vice-Moderator, so that they can continue to share your stories with the whole church.

Hope for the PCUSA letter (English)
Hope for the PCUSA letter (Español)
http://hopeforthepcusa.blogspot.com/?v=0

Dr. Gary Cecil,
Former members of Tropical Florida Presbytery.

It saddens me to read these letters from friends on both sides of the issue, knowing how much I value each and yet to see the division. Where I sit now as senior pastor at Madison Presbyterian Church in N.E. Georgia Presbytery, I have found here that our folks won’t let any polity decisions separate them from their church, even though there is not a lot of love for presbytery or GA. But they love Christ, and love each other, and that is their defining “polity” and theology. I also have found that we spend so much energy parsing phrases yet miss the bigger picture. For instance, in G-2.0104b, it does say “guided by Scripture and the confessions” but it also speaks of all aspects of our life joyfully submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ AND refers us to the questions for ordination where it specifically speaks to the Scriptures as, by the Holy Spirit, unique and authoritative and God’s Word to us. I do think the word “authoritative” is used there, and that, for me, provides some balance to the clause in question. Furthermore, elders are called to discern and measure its [the congregation’s] fidelity to the Word of God - what’s wrong with that? Notice that the word "fidelity" is still around and used in a very important way here. What of our conscience being "captive to the Word of God"?

My point is, we let ourselves get hung up on a word or phrase at the expense of the greater witness we are called to honor in Jesus Christ. I, and my session, like this new order in many ways, especially in how it give us more flexibility for mission at the local level. It’s actually more like the old PCUS polity before reunion in some ways.

Ministry is guided by Scripture and confessions. I see nothing offensive about that when it is understood that they are unique and authoritative witnesses to Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. So, I guess I just don’t see all the fuss unless it’s really not about that, but about a greater discontent that’s been festering for a while. I had two families leave over this - just two. Both complained that we would be promoting the ordination of gays now and that we don’t believe the Scriptures. Both now attend a church whose denomination openly ordains gays more than we do. It wasn’t about the polity - they just wanted to go check out the grass on the other side. By the way, we have gained more than have left - again not because of a Book of Order but because of the kind of welcoming and serving community for Christ that we are. And just a caveat: our Engage conference on Evangelism quoted from this new Book of Order more than I can remember in previous years. Evangelists are excited about some of the new language we’ve adopted.

Let me say that I’m not making light of the concerns I’ve read here. But I’m finding that all politics and polity break down to the local level and its leadership. As the servant/leader of this church, I choose to focus on knowing, growing in and serving the Christ to whom, by the Holy Spirit, we witness in the unique and authoritative Scriptures and confessions. So please be with you all, and I continue to pray for you no matter where all this may lead you, for I know all of you are seeking to follow your conscience before the Lord who loves you.

Respectfully yours in the grace of our Lord,
A New Denomination, continuing ties to PC(USA)

A report from the Fellowship of Presbyterians conference
By Leslie Scanlon, Presbyterian Outlook national reporter
ORLANDO, FLA.

Most of the 2,100 people who came to the Fellowship of Presbyterians’ Covenanting Conference, held Jan. 18-20 in Orlando, are not yet ready to leave the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Instead, they’re still trying to discern what to do next.

“I’m not really sure we have really dreamed for a long time,” said John Ortberg, an author and pastor of Menlo Park Church in California. “I think God is calling us to dream.”

Along with the dreams came a bucket of nuts and bolts (pensions, health plans, per capita and more). The Fellowship’s board of directors approved revised theology and polity documents that form the new denomination’s constitution. They announced plans for another national gathering, to be held Aug. 23-24 in a place yet to be determined. It will be partly a gathering for mutual support and worship, partly a formal business meeting.

It’s also clear that most evangelicals aren’t leaving the PC(USA). Some aren’t ready to make the switch yet, some don’t want to go at all (although that could change if the PC(USA) decides to allow its ministers to perform same-gender marriages). Relatively few are pursuing the idea of achieving union status with both the ECO and the PC(USA).

Evangelical congregations may have several reasons for staying in the PC(USA), said Jim Singleton, a Colorado pastor and president of the Fellowship. Some may feel it’s too costly to go to the ECO; some may not want to risk rupturing a divided congregation; some feel they already do effective ministry and have solid relationships within PC(USA).

Some evangelicals staying in the PC(USA) also will join the Fellowship as a way of differentiating themselves — to align with other evangelicals in networks of mutual accountability,
and to stand in opposition to the PC(USA)’s controversial decision last year to allow the ordination of sexually active gays and lesbians.

Here are more details regarding the Fellowship and the new denomination.

**ESSENTIAL TENETS.** Included in the ECO’s theology document is a section on essential tenets, with which those being ordained in the new denomination or having leadership roles in its congregations are expected to agree. That section, however, is apparently still under revision. Laura Smit, a theology professor and its primary author, described it as a “paper-cup document” (to be used for a while, then replaced with something better), rather than a cherished crystal goblet handed down through the generations.

The essential tenets are “not a subscriptionist bullet-point list of eight essential things you have to believe to get in the door” of the ECO, said John Crosby, a Minnesota pastor and president of the ECO. Crosby said in an interview that the essential tenets are bedrock theological teachings listed in boldface in the document, and that the Fellowship’s board of directors retains the authority to make changes in the constitutional documents for the next 18 months, while the ECO is taking shape.

“Everything we do around here is a draft,” Singleton said.

**FINANCES.** The Fellowship has begun raising money. It ended the gathering with a Covenanting Service where pledge cards were passed out and people were asked to sign a covenant of support with the broader Fellowship umbrella group, not specifically with the ECO. The Fellowship has set what its leaders call a “bare-bones” budget of $500,000 for 2012. For congregations entering the ECO, the per capita would be 1 percent of the congregation’s budget. Joining the Fellowship will cost $250 a year for congregations and $125 for individuals.

**NEW ECOSYSTEM.** Leaders spoke of having in the ECO a solid theological center; mutual accountability through peer evaluations of ministry; and an ethos that allows for flexibility, risk-taking and trust.

“This is not a safe harbor” but a vessel for those “who want to be in ships that sail out into the storm,” said Joe Farrell, a Colorado minister who worked on the polity document.

“We’ve had this deep longing for belonging,” said Marnie Crumpler, a minister with Peachtree Church in Atlanta. “This is our tribe. These are our people.”

When asked why evangelicals should choose the ECO rather than the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Singleton said there’s one clear distinction: The EPC has an “ambivalent” position on the ordination of women, while the ECO celebrates the gifts of women in ministry.

For further reports, go to www.pres-outlook.org
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**SHARI’S SHOUT OUT**

**Misconduct Prevention Training**  
Myrtle Grove Presbyterian Church  
Saturday, February 4th  
(Reservation)

Plantation Presbyterian Church
Monday, April 30th  
(Registration)
Both – 9:30-3:30

Cost: $25, includes book and lunch  
(Members of COM, PJC and CPM pay $5 / balance offset by committee budget)

You may sign up for your preferred location and date by calling me at the Presbytery office or sending an email to shari@tfpby.org. You may also fax your registration form (954-785-1983) for either the February or April session.

According to our records, many people should be registering.

Pastors who last took this training in 2007 are due to take it again; those who last attended in 2006 are overdue! Elders (teaching and ruling) whose names are on the Presbytery approved pulpit supply listing must attend. Honorable Retirees who serve a church in any capacity must attend. Newer minister members who have received training during the past five years elsewhere need to submit a certificate for their file to be exempted from attendance.

Packets will be mailed on Valentine’s Day for the Presbytery meeting on February 25.

Show your love by making lunch reservations now at www.tfpby.org (lower right wide of the home page).

How are the Statistical Reports coming along?  
Deadline February 22nd.
LET’S TALK ABOUT MONEY  Susan Carpenter

Clergy and spouses, Church Treasurers, Business Administrators, Session Leaders
Thursday March 1, 2012 RENDER UNTO CAESAR Seminar presented by The Board of Pension First Presbyterian Church of Miami

Seminarians, candidates and inquirers, Early- to mid-career clergy and lay plan members and spouses
Wednesday February 29, 2012 GETTING IN SHAPE Fiscally Seminar presented by The Board of Pension Presbytery of Tropical Florida offices

TECH TALK Delphia Sullivan
On our website you will find various documents, Powerpoint slides and You Tube videos related to Gracious Separation for you to watch or download.

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION

What will your administrative staff be doing from May 16 to May 20, 2012? Will they be working in the office doing their weekly tasks or will they be joining other administrative personnel at this year’s Florida Region Administrative Personnel Association Conference in Sarasota?

This year’s conference offers a great opportunity for your staff to grow in their professional and spiritual life. Led by clergy and other professionals, the knowledge gained by their attendance will enhance their ability to more effectively allow them to serve their respective organization.

Encourage your lay staff to join the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Membership forms can be found on the Florida Region’s website, www.floridaapa.org. While there, make sure to download the registration form for the 2012 Florida Region Conference. For a small investment in your administrative staff, they will return from the conference with the knowledge and spiritual wellbeing to be more effective in their jobs.

Show your administrative staff that they are a valuable asset to you and your congregation. Make sure to let them know that you are willing to invest in them by paying their membership dues ($75) and conference expenses (approximately $500). For a small investment in them, you will gain a happier and loyal staff member who knows that they are valued.

If you want to know how the APA can benefit your organization, contact Barbara Prieto, Florida Region President, at 305-666-8566 or rivierachurch@bellsouth.net. Nancy Fine Membership Chair, Florida Region of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA) www.floridaapa.org

Clergy and lay plan retirees, spouses and surviving spouses
Tuesday February 28, 2012 POST-RETIREMENT Seminar presented by The Board of Pension Lakeside Presbyterian Church, West Palm Beach

REGISTER ONLINE AT THE BOARD OF PENSION WEBSITE www.pensions.org

Please check out your Church’s Page and let us know if the information we have is correct, including websites that are not listed.

Coming next month we working on a website template that we hope churches that do not have a site can use and adapt.
Dear fellow presbyters,

Coming up on Sunday, Feb. 5, many of us will host friends and family to watch the Super Bowl game. I hope you will also consider hosting a "Souper Bowl of Caring" Party as you gather with your congregations! Right now, in our country, 1 of every 6 people is food insecure. Even more startling is the truth that 1 of every 5 children in the United States is food insecure right now. They may not know from where their next meal will come. As people of faith, we have a unique opportunity to reflect God's love especially to those who are hungry and suffering. Please collect non-perishable food for these families who don't have enough to eat. If you aren't sure what to think about the adults in need of food, please think of the 1 in 5 children who could have something to eat because you took the time to ask for these donations!

See attached for a Souper Bowl of Caring logo to use in your January bulletins to remind your congregations that food will be collected at worship on Sunday, Feb. 5. Also, see below for food programs in each region of the Presbytery that will welcome your food donations next month. If possible, please call them in advance to find out how and when is best to deliver the food to them.

Thank you in advance for all you do to serve the under-served in our community.

Blessings,
Rev. Amy Baer

Hunger Action Enabler, Tropical Florida Presbytery

**REGION 1**
Treasure Coast Food Bank (Martin County)
3051 Industrial 25th Street
Fort Pierce, FL 34946
772.489.5676

C.R.O.S. Ministries Food Pantries (Palm Beach County)
Pantries located in Jupiter, Riviera Beach, Lake Worth, Delray Beach and Belle Glade
http://www.crosministries.org/pantries.htm
561-233-9009, ext. 105

**REGION 2**
Follow this link for an extensive listing of Broward County food programs:
http://www.adrcbroward.org/foodpantries.php

**REGION 3**
Pass it on Ministries (Miami)
14617 NW 7th Ave
Miami, FL 33168
(305) 681-1594

Food Bag Ministries (Miami)
8000 NW 25 St.
Miami, FL 33122
305-305-1988

Florida Keys Outreach Coalition (Keys)
http://www.fkoc.org/donate.html
305-295-7580

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**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WEST PALM BEACH CELEBRATES 90TH ANNIVERSARY**

First Presbyterian Church of West Palm Beach is celebrating its 90th anniversary in February. Several events are scheduled throughout the year with the cornerstone event being a Service of Thanksgiving and Homecoming sometime in the Spring. Reverend Shirley Saunders has now served the church for over two years and members are once again joining...Praise God! During one of the anniversary observances, we will unveil a new plaque in our sanctuary to honor our senior Elder, Yvonne Hewitt, who has been our "rock and stay" during times of transition. Her faithful determination coupled with Pastor Shirley’s positive leadership have ensured us being there for our 90th celebration! Our main missional outreach is our Monday Night Meal Ministry which serves hot meals to the homeless and less fortunate and also supplies toiletries, backpacks and blankets. Pastor Shirley leads our guests in a short devotional before dinner and Patricia Glover, meal coordinator, leads the volunteers in a time of study and prayer. Three area churches as well as students from PBAU assist us on a rotating basis and many denominations are represented. Our Korean brothers and sisters, who share our facilities at First Church, also assist with monetary help and special gifts from time to time... so we truly feel that we are being the "hands and feet of Christ". As we celebrate our 90th year, we will continue to be "the loving heart of the city" and our goal for the next 90 years is, as our new mission statement declares, "To love and Serve Christ and His People"!!!!
FROM YOUR EARTH

Weather is important for people living in Florida. Weather is important to your economy in the winter. Weather is the impetus for increasing cost of homeownership as wind and flood insurance premiums rise. Weather is what keeps your water supply flowing. Weather is why many of you live in Florida. How you treat the earth and its resources affects weather. This year my day, Earth Day, falls on a Sunday. That’s right, April 22 is a Sunday. I want to encourage you to talk about me that Sunday maybe you will deliver a sermon about the stewardship of God’s creation.

Remember, the better you take care of me, the better the weather will be in Florida for future generations.

Love, Your Earth

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Eco-Palms and your church: your role in supporting social and environmental justice

More than 300 million palm fronds are harvested each year for U.S. consumption alone — most of them for Palm Sunday, but also for floral displays for church-related events. Your congregation’s commitment to purchase eco-palms plays an important role in protecting forests, local jobs, and sustainable livelihoods in the harvesting communities.

Continue reading

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PRAYERS

- For the ruling elders, deacons and church volunteers for their contributions of time and talent
- For the churches of the presbytery opening their doors to people seeking Jesus Christ
- For the churches of the presbytery reaching out to support and serve their communities
- For the ten churches discerning separation
- For the leadership of the PC (USA)
- For Jacky Rhoades who is in the hospital
- For John Hendricks, hospitalized in ICU, and his family
- For Pedro Rivera who was released from the hospital on Thursday
- Thanksgiving for retiring Jim Nimmo and his wife Anne who have served for 45 years in ministry
- Thanksgiving, for the service and leadership of Council Chair John Terech
- Thanksgiving, for Interim Stated Clerk Michel Yonts’ service and guidance.
- Thanksgiving, for the service of Bryan Wenger, Region 1 Associate Missional Presbyterian
- Thanksgiving, for the 10th anniversary of All Villages

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BIRTHDAYS

01  Dr. James Nimmo III – First, Port St. Lucie
02  Rev. Raquel Welty - HR
03  Rev. Ryan Baer – Lakeside, West Palm Beach
11  Dr. Raymond Gamble - HR
17  Rev. Van Lahmeyer – First, Miami Springs
21  Dr. Sam Rutland - Miami Shores, Miami Shores
26  Rev. John Stewart - MOS

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ORDINATIONS

05  Rev. Julio Delgado – HR
20  Rev. Kim Kavazanjian – Central, Miami
21  Dr. Elaine Klaassen - HR
24  Rev. Patricia Ashley - HR
YOU WANT TO PRAY, BUT YOU’RE NOT SURE HOW TO PRAY FOR YOUR PASTOR.

From Otoniel Bermudez:

I’ve listed below 10 prayer requests that can help you start.

- Insight into scripture and an understanding of how it applies to people today.
- Protection from the work of Satan.
- Help him/her keep a soft heart in the face of abrasive and abusive people.
- His/her personal spiritual growth.
- A successful ministry – however God defines success in your pastor’s life.
- Boldness to speak the truth, and grace to speak it with humility.
- That s/he would persevere through whatever trial s/he is facing.
- If you pastor has children, that they will grow up with a positive impression of church ministry.
- If you pastor is married, that s/he would remain pure, and that the love for his/her spouse would increase daily.
- That you would know how to encourage your pastor today.

PRAY FOR YOUR P-A-S-T-O-R

Here’s another way to pray for your pastor - especially if you have trouble remembering what to pray about. Use the letters of the word, P-A-S-T-O-R to remind you of specific prayer requests. For example:

P - Purity. Pray that your pastor will remain pure in the face of constant pressure in an immoral culture.
A - Adversity. Pray for your pastor that s/he will be able to confront adversity with faith and endurance.
S - Strength. Most pastors work long hours and at least six days a week. Pray that s/he will have the strength to continue his/her ministry.
T - Teaching. Pray for your pastor that his/her teaching and preaching will be effective, powerful, and clear.
O - Organization. Your pastor has more to do than any one person can handle. Pray for your pastor that s/he will be able to prioritize correctly.
R - Rest. Your pastor needs rest. Pray that your pastor will sleep well each night and that s/he will take enough time away from ministry so that s/he does not get worn out.

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<td>10:00 - Council</td>
<td>Noon – COM (Region 2&amp;3)</td>
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<td>1:00 – COM</td>
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<td>Noon COM (Region 2&amp;3)</td>
<td>7-8 Synod</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>10:00 - Multicultural</td>
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<td>PW – Annual Gathering, Korean Miami, Ft. Lauderdale</td>
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<td>10:00 - Covenant Group</td>
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<td>10:00 – Multicultural</td>
<td>10:00 – MOSJP</td>
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<td>Statistical Deadline</td>
<td>22 9:30 – FRC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presbytery Meeting – Sunrise PC</td>
<td>5:00 – PRT/PUP</td>
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<td>4:00 – Multicultural Gathering, Myrtle Grove</td>
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Access the annual calendar online: [http://www.tfpby.org/calendar.html](http://www.tfpby.org/calendar.html)

SPRING YOUTH EVENT

This is always a fun event which is greatly anticipated and enjoyed.
Save the dates – April 27-29 – to join Tropical Florida youth at Gold Coast.
More info to follow.
OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

HAITI MISSION UPDATE

One of the ways in which our presbytery is engaged in mission with Haitians, including earthquake survivors, is through the partnership of First, Hollywood with Temple Beth El, Hollywood and Project Papillon in Haiti. Recently Kennedy McGowan, pastor of First, Hollywood went to Haiti in conjunction with this work. Here’s his reflection on this mission:

This past Sunday at First in Hollywood, we showed 28 children’s faces on the screen in the sanctuary, the faces of the 28 kids that we support at the three Project Papillon house orphanages in Port Au Prince. Of those 28 children, about a third are HIV positive.

While those faces mean a lot to all the folks at our congregation, they meant a little bit more that Sunday as only four days before I had been hugging those same kids as part of one of our regular delegations to the work that we do there. How God has worked so powerfully since we heard God’s call five years ago to launch this work remains amazing to me.

Since that first trip, our congregation and our partners at Temple Beth El, have not only had the opportunity to start the HIV house at Project Papillon, but help launch a school for our kids, and now a community center to minister to thousands more in the general area who are still recovering from the earthquake.

Two years after the quake, Haiti is beginning to recover and move forward, slowly but surely. The new President has given an injection of energy and optimism to the people. And in our ministries, our kids remain healthy and strong. Some of them now attend high school, and we spoke with John Dieubon, our partner there about plans to get those older kids into colleges so that they can have a future outside of the homes. In addition, we talked about the transportation struggles as all of Project Papillon’s vehicles are out of commission, and committed to raise $20,000 or more to help the project purchase at least a used vehicle.

Yet even as we talked about these challenges, we saw how the community center, begun only months after the quake, is making a huge impact with programs on everything from microfinance to music to computer basics. We saw the internet and copy center that helps defray the costs of these programs, the music room and worship center where Project Papillon conducts outreaches to the neighborhood, and the various other rooms and offices abuzz with activity. And we made a special visit to see our partners John and Ruth Dieubon’s first born, the beautiful Grahyah! We had an opportunity to run a shoe store to share the new sneakers and shoes that we had brought over for the Papillon kids, along with about 500 pounds of new and gently used clothes. As Project Papillon is a receiving agency for Samaritan’s Purse Operation Christmas Child, we got to share in giving hundreds of gifts to children of a local tent city too. (If your congregation participates in this program, please know that these gifts do get to the people who need them!)

And beyond all those good works, we laughed, and ate and drank and shared with our Haitian partners and with one another. To put it honestly, we had a blast.

As I arrive in Haiti, I can’t help but find myself sobered, even pained by what I see. Two years after the earthquake, you still see collapsed houses, and huge tent cities. The challenging realities of so little infrastructure and so much poverty seem overwhelming. Yet after seeing how the Haitian people confront their circumstances with such courage, hope and faith, I leave renewed, even strengthened. I realize that I have received far more than anything I brought to give.

As we continue this ministry, we are always open to share with new partners the blessings of this work. If you are interested in learning more or joining a future trip, please don’t hesitate to contact me at kennedym@fcoh.org.

REBUILDING HOPE IN HAITI

TWO YEARS LATER

Two years after the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti, many people who gave to charities are asking why they are not seeing more progress. The answer is often that charitable groups were focused on the immediate needs with little emphasis on long term recovery.

This is what sets the response by PC(USA) and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance apart from other relief efforts in Haiti.

PDA placed a strong emphasis on working with longstanding local and ecumenical partners. These Haitian partners already had the trust of local communities before the quake struck, and so they were able to help facilitate the ongoing PC(USA) response.
We are working to maintain and use these long-time partnerships to help repair and rebuild homes, support agricultural sustainability, empower people who became disabled from the earthquake, and promote long term recovery.

Visit the PC(USA) Haiti Response web page for stories and updates on some of the ways YOU are walking with Haitians as they rebuild their lives.

REGISTER FOR THE 4TH INSTITUTE OF MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY BUILDING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

February 16-18, 2012 | Princeton, N.J.

Participants will hear about and learn best practices of theological, ethical, social and pastoral frameworks for engaging multicultural ministry as Christian leaders and clergy, particularly in building dialogue and community in the areas of: interracial/ethnic relations and ministry, socio-economic disparities, and gender differences.

The institute will close with a panel discussion lead by the leaders of the institute where leaders and the participants will have a chance to share their questions, concerns and hopes of an intentional diverse ministry.

Register now and read more about the keynote speakers
Download a flier

SECURITY FOR HOUSE OF WORSHIP

For those of you who missed the class at Presbytery given by Palm Beach Deputy Eddie Nelson, another opportunity has been offered.

Deputy Nelson will be conducting this training at his own church on March 3, 10 to noon.

Where: Orthodox Zion Primitive Baptist Church, 2900 Australian Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33407
Free, refreshments will be served
CELEBRATING OUR ELDERS

Elder E. Birch Willey of First Presbyterian Church of Fort Lauderdale is one of our resident historians helping us to celebrate Fort Lauderdale’s 100th Birthday in 2011 and our church’s 100th birthday in 2012. Born in Marion, Ohio, Birch calls Arkansas his home state. He moved to Fort Lauderdale in 1956 and has been part of our First Church family since 1958. Bearing his mother’s family name, Birch is also tied to Fort Lauderdale through distant ancestor Hugh Taylor Birch.

Entrepreneur E. Birch Willey opened the first color photo processing lab in the county and ran what would become Fort Lauderdale's well-known Hobby House Camera Shop. In 1996 Birch was awarded the City of Fort Lauderdale Distinguished Citizen Award as a resident of the community who has contributed to the development of the community over a number of years.

Birch and wife Claudia have two grown daughters and both Birch and Claudia have been extensively involved at First Presbyterian Church. Birch has served as an Elder and Deacon, taught adult Church School classes, and given numerous lectures on the history of the City and our Church both at church and community functions.

He was one of the first men enlisted by the Junior League in the development of the Museum of Discovery and Science and served on the Museum Board for over 20 years. In addition he has served on the Boards of the Community Blood Center of South Florida, the Homeless Initiative of Broward County, Parker Playhouse, Habitat for Humanity of Broward and the City of Fort Lauderdale Code Board. He is also an active Rotarian and is a member of the Fort Lauderdale Executive Association.

We love Birch Willey (especially when he takes us fishing in the Everglades!)

As a new pastor to FPC Miami, I’ve spent much of my first two months listening to the stories and histories of our church family. When I asked Jeffrey Hooper, one of our ruling elders, why he felt called to join and serve FPC Miami, he responded, "I felt like it needed me, and I needed it." His response reminded me of Frederick Buechner's famous line, "Where our deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet, we hear a further call."

FPC Miami has been so blessed that Jeffrey has responded to God’s “further call” to bless our community of faith through joyful service. Although Jeffrey serves to work wholeheartedly for the Lord alone (Col. 3:23), it has been and will continue to be a privilege to serve God alongside him. May God continue to raise up a generation of servant leaders like this one!

CLERGY NEWS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRESBYTERIAN CLERGYWOMEN NEWS

The National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen held its triennial gathering aboard the cruise ship Carnival Destiny, February 2-5, 2012. The cruise was a creative idea to encourage more clergywomen to join the organization and to spend quality time studying and sharing with other clergywomen in a relaxed environment. Those who joined the cruise were inspired by the various worship services and the many discussions and workshops around the topic “Many Waters, One Baptism.” The keynote speaker for the event was Rev. Theresa Cho who delivered inspiring messages on living out our baptisms in a way that glorifies God over and above our unique calls.

We have conversations and dialogues, workshops, exercise and reflection time. We observed women in Cozumel and made a visit to the Trinity Presbyterian church in Key West where the Rev. Dr. Gwendolyn Magby greeted us and gave us a tour of the church property.

During our business meeting, new officers were elected as follows:

Cecelia Armstrong, Co-Moderator
Rebecca Tollefson, Co-Moderator
Susan Barnes, Membership Secretary
Rebecca Harrison, National Conference Coordinator
Elizabeth Coleman, Pastoral Care/Chaplain Coordinator
Cheryl Thorne, PCUSA Liaison
Arlene Gordon, Seminary Liaison
Jane Busey, Secretary and Newsletter Editor
Anne Marie Meyerhoffer, Treasurer
Georgia Ann Snell, Historian

Over 80 women attended the conference. Three male spouses accompanied their clergy wives and four elders joined the group. Rev. Mary Paik and her husband traveled the farthest distance to be a part of the event. It was an awesome experience for all who attended and it will be remembered for many years to come as one of the best gatherings. For more information, contact Rebecca Tollefson at mailto:rtollefson@ohcouncilchs.org
The February Presbytery meeting was exciting and forward looking as the body met at Sunrise Presbyterian Church in Hialeah. Following a most gracious and encouraging welcome from host Pastor, Pedro Rivera, we were asked to keep the Sunrise congregation and ministry in prayer, particularly as they are having *Santeria* (a Caribbean form of witchcraft) sacrifices left on their church property weekly! But our God is more powerful than the forces of darkness that seek to desecrate His house.

The business of the Presbytery:

- The Interim Stated Clerk presented the current roster of teaching elder members of Presbytery, along with the new distribution of ruling elder commissioners assigned to each church.
- The Administrative Commission on Discernment presented their report and led the Presbytery in a time of learning and discussion regarding issues surrounding the GSA process. The Presbytery voted to approve 3 Reformed bodies as acceptable destinations upon dismissal: Reformed Church in America (RCA), Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), and the new Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO). The Presbytery also voted that the AC will add language to the GSA’s terms of dismissal to protect against a congregation seeking dismissal to independence after being dismissed to another Reformed body. The Presbytery received as a first reading an amendment to the GSA to require an opportunity for the Presbytery to make a case for remaining in the PCUSA at a Town Hall meeting (note: this is already happening, but adding it to the GSA will ensure best practice).
- The Treasurer had reported that Faith Presbyterian Church, Pembroke Pines, has requested that the Presbytery continue to hold the mortgage on the Church when the church invokes the provisions of the GSA and leaves the denomination. Both FRC and the Faith PRT have agreed to make this request a part of their GSA terms of dismissal.
- The Council report included actions to: 1) approve refinancing for All Villages Presbyterian Church PILP loans as a part of their participation in the GSA process; 2) prepare the way for the Korean Presbyterian Church of Miami to purchase property and move from 2nd, Fort Lauderdale, to a site in Cooper City.
- Human Resources Committee presented the appointment of a Temporary Stated Clerk, the Rev. Dr. Skip Bush, for a period of 6 months, his terms, and an amended job description for the position.
- The worship of the Presbytery continued with the preaching of the Word by the Moderator, Dr. Gwendolyn Magby. Her rousing sermon encouraged us to “trust God.” The 2011 Necrology report was read (available on the Presbytery web site), and the sacrament of the Lord’s Table was celebrated.
- The offering taken for relief work in Sub-Saharan Africa totaled $1,010 (the first time a Presbytery offering has exceeded $1,000). The Centsibility offering at the door on the way to lunch collected $165.
- Committee on Ministry presented the following actions, all of which were approved: 1) an Interim Pastor covenant was established between Dr. Robert Sullivan and First, Port St. Lucie; 2) renewed the Commissioned Lay Pastor relationship between First, Lake Worth, and Ruling Elder Victor Blandford; 3) renewed the Stated Supply covenant between Calvary, Coconut Creek, and Dr. Timothy Stover; 4) approved the change in status for the Rev. Shirley Saunders from Temporary Supply to installed Pastor for First, West Palm Beach; 5) approve the change in status for the Rev. Kim Kavazijian from Temporary Supply Associate Pastor to installed Associate Pastor; 6) approved the covenant between Mr. Edwin Collado and the Palmetto Church as temporary Co-Pastor, and approved him for ordination and membership in the Presbytery; 7) dismissed the Rev. Donna Wrzeszcz to Black Hawk Presbytery; 8) dissolved the First Spanish Presbyterian Church of Ft. Lauderdale at their request effective February 25, 2012; 9) dissolved the affiliate relationship with St. Andrews and Lucaya Presbyterian Churches in the Bahamas as they have joined the Evangelical Presbyterian Church as full members.
- Committee on Nominations presided over the election of General Assembly Commissioners to the 2012 Assembly in Pittsburg, PA. Elected as Teaching Elder Commissioners were the Rev. Dr. David Massey and the Rev. Dr. Gwendolyn Magby. Alternate will be the Rev. Pedro Rivera. Elected as Ruling Elder Commissioners were Elders Marianne Shine and Elizabeth Torres. There is no alternate. On nomination from the floor Corrine Robertson was elected as YAD.
- Other committee and commissioner vacancies were filled – only one by ballot vote. For the position of Coordinating Council Chair, Committee on Nominations had placed the name of the Rev. David Kwon. The Rev. Dr. Laurie Kraus was nominated from the floor. Following the ballot vote it was announced that the Rev. David Kwon was elected to the position.
- NCD reported and the Presbytery approved an NCD probe in the Parkland community to be named Wellspring Community Church. The church planter and his team were presented to the Presbytery.
- The final action of the Presbytery this day was to install Ruling Elder Dwayne Black, Jr., as Moderator for Tropical Florida Presbytery in 2012. Moderator Gwen Magby asked the constitutional questions and prayed for the new moderator. Elder Black presented Gwen with a moderatoral cross as a commemoration of her year as moderator and in thanks for her service. Wayne will assume the gavel at the May meeting of Presbytery.

In the midst of all this, and other business, we greatly enjoyed the hospitality of Sunrise Presbyterian Church, Hialeah, along with worship and fellowship as a Presbytery.
RESPONSE LETTER TO GRACIOUS SEPARATION

Dear Friends in Ministry,

A number of you have asked if I was going to respond to the call from the Presbytery to share my thoughts on the current state of churches considering leaving the PCUSA. Up until this point, I have delayed in putting down those thoughts simply because I hadn’t yet processed exactly what those thoughts were. But in the last week, more clarity has come as I have seen how immensely and painfully distracting this process has become in the life of our Presbytery. So here, briefly (as briefly as this pastor can be!), is why I believe what is happening among us to be a tragic mistake that will hamper the mission of Christ in our midst, and what we can do to not only reduce that hampering, but maybe even turn this lemon into some divinely constituted lemonade.

First, I cannot but believe this move to separation is a tragic mistake because scripture says it is. In the midst of people talking about the disappearance of Biblical authority in the PCUSA, I have not heard much addressing the Biblical basis for this church split beyond some references to Abraham and Lot and Paul and Barnabas. Even in those cases, scripture makes it clear that neither of those divisions are what God intended. Simply God worked as best as God could with what human sinfulness created. And when it comes to the case of Christian communities dividing, I have heard no justification, because simply put, no Biblical case can be made. From Jesus’ high priestly prayer to Paul’s letters, scripture calls for unity not division. In fact, it proclaims that disunity profoundly compromises the gospel. The tragic history of Christian division only confirms this Biblical truth. In fact, the ecumenical movement began because missionaries saw how our divisions were compromising the mission of spreading the gospel around the world. Beyond the mess it’s created in worldwide Christianity, the history of the PCUSA confirms the Biblical wisdom again and again. Since our first significant split in 1837, the splits in the American Presbyterian family have only served to weaken our witness and hamper our mission. In the end, they have always been lose-lose propositions.

In some sense, this most recent division seeks to do it differently. We, as a Presbytery, have developed a policy that helps us deal gracefully, lovingly and fairly with one another in the midst of potential separation. And ECO and the Fellowship have also sought to move in a way that is as positive and loving as possible. Yet, even so, already this split has hampered our mission just as a Presbytery. I and others on both sides of this split have had to spend many hours dealing with the intricacies of the process, and ensuring that it is done fairly and justly for all involved. Those hours have taken time and energy away from the mission of our Presbytery. We will recover that momentum but it will not come without cost. Once the dust has settled, we will yet have further losses from which to recover as we deal with losses of leadership and funding from those churches who choose to leave, and as those separated churches try to organize themselves in a new setting.

Even as I have heard the vision of those leaving, including Ortberg’s eloquence at the conference in Orlando, I still see people retreating from a difficult task (the transformation of our denomination) and trying to rationalize that retreat as a bold advance for the gospel. As many words as I hear casting that rationalizing vision; I don’t buy it. If God can speak the universe into existence, God can certainly transform and reform the PCUSA. Will it be easy? No. But God doesn’t turn away from difficult tasks. The cross shows us that. And if God doesn’t turn away, it puzzles me why so many churches have decided to do so.

Still, as I write this I am aware that my words are a bit like that old story about King Canute trying to order the tide to go out (if you don’t know it – google it – it’s a great story). Whatever words I write here will not change what is happening among us. This tide will continue to roll out. But even so, that tide does not discourage me. Why?

Though I believe that God doesn’t like it, I also believe that God still wants to work in it. Romans 8:28 remains in the Bible, and when God says that “I work all things together for good”, God doesn’t say all good things; God says all things. I may see this separation as a bad thing, while others see it as a good thing. On that point, sisters and brothers can and will faithfully disagree. But we can all agree that God can use it for good, if we stay focused on loving God and living according to God’s purpose. What can seem to be lose-lose or maybe win-lose can be in God’s hands, win – win. How might that happen?

While we may disagree on some points of theology and polity that will cause us to separate denominationally, we can stay united missionally around the vision that we developed together; moving from being reducing Presbyterians to reproducing Presbyterians albeit in two different denominational entities. We can do that by developing networks or partnerships together around mutually shared mission. For example, churches that are still engaged in work in Mexico can develop a separate network that spans congregations in both denominations (this arrangement may enable us to continue our Presbytery’s partnership with the church there in a form acceptable to the Presbyterian Church in Mexico). We could do similar networks or partnerships in the areas of church planting or missional coaching, and in this way continue in those areas of mission that continue to unite us. In this way, the mission that God has been growing among us continues. In addition, we have the opportunity to continue to relate to each other through these networks. This form of collaboration has precedent in our own denomination, and has worked cross denominationally in other denominations, particularly in the areas of church
planting. And these networks could enable us to expand beyond our Presbytery bounds to impact both the PCUSA and the ECO (the new denomination) in exciting and powerful ways.

I know that some on both sides might say that we need to say good-bye and leave it at that. But as I’ve argued above, scripture does not leave us that option. Whether we like it or not, in God’s eyes, we are bound together in this one church no matter how fragmented we may appear to the world around us. So, even as we choose to separate ecclesiastically, we can and must work together missionally. Jesus calls us to do so.

In my role as a member of NCD, and its former chair, I will work diligently to develop such a network in the area of church planting. I hope that as many of us gather at the national church planting conference in Orlando from April 23-26 that we can begin discussing what such a network could look like, and how we could continue to collaborate together to bring the gospel in transformative ways to our region and beyond.

I may disagree with how Ortberg and others in the Fellowship are choosing to go about the vision, but I have total agreement with the vision itself. I yearn for a church that is bold and risk-taking in its mission, not just one struggling for survival. I pray that as sisters and brothers, we can cross the impending denomination divide to keep working with God in bringing that vision to reality.

I want to invite anyone (those who agree with the above and those who disagree too) who would like to attend the Exponential church planting conference in Orlando to please contact either myself or Chuck Denison or the Presbytery office. We have reserved 50 spots, and NCD will pay your conference fee and half your accommodations, and your spouse goes for free too. I promise that the two and a half days you will be there will impact and transform your ministry in ways you could not dream.

Kennedy McGowan

**SHARI’S SHOUT OUT**

The deadline has passed and churches can no longer enter their 2011 statistical information. You may still go in and print reports or change address information but the tab to enter statistics will no longer work. Presbyteries, however, are given until March 8th to assist in getting the church information entered.

**If you have not completed the statistical report, PLEASE complete the pages in the workbooks and fax them to me to be included.**

I have the time to do this in the evenings and truly want **all** Tropical Florida churches reported.

You still have time to enter the information for the Clerk’s Annual Questionnaire; however, I am happy to do that as well.

The April newsletter will report our ultimate percent of completion – **hopefully, 100%**.

**Presbytery-wide Multicultural Gathering – March 31**

Myrtle Grove PC is hosting this third annual event. Invitations were sent electronically on February 12th and included in the supplemental packet (it’s on line). Have you handled your RSVP?

**TECHNOLOGY**

**Does Your Church Have A Website?**

In this age of technology you need to have a presence on the Internet. In order to help any of our churches to develop their own website. We have put together a series of presentations and resources to give you a start in developing your online presence. [http://www.tfpby.org/webdev.html](http://www.tfpby.org/webdev.html)

On March 21st, 10:00-12:00, we will host a demonstration and we shall try and answer any questions you have. The Class will be repeated on April 24 at the same time. Please [e-mail](mailto:) me, if you plan to attend or [go online fill out the form](http://www.tfpby.org/webdev.html).
From Susan Carpenter

**Effective Salary**

Understanding effective salary and reporting effective salary to the Board of Pensions is important for a number of reasons. Failure to report increases in effective salary means less money at retirement, less money in cases of disability and less money for your spouse at the time of your death.

Please watch and listen to the e-learning module below. Then print the publication below on effective salary. Then calculate effective salary using the calculator below. Then report the effective salary of your pastor(s) using the form below. And if you have any questions call the Board of Pensions at the number below.

The Board of Pensions e-learning module about Effective Salary
https://pensions.adobeconnect.com/_a701962636/effectivesalary

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**Region 2 Update**

*The season of Lent calls us to reflection and repentance therefore, let us retreat into the “wilderness” for an experience of renewal.*

**Region 2 Pastors’ Meeting:** The Reverend Dr. David Massey will host the next regional meeting on March 6, 2012 at Plantation Presbyterian Church, located at 901 N.W. 70th Avenue, Plantation. The group will convene at noon with lunch to be followed by a presentation on intentional participation of youth in the life of the church. This presentation continues the region’s focus on the work of becoming a missional church. A donation of $5 would help offset the cost of lunch.

**Elder Spotlight:** The current issue of the presbytery newsletter is focusing on elders and their ministry in the local church. In keeping with that focus Region 2 is seizing the opportunity to recognize and celebrate the ministry of Elder Dwayne Black Jr. currently serving as the student pastor at Second Presbyterian Church of Ft. Lauderdale. The ministry at Second Church has continued on a positive trajectory under Dwayne’s leadership, exploring a new vision for an effective Christian witness. Two years ago there was concern about the continuing viability of Second Church. With the arrival of the Rev. Linda Lader as Temporary Supply pastor they began a movement toward renewal and health, and the congregation has sustained that momentum under Dwayne’s leadership.

Dwayne is continuing his pursuit of the Master of Divinity degree at St. Thomas University. Prior to his service at Second Church, Dwayne served as the Director of Youth and Family Ministries at First Presbyterian Church of Pompano Beach.

**Congregations in a Period of Discernment:** Let us continue to pray for the pastors, ruling elders, and members of Faith Presbyterian Church of Pembroke Pines and Grace Community Church of Boca Raton, both within Region Two and in the process of discernment, as they seek to discern where the Holy Spirit is leading them in this time of uncertainty.

**On A Personal Note:** Serving the presbytery as an Associate Missional Pastor has been an opportunity for service that I have found satisfying and one that I will always value. However, I have determined that it is time for me to conclude my service in that capacity in order to focus on the responsibilities of my service as chair of the Committee on Ministry (COM). The adoption of the Gracious Separation Agreement and the decision of several churches to enter the process will require the COM to work very closely with the
Discernment Administrative Commission to safeguard the interests of pastors and certified educators whose churches enter the separation process. That being the case, I had to make a decision that would be in the best interest of the presbytery while at the same time protecting my personal well-being.

It has been a pleasure working with you and I thank you for your support and encouragement.

Leon Lovell-Martin
Associate Missional Presbyter
Region 2 – Broward and Southern Palm Beach Counties

REGION 3 UPDATE

BRAIN GAMES

I like National Geographic. On their TV channel they have a show called Brain Games. It is a series that uses interactive and participatory elements with the audience as they demonstrate all sorts of brain functions. It is a great program and very revealing about ourselves.

In one of the shows, they were discussing the great effort the brain needs perform in order for us to focus, isolate and pay attention to one specific item. It seems that when we try to focus our attention on one object our hearing sharpens, our vision expands, and other senses drift in every which way. It is only with practice, practice and more practice that an individual is able to concentrate and block other senses in an intentional manner. The brain can be trained to focus intentionally against the tendencies to wander.

Many of the sports figures learn this process of intentional concentration; actually it is a psychological skill taught to successful actors, public speakers and athletes; from football players to marathon runners, from the stage to the platform. These individuals have learned to focus on what is important at a specific time and go for the goal, the vision, and the dream or in our case the mission to proclaim Christ.

The apostle Paul was very aware of our tendencies to wander, drift, and get out of focus. He shares with us these amazing words of encouragement:

“No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” Philippians 3:13-14

“...but I focus on this one thing...”

In our presbytery, many congregations are not growing; some are stable, some are growing, but most are in decline. In our presbytery, some churches need to focus energies and resources to maintain a building or the status quo, while others are looking for new leadership, yet some will need to focus on immediate situations. But we must not allow those issues and circumstances to distract our attention, drift our efforts and cause us to abandon the call to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Yes, our brain may play tricks on us, and our senses may want to take us all over the place, but I believe that the greatest call each one of us have is to demonstrate, to show, to proclaim, to live out Christ in our particular contexts and intentionally learn to play “Sacred Games” for God’s Glory. Next month I will share about “sacred games”

From the Missional Adventure, Reporting;
Rev Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz
AMP Region 3
CALLIE HOWLAND – MIAMI YAV REFLECTION

As my college graduation approached, I knew that I wanted to serve. I didn’t want to simply get a job; I wanted to do something that really made a difference and experience something completely new. So this California girl decided that she was going to pack up her things, leave behind friends and family and fly across the country to Miami, Florida, to work in the Little Haiti community. The only thing I knew about Haiti was that they had had an earthquake and that the country has been struggling to regain stability. I really had no idea what I was getting into, but I knew that I wanted this experience to teach me something new.

One of the most significant pieces of the YAV year is the placement in a nonprofit organization in the community. I was placed in a small private school that serves a predominately Haitian student body. The school is a very special place and has become a sort of a refuge for children who are not able to get the support they need in the public school system and who seek a faith-based education. My specific responsibilities change every day, but my most important contributions are running the tutoring program for ESE students, working with the school garden and miscellaneous administrative tasks. The work that I am doing is not going to fix the nation’s education issues or rectify all the problems of poverty, but by doing my job to the best of my abilities I believe that I am making a God-directed and needed change in my community, however small it may be.

When I used to think about volunteer work, I mostly focused on what I was going to accomplish. What I have learned so far in my experience as a YAV is that you will get much more from your communities than you imagine. I am blessed by both the staff and the students of the school and am a better person for having them touch my life. In addition, my house in Miami is part of an urban farm that is host to all sorts of people with all sorts of stories and so much love. I cannot begin to express how grateful I am for the generosity of my neighbors, who come over to make smoothies, bring food and start drum circles by the fire pit. The farm is a place of love, connection and rest that gives me the strength to work and serve the students and the school.

It is amazing how much we can know something but never truly understand until we experience it first-hand. So much of this year has been about truly learning what life is like for people who do not have much but still express more joy than people who have piles of resources. I have a new appreciation for teachers and school administrators who work tirelessly to ensure the happiness of just one child, not to mention a school-full. I am beginning to really comprehend that “it’s not about me” and what I can do; rather it’s God’s grand plan that truly matters. I have also learned that God has granted us the ability to choose the attitude with which we embrace the world and that our attitude is a very powerful force. I pray that I will remember these lessons for the rest of my life as I continue to pursue the plans God has for my life.

RIVIERA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MIAMI FL, CERTIFIED AN EARTH CARE CONGREGATION BY PC(USA) ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTRIES

In late December, 2011, Riviera Presbyterian Church, 5275 Sunset Drive, Miami FL, became the only currently certified Earth Care Congregation in the state of Florida. This followed the successful outcome of an Earth Care Audit by a designated committee of the Mission Division at Riviera. The Earth Care team found that the church, through its regular activities, had achieved more than the necessary points in all of the required categories. Somewhat ironically, it was found that many of the same frugal exercises engaged out of the necessity of a small budget are also recognized as excellent practices of stewardship of God’s creation.

The certification process is not difficult and is recommended for your consideration – the materials are thought-provoking and educational. To become certified as an Earth Care Congregation, churches complete activities and projects in the fields of worship, education, facilities and outreach, and take the “Earth Care Pledge.” A Guide to Greening Presbyterian Churches provides congregations with worksheets, resources and instructions for becoming an Earth Care Congregation; it can be found at www.pcusa.org/earth-care-congregations. Also available is the concise booklet And the Leaves of the Tree Are for the Healing of the Nations which covers the biblical and theological foundations for cherishing God’s creation, with focus on Genesis, Psalms, Pauline writings and the life and teachings of Jesus Christ; at www.pcusa.org/resource/and-leaves-tree-are-healing-nations/

For further information, other resources with upcoming relevance are available for Lent (Tread Lightly for Lent 2012, pcusa.org) and soon after that for Earth Day, Sunday April 22, 2012 (A Life of Abundance – Energy and Ethics, nccusa.org).
**PRAYERS**

Global Day of Prayer for Burma.
March 11th

A year ago Burma held its first elections in two decades, and recent political developments under president Thein Sein’s new semi-civilian government have been met with robust international praise. While there is an understandable optimism in lowland Burma, something entirely different has been happening in highland ethnic areas, where thousands of civilians are enduring an increase in brutal human rights abuses by the Burma army, a lack of humanitarian aid, and ongoing civil war.

www.prayforburma.org

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**BIRTHDAYS**

01 Dr. Roger Verse - HR
03 Rev. James Goldsmith – Community, LBTS
09 Dr. Gwendolyn Magby – Trinity, Key West
11 Rev. Robert Bonham - HR
11 Rev. Jung Yn Shin – Korean, Miami Ft. Lauderdale
11 Rev. Rosemary N. Welton - MOS
12 Dr. Kirk McCormick - Grace Community, Boca Raton
16 Rev. Jacqueline Brovold – Pinecrest, Miami
16 Dr. Keith Riddle – At Large
18 Rev. Brad Klostreich - Palm City, Palm City
21 Rev. Elizabeth Pankey-Warren - MOS
23 Rev. Robert Walsh - HR
27 Rev. Pamela H. Barras
28 Rev. Amy Baer - MOS
31 Rev. Thomas Crowder - HR
31 Dr. Theodore Bush - HR

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**ORDINATIONS**

06 Rev. Linda Lader – At Large
10 Dr. Dohyun Paik – At Large
12 Rev. Guihag Hwang – At Large
17 Dr. German Vega-Feliciano - MOS
24 Dr. Ronald Hilliard – First, North Palm Beach

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**ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION**

The deadline is quickly approaching for your administrative staff to attend this year’s Florida Region Administrative Personnel Association Conference in Sarasota from May 16th to May 20th. Don’t let this important educational opportunity for your valuable staff members pass.

By attending the conference, your church employees will be nurtured both spiritually and educationally. They do not have to be a Presbyterian to join the APA or attend the conference. We have members of all faiths who want a deeper understanding of PCUSA issues and theology. The knowledge gained by joining and attending conferences will benefit them, their fellow staff members and congregation by allowing them to be more effective in their roles in your organization.

The APA improves the quality of professionalism in those offices that are generally the first contact with congregations, governing bodies and agencies for our denomination. It affirms the Ministry of the Lay Church Professional and recognizes the importance of efficient office procedures and competent personnel who strive to provide a deeper commitment and understanding of the issues and theology of our Church.

Visit the Florida Region website at www.floridaapa.org to find out more about this association. The benefits of networking, classes and friendship will benefit you and your congregation.

Contact Barbara Prieto, President of the Florida Region of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA) at 305-666-8586 or rivierachurch@bellsouth.net. She will gladly take the time to explain how the APA will benefit your administrative staff members.

Nancy Fine
Membership Chair, Florida Region of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
www.floridaapa.org
HAITI MISSION UPDATE

Good news! We have received word that all four matching-grant proposals that our presbytery approved at our September meeting have been approved! You can expect to hear more from All Nations' After School Program; Miami Shores and its work in Haiti; First, Hollywood and Project Papillon; and FANM (Haitian Women of Miami).

EVENTS

STEPHEN MINISTRY WORKSHOP

First Presbyterian Church
33 Gleason St
Delray Beach, FL 33483
View Map

Workshop Date: March 10, 2012

To register for this workshop please click here.
Registration is $15 per person or $50 for a group of four or more people from the same congregation (payable in U.S. funds).

Who Should Attend the Workshop?
- Pastors and other church staff
- Lay leaders and decision makers
- Caregivers and caregiving team

What Happens at a Stephen Ministry Workshop?
Come with curiosity and questions. Go home with a clear vision and a practical plan for multiplying Christ’s love and care in your congregation and community.

Session 1 - Ministering to Those Experiencing Grief
Topics covered in this session include:
- Essential elements of grief care
- The common phases of grief
- What grieving people typically experience
- How to care at each phase of grief

Session 2 - An Introduction to Stephen Ministry
Topics covered in this session include:
- How to identify needs for care
- How Stephen Ministry works
- The value of Stephen Ministry for today’s congregations
- How a congregation can begin Stephen Ministry

Session 3 - How to Care in a Distinctively Christian Way
Topics covered in this session include:
- What it means to care in distinctly Christian ways
- How to use prayer and other Christian resources appropriately and effectively
- How you can build on your workshop experience in your own congregation

March 2012                                                                                   April 2012
1  Noon – COM (Region 2&3)  1:00 – COM                                                  6  Good Friday – Office Closed
  7-8  Synod                                                                                   10  2:00 – COM Region 1
15 10:00 - Multicultural                                             12  Noon – COM Regions 2 and 3
20  10:00 – MOSJP                                                              17  1:30 - MOSJP
21  10:00 – Website Designs                                                                 18  10:00 – CPM
22  9:30 – FRC                                                                                  19  Council
26  5:00 – PRT/PUP                                                                                   24  10:00 - Website Design
31  4:00 – Multicultural Gathering, Myrtle Grove                                           26-  National Multicultural Conference

Access the annual calendar online: http://www.tfpby.org/calendar.html
**The 2nd Annual South Florida Church Conference**
"Tending Seeds" Church Growth Strategies
Leadership and church growth strategies are just some of the day's exciting topics.

Join the National Association of Church Design Builders (NACDB) and Hedrick Brothers Construction for an informative and encouraging day designed to empower you to build and grow HIS church!

Thursday, March 8, 2012
8:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Harriet Himmel Theater
700 South Rosemary Avenue
CityPlace
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

**Contact**
Cheri Pavlik
Hedrick Brothers Construction
cpavlik@hedrickbrothers.com
561-242-4330
Register online

**Florida Presbyterian Cursillo:**
Ultreya Gathering at First Presbyterian Church, Ft. Lauderdale, FL on Sunday, March 18, 2012 at 3 PM.

FLPC #7 Presbyterian spiritual-renewal weekend at the Christian Church Conference Center, Silver Springs, FL beginning at 5 PM, Thursday, April 26 through Sunday, April 29, 2012.
Dan Hallenbeck, Moderator, 352)615-0092.
www.FloridaCursillo.org for information and applications.

**FLAPDAN Meeting – April 16**
(Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network)
Gainesville, FL

**12th National Multicultural Conference**
April 26-29, 2012
Preconference: April 25-26
Hilton Charlotte University Hotel
Charlotte, NC

Registration Booklets available through Presbytery office
Online registration: www.pcusa.org/multicultural

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**1,001 in 10**
Presbyterians rally around the call to grow the church deep and wide. See how the numbers reflect our bold new vision.

**The Outward-Facing Church**
Demographics and other tools can help congregations rediscover their call to care for those around them.
Learn more.

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**220th General Assembly**
June 30 — July 7
Location: Pittsburgh, Pa.
More details

**Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women**
July 18—22
Join thousands of women for worship, community building, and education
Location: Kissimmee, Florida
Theme: River of Hope
Register now

**For Such a Time as This** seeks recent seminary graduates
Pastors serving in part-time and/or temporary pastoral positions interested in answering God's call to serve small-membership congregations should visit the website for further information. The deadline for applications is March 31.

**One Great Hour of Sharing**
Quickly on its way is One Great Hour of Sharing, which supports Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program and the Self-Development of People ministry. We’re currently hard at work making some great videos for the Offering, and you should be seeing these soon!
In the meantime, if you’d like some more information about the Offering, you can go to the One Great Hour of Sharing website.
Energy conversations often revolve around talks of scarcity. While we do need to be good stewards of energy, just as with the rest of God’s Creation, this is not the only way to look at energy. Creation is brimming with life. A Christian perspective on energy involves acknowledging the abundance of God’s Creation and being a good energy steward that respects our human “neighbor” and the rest of God’s Creation. Like all things, energy is a gift from God. Whether in the form of the food that fuels our bodies, the gas that fuels our cars, or the electricity that lights our day-to-day lives, energy is part of the make-up of Creation. God intends abundant life for all people, and energy is a critical part of that. God has supplied enough energy for not only for our lives, but for all of life. Unfortunately, humans have not always been good stewards of energy. We waste food, we use some forms of stored energy like gas and oil more quickly than they can be replaced, and we fail to make energy available to everyone in order for them to meet basic needs. We also have not made good choices regarding how we get our energy. From extraction to production to transmission, the choices we make on how we obtain our energy have consequences, sometimes devastating, on God’s Creation.

So, how do we, as Christians fuel a world in ways that are Christ-centered and honor God?

**call To Worsh1P**

*Adapted from Psalm 49, Psalm 95*

**Leader:** Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world,

**All:** Both low and high, rich and poor together.

**Leader:** Let us come into God’s presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise!

**All:** For the Lord is a great God, and reigns above all gods.

**Leader:** In God’s hand are the depths of the earth, the heights of the mountains are God’s also.

**All:** The sea is belongs to God, for God made it, and the
dry land, which God’s hands have formed.

confession and forgiveness

All: Creator God, we confess that we have sinned against you and against our neighbor, in thought, word, and deed, both by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have used more than our fair share of the gifts
of energy you have given us. We have not worked to ensure fair access to energy for all peoples, especially the most vulnerable among us. We have not considered the effects of our energy use on our neighbors in our community and around the world. Have mercy on us, forgive us, and help us to strive for a just energy future, in which all people can receive the resources they need, and in which our energy use is sustainable and treads lightly on your Creation.

**Leader:** God who redeems all Creation has given his Son to us and, by his self-giving sacrifice and resurrection, forgives us all our sins. Let us trust in God’s grace to help us turn from our selfish ways to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

**Prayers**

Gathered together as people of God’s Creation, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Creator God, help us to be wise caretakers of the gifts you have given us. Help us to use energy in a way that benefits all people and treads lightly on your creation. Creator, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

**Compassionate God,** we pray for those in the world who are most vulnerable to the effects of our unwise use of energy, that they may have safe homes and daily bread, and that you would grace them with your presence in times of crisis, displacement, and famine. Creator, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

**God of peace,** we pray that the nations will work peacefully to find solutions to our common energy needs, that we may avoid bitter conflict over limited energy sources. We pray that you would lift up leaders for peaceful cooperation and give strength and your blessing to the peacemakers. Creator, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

**Loving God,** we pray for those who depend most on your gifts of energy for vital aspects of their daily lives, for the sick, the aging, the poor, and the children. Help us to achieve a sustainable and just energy future that will guarantee these vulnerable groups the services they need, especially as our changing climate makes our weather more erratic and more dangerous. Creator, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

**Holy God,** we stand in awe of the wonders of your Creation. Help us to protect these wonders and find the energy we need from sources that do not tear down your mountains and poison your rivers. Creator, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

**sending forTh**

**Leader:** Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Go in peace. Care for Creation and for your neighbor.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

The National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program develops Earth Day Sunday materials each year to help congregations celebrate and care for God’s Creation. For more information about the Program, to make a donation, or for additional Earth Day resources, visit [www.nccecojustice.org](http://www.nccecojustice.org) or email [info@nccecojustice.org](mailto:info@nccecojustice.org). For more information on how your congregation can practice stewardship of God’s Earth visit [www.nccecojustice.org](http://www.nccecojustice.org) or contact [info@nccecojustice.org](mailto:info@nccecojustice.org)

Eco-Justice Programs National Council of Churches USA 110 Maryland Avenue, NE, Suite 108 Washington, DC 20002 info@nccecojustice.org [www.nccecojustice.org](http://www.nccecojustice.org)
Mark your calendars for the presbytery meeting **May 15th.** This is one of Tropical Florida's most important presbytery meetings.

**CLERGY NEWS**

On Sunday March 11, 2012, the presbytery celebrated a worship of ordination at Palmetto Presbyterian Church. The Rev. Edwin Collado was ordained as Minister of Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder. He is occupying a temporary co-pastor position at Palmetto’s English worship called Redeemer. Edwin’s parents presented their son with the symbols of his new office. The sanctuary was full to capacity as this bilingual and multicultural congregation reached and celebrated this milestone. The worship was conducted by the commission in both, Spanish and English. The service concluded with the newly ordained pastor offering words of gratitude and pronouncing the benediction. Congratulations!

Central Presbyterian celebrated the installation of Kim Kavazanjian as Associate Pastor Sunday March 18. This installation was marked by the participation of the youth in the church who provided two solos, a dance and reading of the Word. Participating in the service was Central’s pastor Jonathon Swanson, Leon Lovell-Martin, Pat Ashley, Larry Schenk, Rosemary Welton, and Moderator Dwayne Black. The Congregation celebrated the installation with a bountiful reception. Members of the congregation said that this installation was a blessing for Central Presbyterian.
NEW COORDINATING COUNCIL CHAIR

Distinguished colleagues and friends,

I am honored to have been elected as the chair of the coordinating council. I thank the colleagues and friends for the trust given to me. I had felt that we had more qualified people to be the chair of council. So, when the nomination and election came I was shocked as anyone else in this presbytery. The scripture reference came to mind immediately. David was in the wilderness tending to his own flock when Samuel summoned him to be anointed by God. David wasn’t even in the radar screen nor was he even invited to the selection ceremony of the seven older brothers when this surprise came. That’s been my experience since the nomination and now in the new position as the chair of the coordinating council.

God had indeed called me to this position through the votes of the commissioners. I have a quiet confidence knowing that God will provide what I need to lead our presbytery. God has already given me my ‘five smooth stones’ to face this huge task ahead of us. I will continue to be led by the leadership of the Holy Spirit as I kneel every day seeking His direction and wisdom.

In my prayer God spoke to me through Rhema (word) to do what I have already been doing. That is making disciples! That happens to be the slogan the presbytery has adopted last year when we radically transformed the presbytery structure. Six years ago, in my quiet neck of woods, I have planted a multi-ethnic fellowship and have been learning and implementing how to make disciples of the ‘unchurched’ and those who had left the church years ago. I have personally devoted four years of my life mentoring these people and they are now serving as the leadership of five house churches spread around Miami-Dade and Broward County seeking primarily the unchurched.

We have Goliath sized tasks in front of us. Theological differences, decreasing church membership, and aging church leadership. Yet, we must fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ and go back to the basics and the call as disciple makers of Jesus Christ.

That’s where I as a teaching elder encountered Jesus for the second time and I repented in tears. I know what it means to be a seminary trained professional clergy. I also know that I was trained to be managing a church but was not prepared to make new disciples of Jesus Christ.

To me, this is the new depth and the direction God would want this presbytery to move. I know this transformation process very well because I have personally gone through it. This is the same decision and the reasons why this presbytery has restructured our presbytery last year with the slogan ‘from reducing presbytery to reproducing presbytery!’ I believe this is the urgent core spiritual issue we need to be confronted with. I’m convinced that God maybe doing this in an unconventional way, with unconventional people, again.

Producing church membership into disciple makers and reproducing new disciples requires transformation of the teaching elder him/herself. It is a huge task because it is different from inviting religious consumers into the church or feeding those who are already in the church. It is easy to say and enormously difficult to do. Multi-ethnic church and House Church (missional-communities) are indeed the new direction experts are now directing us. By God’s grace I’m ahead of the curve in my Wounded Healer Fellowship under the umbrella of the Korean Presbyterian Church of Miami and Pastor Jung Yn Shin.

I have learned and now share with others what it takes to reproduce another spiritual being. There is nothing professional about reproducing another spiritual human being. This work is very similar to a woman transforming into a mother and raising another human being. It takes personal sacrifice to the limit. Life for life is the best of way to describe this work.

To go ‘from reducing presbytery to the reproducing presbytery’ we have to begin to ask ourselves some hard questions. Why can’t local church reproduce new disciples? Teaching elder and ruling elders must ask ourselves why we are not baptizing new Christians? On May 2nd Presbyterian Coordinating Council has scheduled a retreat to fix our eyes to the call to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

I know we have leadership transition in this presbytery. We need new leaders to step up! I look for those teaching elders and ruling elders who in their quiet way, in their neck of woods, have already been engaged in the work of making new disciples. I want to hear from you. I want to bring all of us together for prayer and candid conversations. Your concerns and voices are necessary to redirect our focus to the main reason for our existence as Christ’s church.

Sometimes God uses the ‘least’ and unconventional people to carry out his will. God is doing it again.

Sincerely,

Rev. David Kwon
dkempastor@gmail.com 954-732-4184
SHARI’S SHOUT OUT

ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORTING
Thank you – our Presbytery had 91% participation! It’s not the 100% we were striving for, but it’s better than the national average (85%). We were lacking five churches. These churches know who they are (having been regularly contacted) and their membership figures will remain as last reported. I truly appreciate all of you who made the effort either by entering the information on line or submitting it to me to do so. Perhaps 100% next year?

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS
Does anyone within fairly close proximity to the Presbytery office have time every now and then to help with material collation or miscellaneous projects? We have found we could use extra hands to get the job done in a timely manner. It would be a great comfort to know there is someone to call when the need arises. Our volunteers serve on or chair committees but we have no office volunteers. Can you help?

TECHNOLOGY

TO TABLET OR NOT TO TABLET?
The Tablet PC cometh! In the last few months, we have seen a wave of major OEM manufacturers release tabletPCs along with the highly popular Apple iPad! These next-generation mobile devices have no doubt helped with our digital lifestyle but several questions should be considered from its arrival:

IS IT GOING TO REPLACE MY NOTEBOOK COMPUTER/DESKTOP COMPUTER?
Tablet PCs should be considered a complement and not a replacement to a traditional computer. Sure it offers more mobility and has similar features like wi-fi and a virtual keyboard but as a student, can you see yourself writing a dissertation or a semester paper on an iPad?

As a business professional, an iPad can keep you organized, take important notes and help with face-to-face video conferencing but can you imagine doing all your business research and accounting on an iPad? Instances where extensive resources are required (such as a large screen) would be better left to a traditional computer. The key is to determine how much of a tablet PC’s utility would be beneficial for your personal or business purposes.

Should I drop the cash just to stay up to date with technology?
While there is nothing wrong with staying current with technology, $300-$800+ dollars for a tablet PC would be difficult to justify without having done your due diligence. Otherwise, you’ve just invested heavily in a redundant email-social networking checker/ebook reader if you don’t do your homework on what a tablet PC can do for you.

Many of the iPad’s apps are designed to keep people in touch with current events, their loved ones or their IT infrastructure. Examples include Dropbox for iPad, Tweetdeck, MarketDash, Friendly Facebook for iPad and CNN for iPad. If some of these programs are applicable to you or you absolutely rely on them to stay in touch with friends, business associates and clients, then a tablet PC might just be the thing to help increase your productivity.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH A TABLET PC?
Tablet PCs have been around for at least the last 15-20 years. Before the arrival of the iPad, many ran on Windows and Windows XP Tablet Edition in environments such as construction, military and even in clinics to show and update patient information promptly. Tablet PCs now have the ability to reduce several annoying formalities of a traditional computer like the pesky (sometimes lengthy) boot and shutdown sequence and the having to restart for update installations. Thus tablet PCs enjoy instant-on start up sand are relatively responsive since the operating systems that are engineered for tablet PCs like as iOS and Android run lean and don’t require too many system resources to start and operate. Tablet PCs are also more subtle for occasions where there isn’t always a power outlet or you’re forced to pack light. For example, if you’re on your way to the office and are on a 30 minute subway ride standing up, you can easily and quietly check your email, talk to business associates and edit business reports without having to find a seat or table.
FROM THE TREASURER:

We wish to thank the 11 churches that have remitted their entire 2012 Per Capita. We also wish to thank the 28 churches who are remitting on the deferred schedule. We ask that the 17 churches who have not begun to remit their per capita to prayerfully consider beginning to remit. The Presbytery Administrative Budget is in deficit at this time with all expenses being monitored. This deficit is due to unremit 2011 per capita.

Thank you.
Marge Hellgren, Treasure

Dwayne Black Jr. (our new Moderator) held a Bold Justice rally at the Second PC on March 22.

SACRED GAMES

Children learn by playing. That is the basic principle of every early childhood educational program. They learn through proper interactions with toys and other children. It is healthy learning, it is organic learning. As adults we also have the ability to play.

As a pulpit supply many times I gather with the choir and liturgist before the worship service and we pray. At times I sense the tension, the fear, and the insecurities of those helping in leading worship. So, I attempt to bring peace with the metaphor at hand: we are sacred children playing with sacred toys in a sacred space and time, before our God, so let’s rejoice. I can see the shoulders relaxing.

God as a Father and Parent has called us children. God has given us a playground to learn “sacred games” so that we may share with those not in our playground, our congregations, and invite them to come to our sacred playground and play with us.

God has given us sacred toys like water, colors, lights, vestments, and shadows. God has given us sacred toys like music, art, drama, and dance to sacredly play. God has given us creativity, passions, imagination, seasons and craftiness, to play sacred games for God’s glory. Above all God has given us a sacred book with amazing stories and accounts of faith. I imagine God rejoicing as we play together.

God has also given us rules to play games; the main one is love; acceptance, peace, forgiveness, new opportunities, unity, freedom, forbearance, justice, patience, order and decency (We Presbyterians like the last two, perhaps to the sacrifice of the others.)

For years the Spanish Council in our presbytery has sponsor a Lenten Retreat. This event would take place on the Saturday before Palm Sunday. They had three speakers presenting three themes from the season, all one morning. Well, this year they supported efforts to change the toys and the entire sacred game. They presented “A Tour to Holy Week.” In this tour the pilgrims will be able to visit and experience the joy of Palm Sunday, have a personal encounter with the Lord in the Upper Room, reflect and pray at the museum of the Passion of Christ, be amazed at the House of the Resurrection, and witness the empty Tomb.

God has given us sacred games, sacred scriptures, sacred toys, and a sacred playground called the Kingdom. I pray we learn to play with joy and rejoice as we play. I pray we learn to play with freedom, embracing all toys and players in Sacred Games.

Rev. Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz
AMP Region 3

COMING-UP!!! MIAMI METRO ZOO: PASTORS GO WILD!
Can we gather at the ZOO? Region 3 pastors, spouses, HRs, youth, associates, co-pastors, and educators are invited to the Miami Metro Zoo on Tuesday May 1st. More information Coming soon.

From the Missional Adventure, Reporting;
Rev Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz
EARTH DAY Sunday April 22, 2012

And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: 13 I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. 16 Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.” 17 So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.” Genesis 9:12-17(NIV)

The first Earth Day, on April 22, 1970, activated 20 million Americans from all walks of life and is widely credited with launching the modern environmental movement. The passage of the landmark Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act and many other groundbreaking environmental laws soon followed. Growing out of the first Earth Day, Earth Day Network (EDN) works with over 22,000 partners in 192 countries to broaden, diversify and mobilize the environmental movement. More than 1 billion people now participate in Earth Day activities each year, making it the largest civic observance in the world.

This year around Southeast Florida communities and churches will be raising the awareness of protecting the environment. There are sermons and many ideas for churches on line, use Sunday April 22 to recall Gods words to Noah.

Celebrate Gods Creation on April 22

NEXT CHURCH 2012

“Next Church will engage the church that is becoming by cultivating vital connections, celebrating emerging leadership and innovation, and working with congregations and leaders to form and reform faith communities.”

February 27 and 28 several hundred seminarians, pastors and elders met at First Dallas to consider the Next Church in the PCUSA. They came to hear about the new ministries that are embodying the gospel throughout the denomination. New ministries that are connecting and building networks of congregations with shared mission callings in a contemporary culture.

Workshops and breakout sessions gave attendees contact with churches and presbyteries that have implemented relevant and effective programs in their communities. One example is the Presbytery of Baltimore, which has created an inner city mission that churches from around the country can send youth volunteers.

Each day there was an opening and closing worship service that showcased music formats and liturgies created to include full participation by the attendees. Pastors such as Reggie Weaver, First Presbyterian of Chicago; Carol Merritt, Western PC, Washington, DC; and Tim Hart-Anderson of Westminster PC, Minneapolis, MN gave inspiring messages about the new ideas in mission and the church.

Next Church held regional meetings by Synod, which gave us a chance to talk with others in the southeast. There was consensus that Next Church was heading in the right direction; several agreed that attending the upcoming Exponential Conference in Orlando would help churches find new ideas. The Next Church will be holding four regional meeting in the next year and their 2013 conference will be in Charlotte, NC March 4-5. Stay tuned for more information on the Next Church as they build for the future of the PCUSA.

Amalie Ash

Next Church is a no vote, no policy paper, non-profit organization to bring Presbyterians together in non-judicial, mission-building encounters. There will be worship, shared experiences, joint mission and Christian fellowship. In the coming year they will organize six regional gatherings to establish congregation-to-congregation connections that will yield 15 joint mission initiatives. And they will develop an online resource, apps and information for pastors and congregations to access ideas and connect to one another. They have a modest budget of $150,000 and are seeking donations.
LAKELAND MARCH FOR THE FAIR FOOD AGREEMENT

On March 10, fifty farm workers and their supporters ended their six day fast in Lakeland, FL by sharing a break the fast worship service with about 300 marchers, who walked more than three miles from a Publix store to Publix Headquarters in Lakeland. It was 44 years from the day Robert F. Kennedy joined labor leader Cesar Chavez in ending his fast. Joining the walk and worship were long time supporters of the farm workers, Ethel Kennedy, widow of Robert F. Kennedy, son Robert F. Kennedy Jr., and daughter Kerry, and members of Tropical Florida Presbytery, Marianne and Randy Shine, and Rev. Kennedy McGowan.

The workers, who are paid by the growers, not the corporate buyers, are asking Publix to sign the Fair Food Agreement, promising to buy tomatoes only from farms that will pay the workers one more penny a pound. The agreement has been signed by other large chains, including Trader Joe’s, Safeway, Walmart, Kroger, Stop and Shop, Taco Bell, McDonald’s, and Burger King. Workers currently make 50 cents per 32-pound bucket of tomatoes, a wage that has not changed in over three decades. To make at least the minimum wage of $7.67 per hour, a worker has to pick about 153 buckets in a 10-hour day.

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?” (Isaiah 58:6-7).
PRAYERS

New Presbyterians

Olivia Kwon was born shortly before 4 p.m. on March 19th to parents, Jin and Rev. David Kwon. Olivia was 6.12 lbs. and 20 inches. Her Korean name means “grace promise.” Olivia joins brothers Isaiah and Elijah.

Pastor Dwayne and Cindy Black are the proud grandparents (for the second time) of a newborn baby girl, Amelia, weighing in at 6 lbs. 9 oz. She was born on March 20th to parents Hilary and Michael.

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION

As we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are awed by the power of His Church. A busy time of the year for church staff, we sometimes forget to take the time to remember what their ministry means to all of God’s children.

As members of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA), your administrative staff will find that they are spiritually nurtured through the fellowship of other APA members. Through the support system of other lay church professionals, your staff members have a network to help them be more efficient and effective in their ministry to your organization.

Through educational and certification opportunities offered at APA conferences, your administrative staff gain a deeper sense of commitment and truly feels the call of working for a PCUSA church or governing body. When their professional life becomes overwhelming, there is a network of other lay personnel to help them find their way through the deluge of expectations.

Classes offered at Administrative Personnel Association conferences can help ground your support staff. The 2012 Florida Region Conference will be held in Sarasota from May 16th through May 20th. Classes offered include Office Administration I, Interim Ministry, Pastoral Care for Self and Others, Church History, Polity III, Book of Confessions and Presenting Your Church/Organization to the Public: Marketing. Registration forms can be found on the Florida Region’s website, www.floridaapa.org. The deadline to register is April 26th.

Encourage your support staff to become a member of the APA. Information about the certification program can be found on the Florida Region website, www.floridaapa.org. Or contact Barbara Prieto, Florida Region President, at 305-666-8586 or rivierachurch@bellsouth.net.

Nancy Fine
Membership Chair, Florida Region of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
www.floridaapa.org

EVENTS

YOUTH MINISTRY AT PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

The webinar “Thriving Small Church Youth Ministry” with Stephanie Caro, is being offered April 16, 2012, 1:20 – 2:30 p.m. There is no cost for this online course but you must register to participate. Details on the web at http://www.ptsem.edu/offices/coned/index.aspx?id=9350.


The next cohort of The Certificate in Youth and Theology program will kick off with a retreat April 21 – 23, 2012 at Princeton Seminary. This program offers training in youth ministry that focuses on theological reflection and ministerial practice. For more information or to apply for the 2012 cohort, go to http://www.ptsem.edu/scvm/lym/index.aspx?hdr=7202&sn=2025&id=5538.
2013 Presbyterian Youth Triennium theme announced

“I AM” will focus on Jesus’ illustrations and instruction to His disciples

Ministries with Youth, in the Office of Evangelism of the General Assembly Mission Council, is pleased to announce the theme for the 2013 Presbyterian Youth Triennium: “I AM.” Event participants will consider and explore the “I AM” statements of Jesus, as shared with the disciples and the early followers of Jesus, as well as the Hebrew understandings of God known simply as “I AM.” The deep connections between the divine “I AM” and the human “I am . . .” will carry the 2013 theme through the five-day event and back home with the youth who attend.” We are being called to help our youth and our congregations think about who we are as people of God, who is as reachable as a vine, as necessary as bread, and as longing for our presence as a good shepherd, says Gina Yeager-Buckley, Ministries with Youth associate and Triennium team leader.

More than 4,000 youth are expected to attend the largest gathering in the in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Young people will experience the “I AM” theme in worship, small group Bible study, guided conversation, recreational gatherings, and creative expression opportunities. “We want young Christians to explore the nature of God through Jesus Christ,” says Bill Buchanan, co-coordinator for the Triennium worship team. “As they wrestle with their sense of God and self in today’s world, we hope they will hear God calling, ‘I AM with you, preparing a place and path for you to be my eyes, hands, and feet in the world.’”

Triennium 2013 will be held at Purdue University July 16–20. Registration and event information will be sent to all PC(USA) congregations and presbytery offices this spring and will be available on the Triennium website in May. Registration for Triennium, open to those entering their freshman year in high school through graduated seniors, begins January 2013.

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<td>10 2:00 – COM Region 1</td>
<td>2 9:00 – Council Retreat (Duncan Center)</td>
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<td>12 Noon – COM Regions 2 and 3</td>
<td>3 Presbytery Packets Mailed to Churches and online Noon – COM Regions 2 and 3 1:00 – COM</td>
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<td>16 FLAPDAN – Gainesville</td>
<td>10 9:30 – Financial Resources</td>
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<td>17 Noon – Region 2 Pastors – Second PC</td>
<td>15 8:30 – Registration</td>
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<td>18 10:00 – CPM</td>
<td>9:30 – Presbytery Meeting – First, Tequesta 1:30 - Mission Outreach</td>
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<td>20 10:00 – Council</td>
<td>17-20 APA – Sarasota</td>
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<td>24 10:00 - Website Design</td>
<td>28 Memorial Day Observed/ Office Closed</td>
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<td>National Multicultural Conference</td>
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Charlotte, n.c. -- When it comes to increasing stewardship, churches can either change the slogan or change the product, said the Rev. Clif Christopher, speaking March 13 at the Stewardship Kaleidoscope conference here.

The March 12-14 conference, hosted by several presbyteries, synods and agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), focused on several angles of stewardship — its theological and spiritual basis, new ideas for campaigns and ways to encourage giving in a time of economic worry.

Christopher, a Methodist pastor and founder of Horizons Stewardship Company, said that charitable giving to U.S. churches has gone down over the years — 60 percent of all charitable gifts used to go to churches; now only one-third does.

And yet, Christopher said, “We continue to pump out the same stewardship message over and over and over again: ‘It’s the church, so you should give.’”

That message no longer works — people need to know why they should give, he said.

When he was in pastoral ministry, Christopher said he never understood stewardship. It wasn’t until he began working with non-profits as a consultant that he realized that knowing your donors is key to success.

“The church needs to understand donor motivations and appeal to them,” he said, adding that Americans give for three main reasons: belief in an institution’s mission, regard for staff leadership and the fiscal stability of an institution.

People want to see a return on their investment, Christopher said. They want to see how their donations change lives.

But many churches are either focused solely on maintaining their operations or aren’t telling the stories of what they’re doing. Church newsletters rarely tell stories of transformed lives, he said, focusing instead on announcements about the annual pancake breakfast or women’s bazaar.

“Why do we do stupid stuff like that when it harms the Kingdom of God?” Christopher asked.

Donors understand that the people running programs have the ability to change lives, he said, and they must have trust in those leaders before they’ll give.

And no one wants to put money into a sinking ship, Christopher continued. People want to know that the money they give will be used for the mission purpose they support. No non-profit asks its donors to send money because it’s about to fail — so why do churches?

Christopher cited management consultant Peter F. Drucker, who said that businesses deal with products, governments deal with services and non-profits deal with changing lives — their product is a “changed human being.”

“When you sell that product, they will shop at your store,” Christopher said. “When you don’t, they will quit.”

The church’s job is to change lives in the name of Jesus Christ. “When you do that, you’ll find that the money will take care of itself,” he said.

Christopher outlined several practical steps to increase stewardship:

- The pastor must tithe and testify specifically about it. “The sheep ain’t going where the shepherd ain’t leading,” Christopher said.
- Set high expectations and require members to meet them. Hold classes about stewardship before new members join. The new DNA from these members will seep into the rest of the congregation. “You can’t change what has been OK for decades, but you can start anew today,” he said.
- Have at least 25 percent of the worship attendance involved in hands-on mission. There’s a direct corollary between churches’ income and mission activity. If you don’t have enough money coming in, maybe you aren’t offering enough chances for members to get involved, Christopher said.
- Accurately report the amount needed to do mission. Always talk ministry when talking money. Tell life-changing stories.
- Don’t publish financial information in bulletins or online, only in mailings that go to members. Be transparent, but be smart about it. Don’t give financial reports during worship.
- Pastors must know what members give. Select lay leaders should also know. Giving isn’t just between the donor and God. Some people think that pastors will treat members unfairly if they know how much each person gives, but congregations need to trust their pastors and give them all the necessary tools to care for souls.
- Seek gifts from all three “pockets”: annual giving, capital campaigns and planned or estate giving.
- Enliven the offering. Have staff or members share a one-minute stewardship witness each week.
- Who’s leading the flock — Wall Street or Emmaus Road? “We are not in the balancing-the-budget business. We’re in the disciple-making business,” Christopher said.
- Share mission budgets, not line-item budgets, with members. Accountants need line-item budgets, but members need to see how the church is doing its mission.
- Make it convenient to give by offering members different options — online, kiosks, electronic funds transfer or brokerage accounts.
- Start saying thank you. Don’t take donors for granted. Pastors should write 10 thank-you notes a week to members.
HOW TO DEAL WITH CONFLICTS

A rather crude and cruel experiment was carried out by Emperor Frederick, who ruled the Roman Empire in the thirteenth century.

He wanted to know what man’s original language was: Hebrew, Greek, or Latin? He decided to isolate a few infants from the sound of the human voice.

He reasoned that they would eventually speak the natural tongue of man.

Wet nurses who were sworn to absolute silence were obtained, and though it was difficult for them, they abided by the rule.

The infants never heard a word -- not a sound from a human voice. Within several months they were all dead.

We need relationships...we do not need conflicts that destroy relationships...in any language.

Therefore what we all must do and always...is...follow some basic rules that common sense and the Bible have laid out for us...for after all we are brothers and sisters in Christ...and if we act like it...half the battle is won.

To begin with...
If we hear a tainted tale about someone don't spread it...or have an honest difference with them expand our interpretation of it with animosity trailing close behind...rather... don't pump up anger and diminish patience...rather practice Unconditional Love.

And then before we speak and share...speak out the word think and examine each letter one by one.

• T...is it true? This tale or opinion of someone or does it resemble to some degree distortions of a funhouse mirror...with no fun at all attending.
• H...is it helpful? Will it clear the air or pollute the air?
• I...is it inspiring? Will it make the angels sing or the devils dance?

• N...is it necessary that we spread the story? Will the world be a better or worse place by our answer and action applied to this question?
• K...is it kind? Ah, that word kindness cuts to the heart of the matter now doesn't it?

And then...
Their names were James and Paul and they could hardly have been any more different in their thinking.

They both loved the Lord...after that it was all downhill.

Then they did what all followers of Christ ought to always automatically do...as brothers in Christ they agreed to magnify what they had in common rather than what they disagreed on.

They could have enlarged their anger and destroyed their common sense... but they didn't.

In Jerusalem there was much more pressure to conform to the laws of Moses than in Antioch.

In a Gentile city, people came to Christ from a different perspective and tradition.

So what did these men of God do?

They worked within the principles of Christ's grace and love and truth as each saw it...patiently...aware of the differences...not denying the differences...but muting the negatives that otherwise could so easily have taken over.

And so they prospered and their churches prospered...and Christ message prospered as consensus won out over conflict.

Again...what did they do?... they agreed to magnify what they had in common rather than what they disagreed on.

Special Thanks to the Rev. Neil Wyrick

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MILESTONE PRESBYTERY
MEETING, MAY 15TH

Set the date for the next Presbytery meeting. This is a very special meeting that will be remembered. It will be a key story in the history of this Presbytery. At this meeting we will come together to give voice and vote on the difficult decision of dismissing some of the churches that elected to be in the Gracious Separation. You, and everyone that is eligible to vote, should be there to hear each Presbyterian Responses Team report the process and recommendation for their assigned church. We need you to be there to give the full vote of the Presbytery in this difficult decision.

In addition this will be a unique opportunity for elders to witness the Presbyterian process. It is on a Tuesday in Tequesta.

CLERGY NEWS

Shirley Saunders was installed at First, West Palm on Sunday April 22. Shirley’s installation was a special occasion for the church, which is celebrating its 90th Anniversary. Shirley’s installation was supported by Moderator Dwayne Black (Second), Suk Wan Han (Korean Presbyterian West Palm), Leah Meador (HR), Elder Arlene Van Kirk (Stuart), Elder Cecil Adderley (Boynton), Elder Lyn Harris (West Palm) and a message from Ryan Baer (Lakeside). The Installation was blessed with the Korean Praise Band, the soprano voice of Moon-Sook Park and Robert Glover (organ). The celebration was topped off with a wonderful dinner prepared by Shirley and other great cooks at First West Palm.
Missions at Calvary Presbyterian Church continue on many levels and in many locations around the world. Locally, the women of Calvary maintain their connections with Our Father’s House in Pompano, providing bread and milk for the homeless of the area. There is also ongoing aid to the homeless that arrive at our door. We also help with overnight housing through our connection to a local motel and with whatever food we have on hand. We also support various self-help communities as well as an organization that provides counseling for youth with addiction and legal issues.

Our assistance to Hamlin Home in Hammama Lebanon continues. Though we are restricted by our limited resources, through the visits of Dr. Stover Calvary continues to support the administration with their grant proposals and planned building projects. The most important aspect our our mission to Hamlin is not our material support but our spiritual and moral support that reassures the staff and clients of Hamlin Home that people in the U.S. are aware and care about their work and mission. The most recent mission trip to Hamlin delivered a $1000 donation from MOSIP. During the visit, Pastor Stover had the joy of seeing the many improvements that have taken place in the past six months. During that time, the Chapel has been rebuilt and is now a beautiful contemporary design ready for use by the local community and missions groups alike. During that same time, the physical plant has been upgraded with a new heating system and new electrical wires for the generators. New energy efficient windows have been installed and new doors are being designed to assist in the energy efficiency. Finally, the new Physical Therapy building is nearing completion and therapy equipment has been ordered. The facility should be operational sometime this summer. It is heartening to see the tremendous progress that has been made. Another trip is being planned to Hamlin for later this year. Anyone who is interested in traveling to this beautiful country to experience what is happening at Hamlin and in the Synod of Syria and Lebanon can contact Dr. Stover through the Calvary office.

Another mission to the Middle East is being formulated through a family of Calvary who has ties with the Church in Pakistan. Plans are being prepared for delivering supplies to school children in a small town outside the city of Lahore. This mission will provide a great deal of support for a very small investment. Once again, those interested in joining a mission trip to Pakistan in either January or February of 2013 can contact Dr. Stover for details.

Missions are not limited by the size of a congregation, only by their desire to serve Christ and our brothers and sisters locally and around the world. Like many of our congregations around the Presbytery, Calvary is a small community with limited resources. Nevertheless, we are fully committed to the ministry and mission of Jesus Christ and will continue our work regardless of circumstances. There is much to be done everywhere and Calvary wishes to support missions around the world and encourages others to do the same. We may grow or we may dwindle but whether we live or die, we live or die in Christ and will provide love and support for our brothers and sisters around the world regardless of our state of being. We hope we are able to raise your spirits and consciousness through our mission, praying that others will have the courage and strength to look within so as to discover the will and path of Christ for your personal and corporate ministry and mission.

God’s Peace
**Missional Opportunity: Not Missing the Boat**

Some people did miss the boat. They just did not get to port on time to sail across the Atlantic in the marvelous vessel’s maiden voyage. They missed the boat. However, in this case it was a blessing to miss the boat, because they actually missed the sailing of the Titanic.

In our calendars we could say that we have two “sailings “or seasons that do offer us a missional opportunity. Both, Advent culminating in Christmas and Lent culminating in Easter, offer our congregations great opportunities for reaching out to visitors in a missional and incarnational manner.

A few weeks ago some of our buildings were just packed with visitors, seekers, and wanderers. Some came because they go to church only twice a year; we know them and have a term for them; “the Chisters” because they only come to church on Christmas and Easter. But they were many others; like friends and relatives of regular attendees, first time curious ones, and even those who quietly are in pain hoping to hear something life changing.

Yes, many new ones were around us. The question is; did we miss the boat? Did we miss the opportunity, the missional opportunity?

Our choirs, drama teams, worship committees, and musicians prepared for weeks to present a worthy representation of our message to the visitors. Our pastors and teachers gave also their best. But after all the work is done and the last candle is extinguished; I wonder, did we miss the boat; did we miss a missional opportunity?

The missional opportunity we have every Christmas and Easter, and perhaps every Sunday is to intentionally develop relationships with newcomers. Become friends with those visiting. This is a gift, a talent that some of our members have. They are welcoming, warm people and sometimes perceived as very friendly and approachable. Befriending, engaging, adopting and receiving new people in our congregations should be natural, but sometimes we need help in refreshing, reviving, and become intentional to be good at this mission.

Maybe a new structure is necessary, or revamping an old structure, perhaps a congregational educational experience can start the process; the joy of welcoming new people into the kingdom of God; the joy of seeing visitors become disciples of Jesus Christ.

I know our congregations did a spectacular job this last Lent and Easter with dozens of volunteers (God bless them) that gave their time, talents and effort for a successful and faithful proclamation of the gospel. I know pastors and teachers proclaimed faithfully. The question now is: How can we be intentionally missional next sailing? How can we reach out our visitors not only with the worship, word, and artistic representations, but one to one, heart to heart, mano a mano?

How can we build intentional relationships? That is the boat we need not to miss.

From
The Missional Adventure
Rev. Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz

---

**Korean PC Relocation**

Spring has arrived to Miami. In these days I enjoy seeing trees getting dressed up with green foliage because it fills me with new energy. I hope the grace of our Lord Jesus is with you all.

On April 22, 2012 our church began to worship God in a new place. God blessed us with a place nearby at the center of the Korean community, and truly it is a blessing for our church because it allows us a better chance to reach our community. We thank all the members of Tropical Florida Presbytery, and especially the members of Second Presbyterian Church for sharing their worship place for the last three and half years. Today our church, can march more energetically in the name of our Lord Jesus. Thank you!!!

We will continue to pray and support you all as God blesses us to do it, and we ask you to do the same for our church. We want to worship God and deliver His Good News to our neighbors near and far to glorify God. Please continue praying to God for our church to be filled with the Holy Spirit, power, love, and passion, so we may be used as a channel of His blessing to the world. Again, thank you all!!!

Cordially,
With the love of Jesus, Jung Y. Shin
SHARI’S SHOUT OUT

Presbytery Lunch Reservations

Keep in mind that you do not need to wait to receive your packets before making your reservations for lunch at First, Tequesta on May 15th. Why not do it now and cross that little detail off your “to do list”?

Please go to our website www.tfpby.org to find the registration and/or excuse forms. I receive an electronic copy of each so that lunch reservations/excused absences may be tabulated. If you find it preferable, you may call in your lunch reservation 800-940-9511 or 954-785-2220. The deadline to receive reservations is Friday, May 11th. Any notification submitted afterward will be considered as having no reservation and therefore charged $10.00. Thank you for your understanding as we help our hosts prepare for the meeting.

Elder Commissioners at Presbytery

With the May meeting fast approaching, please be reminded of the number of voting commissioners that may represent your church. The number of active members shall be determined by the last completed Annual Statistical report of the General Assembly.

Therefore, the congregations of the Presbytery of Tropical Florida may send the following number of ruling elder commissioners during 2012:

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<td>Glades, Boca Raton</td>
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<td>Sunrise, Hialeah</td>
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<td>Friendship, Hialeah</td>
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<td>Gardens, Palm Beach Gardens</td>
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<td>Trinity, Key West</td>
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When preparing the roll call for the February minutes it was surprising to see that although there were a record number of ruling elders in attendance (95) and additional 89 were eligible to be sent! Please make sure your church is properly represented at Presbytery meetings.
APA

Following the Presbytery meeting on May 15th, I will be attending the APA Florida Regional Conference in Sarasota. Any emails or phone messages left during that time will be answered on as soon as possible upon my return May 22nd. We wish every church secretary and/or administrative assistant (regardless of your title) could have been able to join us for this time of continuing education, sharing of best practices and general revitalization of spirit.

We have received our reorder form for Presbyterian Planning Calendars. Based on the amount we have left, we will be reducing this order but will still receive the best discount.

If you wish to order yours through the Presbytery, please contact Shari. They’ve raised the price so we must – calendars will now be $9.00 each.

TECHNOLOGY

HAVE YOU BEEN WAITING TO CREATE A WEBSITE FOR YOUR CHURCH?

The Presbytery will help you set up a contemporary, easy to manage website for your church.

The Cost of a Site will be $150 which will cover the following:

- 1-5 basic pages – General Description, Contact Information, Services, Ministries etc.
- Cost of 1 year’s Webhosting and Domain Name Registration
- Development of the Site
- Uploading the Site and basic training on how to make changes to the pages.

What you will need to do:

- Contact Delphia to schedule a date to begin working on your website
- You will be sent a list of items to collect for the website
- Allow 2 hours for the first meeting
- You will need to provide:
  - Photos
  - Text - Brief History or “About Us” Contact information, Services, Ministries, Projects, Events etc. (in email, Word format)

Please contact me, if you are interested and then we can start the process.
COMPASSION, PEACE AND JUSTICE TRAINING DAY/ ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY DAYS CONFERENCE

For the past 5 years, the Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness in based Washington, DC has joined with the NCCC/Church World Service to develop and present a series of training classes and conferences on various issues related to the social mission and ministry of the Church. Many denominations, ministries and organizations answered the call to action.

This year, the so called Presbyterian compassion, Justice and Peace training was held on March 22nd at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. and the Ecumenical Advocacy Days at the Chrysalis City DoubleTree Hotel in Virginia. Early on March 22, the Presbyterian conference gathered at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church for a full day of training in urban ministry and advocacy. (Appropriately, several scores of homeless men and women camped at the entrance of the church as well as lined in the corridors that lead to the church office where they usually receive care, service and supplies.) At the end of the day, we were exhausted but satisfied of having been learning where the common people are. Later that day, the Ecumenical Advocacy Days began with a bang in the Hotel ballroom.

While the Presbyterian event concentrated on domestic issues and lasted one full day, the Ecumenical Advocacy Days covered 3 days of learning and worship and one day of actual demonstration at the Supreme Court, and lobbying at the Congress. That particular segment of the program was an eye-opener for many participants, such as I, who had the privilege of meeting with staffs of both Senator Marco Rubio (R-Florida) and Congressionalwoman Frederica Wilson (D-Florida). During those visits, we called on our elected leaders to works toward the enactment of a faithful budget, which takes into consideration the poor, the environment and sustainable development in the Third World.

The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church was packed to capacity. Presbyterians of all shades and coming from various parts of the country, filled all meeting rooms to capacity in order to listen to such luminaries as The Rev. Dr. Herbert Nelson, II, Director of the Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness in Washington, DC and Sara Lisherness, Director of Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry. Throughout the day, those and other speakers covered about a dozen different subjects ranging from Self-Development of People, Ministry in the United Nations, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, to HEWA.

As for the Ecumenical Advocacy Days, the conference theme was based on Isaiah 58:3-7: “Is this the fast I seek?” That prophetic interrogation is translated into current realities under the sub-title: “Economy, Livelihood and the Our National Priorities.” This conference drew several hundred of urban pastors, priests, nuns and lay people throughout the United States, and Canada. Moreover, the plenary speakers are top guns who covered their subjects with mastery, and exhibit hands-on experience in their field. Among them, Congressman Emmanuel Cleaver, II, a United Methodist Minister, covered the subject of Christian responsibility in good governance, the Rev. Dr. Gary Dorrien, Reinhold Niebuhr Professor of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in NYC & Columbia University, spoke on the ethics national budget.

Beside the general and plenary sessions, I attended a couple of seminars at the Compassion, Justice and Peace event, namely, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. As for the Ecumenical Advocacy Days, I participated in the discussions on Global Economic Justice, Economic Issues, Latin America, Advocacy Skills Training and Breaking the Yoke of Injustice.

My goal is to apply these newly acquired skills in my ministry, introduce those subjects to the MOSJP sub-committee and use them as resource for the Presbytery when needed.

Rev. Dr. Jonas N. Georges, Pastor
ALL NATIONS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BIRTHDAYS

01 Rev. Charles Pipes - HR
02 Rev. Robert Collins - HR
03 Rev. Walter Arnold III - First, North Palm Beach
08 Dr. Evangeline Tolley - MOS
10 Dr. David Thomas - HR
10 Dr. William Stepp - HR
10 Rev. Gary Fravel - HR
15 Dr. Calvin Leonard - HR
16 Rev. Constance Bright - New Covenant, Miami
16 Rev. Elias Collado - Palmetto, Miami
16 Rev. Juan Perez - IHR
16 Dr. David P. Welton - MOS
23 Dr. German Vega-Feliciano - HR
23 Dr. Albert Bush, Jr. – Gardens, Palm Beach Gardens
24 Dr. Jonathan Swanson – Central, Miami
25 Rev. Hai Keon Yang - HR
25 Dr. James S. Kirk - HR

ORDINATIONS

01 Dr. Calvin Leonard - HR
10 Rev. Robert Bonham - HR
10 Rev. Robert Welsh - HR
11 Rev. Charles Croghan - HR
11 Rev. Ryan Baer – Lakeside, West Palm Beach
16 Rev. Aida Diego - Pan Americana, Miami
26 Rev. Raquel Welty - HR
27 Rev. Bryan Wenger - Indian River, Ft. Pierce
28 Rev. Stephen Castillo - HR
30 Rev. Jung Yn Shin – Korean, North Miami
31 Rev. Pierre DuBose – HR
May is a month when programming winds down and your administrative staff finds that they have more time to focus on their ministry to Christ's Kingdom. As the snowbirds depart for their northern homes, staff members find themselves catching up on those tasks that pile up prior to Easter.

This is a great time for them to join the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and begin taking online classes for Professional Seminar credits towards becoming certified in Church Administration. Information about membership and the certification process can be found on the Florida Region website, www.floridaapa.org.

The Mission of the APA is to offer opportunities for professional development and personal growth for those called by God to serve as support staff of the Presbyterian Church (USA). This is accomplished by providing continuing education events for certification and occasions for fellowship, worship and spiritual nurture and prayer at both National and Regional meetings as well as seminary sponsored training events.

Led by ministers and experts in their fields, the Administrative Personnel Association gives them an exceptional value by combining career and spiritual development into one cost-effective event, the 2012 National APA Conference in San Antonio, Texas from September 12th through September 16th.

For more information about joining the APA and attending the conference, visit the Florida Region website or contact Barbara Prieto, Florida Region President, at 305-666-8586 or rivierachurch@bellsouth.net.

Nancy Fine
Membership Chair, Florida Region of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
www.floridaapa.org

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<th>May</th>
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<td>1  2:00 – COM Region 1</td>
<td>5  2:00 – COM Region 1</td>
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<td>2  9:00 – Council Retreat (Duncan Center)</td>
<td>7  Noon – COM Regions 2 and 3</td>
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<td>1:00 – COM</td>
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<td>3  Noon – COM Regions 2 and 3</td>
<td>14 2:00 - HR</td>
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<td>1:00 – COM</td>
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<td>9  Presbytery Packets Mailed to Churches and online</td>
<td>19 1:30 - Mission Outreach</td>
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<td>2:00 - HR</td>
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<td>15 8:30 – Registration</td>
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<td>9:30 – Presbytery Meeting – First, Tequesta</td>
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<td>17-20 APA – Sarasota</td>
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<td>28 Memorial Day Observed/ Office Closed</td>
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CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAWS

Webinar Registration
When:
Wednesday, May 2, 2012
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM EDT

Join church law expert Richard Hammar for the compelling free webinar "Child Abuse Reporting Laws--What Churches Can Learn From Penn State."

The allegations of child molestation at Penn State stunned the nation. Even as the investigation continues, church leaders can learn from the tough lessons of this case, including recognizing abuse, the duties to report suspected cases of abuse, the mandatory reporting laws enforced by each state, and the civil and criminal liabilities associated with a failure to report.

Richard Hammar will review these critical matters for church leaders and take questions.
Go online to signup
https://www4.gotomeeting.com/register/953763919

COMING SOON: PENTECOST OFFERING

The Pentecost Offering, which enables the PC(USA) to encourage, develop, and support its young people, as well as provide assistance to at-risk children, will be received by many congregations on or before May 27, 2012. If for any reason you are unable to make a gift at that time, you are welcome to give through the online Pentecost Offering donation site, or you can simply make as many $10 donations as you’d like by texting “YOUNG” to 20222.

2013 Presbyterian Youth Triennium theme announced
“I AM” will focus on illustrations of Jesus and instruction to disciples. Read more →

Support military families and personnel
Reach out to Presbyterian military chaplains, personnel and their families this Memorial Day (May 28). Find resources for churches at Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel (PCCMP) or make a gift to the General Assembly Mission Council to support PCCMP’s ministry.

PRESBYTERY CONTACTS

Phone: 954-785-2220
1-800-940-9511
Fax: 954-785-1983
Address:
440 E Sample Road
Suite 208
Pompano Beach, FL 33064

Email:
center@tfpby.org

Presbytery Administrator
Amalie Ash

Stated Clerk
Dr. Skip Bush
561-625-5970

Associate Missional Presbyter
Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz
954-496-0394

Pastor to Pastor
Kernie Kostrub
561-477-4898

Executive Assistant
Shari Lowe

Financial Administrator
Susan Carpenter

Communications Specialist
Delphia Sullivan
Tropical Florida Is Looking Forward.

We are looking forward towards new missions, new communities and reenergizing our commitment to sharing the gospel to southeast Florida. In this issue we are featuring the outreach efforts in the presbytery. Perhaps you will see a new idea or will want to partner with your neighboring church.

If you would like to tell us about your congregation’s support in your community please send your story to the Presbytery by August 15th for the September issue.

Have a wonderful summer and continue to let us know your joys and your concerns.

Blessings,

Amalie
The Presbytery of Tropical Florida held its regular stated meeting on May 15, 2012 at First Presbyterian Church Tequesta. Thank you to Dr Pat Schafer, Senior Pastor and the members for being such good hosts.

Ruffin Stepp is coming from the Presbytery of Peace River. The Presbytery questioned him and voted to receive him as a member.

As a third item of pastoral concern the COM presented the contract for Rev Jim McNaull to serve as the interim pastor for Glades Presbyterian Church in Boca West.

The Peace Unity and Purity Administrative Commission (PUP AC) presented an amendment to the Gracious Separation Agreement (GSA). Stating whereby a congregation that leaves the PCUSA with its property and decides to become independent or ceases to exist, within five years of leaving the PCUSA, the property will revert back to the Presbytery of Tropical Florida. Additionally, there will be a ten year contract whereby a monetary payment will be made to the Presbytery of Tropical Florida if either two of the above conditions happen. This amendment passed with no objection.

After enjoying our lunch, we moved to the main business of the day.

Nine congregations that are following the Gracious Separation agreement procedures were presented. They were requesting to leave the PCUSA with their property. Each one was presented and the Presbytery of Tropical Florida voted to dismiss the following churches:

- Faith Presbyterian Church - Pembroke Pines
- North Palm Presbyterian Church
- Palms City Presbyterian Church
- Grace Community Presbyterian Church
- Memorial Presbyterian Church
- Indian River Presbyterian Church
- First Presbyterian Church Miami Springs
- All Villages Presbyterian Church
- Church and Kirk of the Keys

Respectfully submitted,

Dr Albert W. Bush
There is continued anxiety over the future of a denomination in an age that has been called not just post-denominational but post-Christian.

I believe is no better time than now to be a Leader in the PCUSA because there is no more important time than right now.

You have all been called by God to serve the particular corner of Christ’s Kingdom called the Presbyterian Church (USA), and, more important, to serve this corner of Christ’s kingdom at a critical time, a time when the sands beneath our feet are indeed shifting, a time when the church is changing, a time when the culture is changing. Now more than ever, the church needs you to provide leadership, stability, insight – or, in the more familiar words, energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

Let me be clear: we are not being called as leaders just to preserve and maintain the PC (USA). God, in God’s infinite wisdom, may have scoped out a future for us that does not include an entity called the Presbyterian Church (USA).

And, if that is where God is calling us, then that is where we must go. But I believe that the PC (USA) still has life left within it – but only if we accept that the sands are shifting and that change must happen.

Your leadership -- your energy, intelligence, imagination, and love -- are needed, now more than ever, to help the PC(USA) as we transform ourselves into a connectional church that can speak effectively to a diverse 21st century culture.

The church is not going to hell in a hand basket -- it’s transforming itself into something new, a new way of being church. The problem is that we don’t yet know what that way looks like. To many Presbyterians, that creates anxiety -- not knowing exactly what’s going to happen, exactly what we ought to do. We proudly label ourselves as doing things “decently and in order,” and that generally means we know what’s next on the agenda, what’s next on the “to do” list. The reality is that we don’t know what’s next on the agenda, what’s the next bullet’s on the “to do” list.

Even if we don’t know exactly what’s next on the agenda, even if we don’t know exactly where we are going to end up -- that’s OK. Martin Luther certainly didn’t know where he was going to end up when he posted his 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. John Calvin didn’t know where he was going to end up when he was unceremoniously booted out of Geneva. Calvin’s sense of security was based not on knowing what was next on his agenda, but on an abiding sense of God’s providence.

The PC (USA) needs you to lead us into our reformation -- to lead us where God is calling us. Doing that may be the most important thing you do as a Presbyterian.

Thanks be to God for your leadership. Thanks be to God for your ministry.

Dwayne Black, Jr.
ST. LUCIE COUNTY - They're going to teach people how to grow their own food, one bucket at a time.

Area residents and Mustard Seed Ministry volunteers gathered the morning of Feb. 10 behind its thrift store in Fort Pierce to begin work on a community garden.

"The whole purpose is to teach nutrition," said Stacy Malinowski, program director for Mustard Seed Ministries.

The purpose of the garden is to grow fresh fruits and vegetables to include in the food packages residents receive.

"This way we'll be able to introduce new foods," Ms. Malinowski said.

The garden involves taking dozens of 5-gallon buckets and filling them with potting soil, then planting seeds. In about 90 days, a variety of plants will be ready for harvesting.

Growing in the garden will be tomatoes, onions, squash, zucchini, pigeon peas and collard greens.

Read More:
http://www.myhometownnews.net/index.php?id=89930

Further Information
http://www.mustardseedministries.org

Goodwill Presbyterian, Ft. Pierce

Spending a day with Bob Coleman, pastor at Goodwill Presbyterian in Ft Pierce is a continuous conversation about outreach and local mission. Bob has been serving Goodwill for 16 years and has not been without ideas that make a difference. Several years ago, Bob invited the county Book Mobile to park in the church parking lot. The church is across the street from a large underserved neighborhood and is a school bus stop. When the Book Mobile was parked at the church Bob would encourage students coming off the buses to “check out a book”. This became a weekly ritual at Goodwill and soon Ft Pierce County officials noticed that the number one location for the Book Mobile was at Goodwill Presbyterian Church. Today, a beautiful three-story library stands across the field from Goodwill, and to accommodate the demand, the library had to be enlarged.

Today, Bob and the congregation at Goodwill have an afterschool tutoring program. The county provided the computers and equipment. Each afternoon, volunteers come to the church to help students in various grade levels. The program has seen improvements in FCAT scores, reading and math skills and overall study habits. The Guidance Counselors from the Ft Pierce School District recommend the students for the program. The community has recognized the Goodwill tutoring program’s success and there is increasing demand to attend.

Pastor Coleman gives his time to the Mustard Seed, a community food bank and outreach center. Bob gives as much as 30 hours a month to pack and distribute food and to serve as a board member. Recently, he developed the Garden-in-a-Bucket project. Using large paint buckets, teams poked holes for drainage, added the soil and planted the seeds that produced buckets of tomatoes, peppers, beans and more. The Buckets will be given to the families receiving assistance from the Mustard Seed.

Bob’s love of teaching and gardening has moved his ministry to the community. He has taught small children how to feel successful by planting flowers; he has a new outpost for more tutoring and community programs. Bob Coleman and the Goodwill PC ministry is a gift to the Ft Pierce community.
First Presbyterian, Plantation

Pastor David Massey shared that Plantation’s heart reaches out for the **Ann Storck Center in Ft Lauderdale**. The Ann Storck Center is a highly acclaimed 501(c) (3) non-profit organization serving the needs of children and adults in South Florida who present severe and multiple developmental disabilities including epilepsy, cerebral palsy, autism, and intellectual disabilities. It is a residential facility, a day care, adult training center and has an Expressive Arts program.

The members of Plantation also support the **Sexual Treatment Center of Broward County**.

Plantation made an investment for a computer-tutoring program that was usurped by a county program in a nearby community. David Massey explained that they learned a lot from that effort; that some programs do not work out. Nevertheless, you have to keep trying to find ways to support your community.

The Caribbean families that have joined First Plantation have added a new energy. They have given a new perspective for **multicultural outreach** in the City of Plantation.

First Presbyterian, Stuart

Stuart has been focusing on becoming a strong neighborhood church. Differentiating themselves from neighboring churches, they decided to change from the traditional summer Vacation Bible School to a program concentrating on the arts. The **arts program** is for Kindergartners to Fifth Grade and will last four hours a day. This gives the participants time to participate in a music program, Bible study, prepare for a play and spend time with arts and crafts. At the end of the program, the participants will act and prepare the set for a Bible based play.

First Stuart still remembers the impact of the 2005 hurricanes so they continue to be strong supporters of **Presbyterian Disaster Assistant**.

The church also supports a scholarship program for girls and young women in India. They currently support two girls in the program.

**Thornwell Home** is important to the church and they provide funds and needed items throughout the year.

First Stuart is responsive to emergencies and challenges around the world, Elders Polly Shaffer and Arlene Van Kirk said that when there is an unexpected need the church is quick to respond.

**Further Information**

**Ann Storck Center, Inc.**
1790 S.W. 43rd Way
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33317
Phone 954-584-8000
Fax 954-321-8863

**Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**


**Thornwell Home For Children**

All Nations,
North Miami Beach

This small congregation is very young and eager to continue and grow in mission and ministry. All Nations has been very closely connected to the Haitian relief effort and reconstruction. All Nations recently opened a daycare to minister and develop new relationships with the community. They are always caring for new arrival immigrant families in need of orientation and new friends. Dr. Jonas Georges has also been involved in the community dealing with fair housing issues. We praise God for All Nations commitment to compassion; a small congregation with a huge loving heart.

Iglesia Presbiteriana Nueva Vida (New Life), Miami

In their last anniversary the congregation expressed their commitment to be a visible and relevant community of faith in the neighborhood. They are transforming the exterior from a bland white to an attractive coral; thus becoming “The Coral Church on Coral Way.”

The Rev. Heidi Arencibia has been leading a transformation through mission and outreach ministries. In a very creative manner this congregations does VBS for the entire family, not just for children. They are committed to enhance the life of the aging members of the community with monthly enriching experiences, and a summer program that brings together all generations for families that are not able to travel during the summer. They have participated in the Presbytery’s summer backpack project and are now moving to ministry to the entire family. They also are constantly helping new immigrant families in our community. God is glorified with Christ’s witness in this small, yet vibrant congregation.

Riviera, Miami

The mission division at Riviera Presbyterian Church has a long history of service to the community. The Dr. Rev. Laurie Krauss has led mission trips to Kenya in support of a school, which continues today. They have a sock mission, food pantry, an amazing child care center, they are involved with GATE, and they support the Covenant Network and Yes Institute. They are known to devote themselves to serving the needs of all neighbors. Riviera has the distinction of being an Earth Care Congregation adopting sustainable practices to reduce, reuse, and recycle. The congregation is also actively involved in Habitat for Humanity. Recently, they hosted a free Mother’s Day Concert with the Greater Miami Youth Symphony. The Witness of Jesus Christ is loud and clear in this congregation’s path.

Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana, Miami

Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana en Miami (First Spanish) is a community of love and forward motion with the Rev. Jose Manuel Capella-Pratts leading an amazing renewal at many levels of the congregation’s life. Their historic ministry, La Progresiva Presbyterian School is a full Christian academic institution serving the new immigrant communities of Little Havana coming from the Caribbean, Central and South America. In addition, they receive contributions from Goya Food Corporation and distribute these to the needy in their immediate community. They host every Sunday a group of homeless individuals who come to worship and share a lunch with new friends of the congregation. They have sent medical personnel to help low income communities in Central America and they are continuously helping the lost and the hungry in the name of Jesus Christ. “La Primera” is a beacon of hope and faith in the midst of the city. Soli Deo Gloria!
Myrtle Grove, Miami Gardens

Myrtle Grove Presbyterian Church is a church that is mission minded and very dedicated to the values of education.

This congregation under the leadership of the Dr. Leon Lovell-Martin has refocused to help the needy in their community. They support the nearby local elementary and middle school, the Thornwell Home and School for Children and two other black educational institutions. Former teachers now in the congregation are known mentors and tutors of children in the community.

Myrtle Grove is doing mission in the name of Christ to their community and beyond by declaring the power of education and biblical values.

Trinity, Key West

Historical Trinity Presbyterian Church continues to loudly proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in worship and mission. This congregation and its anointed pastor the Dr. Rev. Gwen Magby are also helping new arrivals into the community and the country. They are involved in helping, guiding, and walking the journey with patients of HIV/AIDS in Key West.

This loving congregation is also caring and guiding the young at risk through their Neighborhood Accountability Board Program which brings together the offender, victims and community to restore and rebuild those affected.

Miami Shores, Miami

Miami Shores Presbyterian Church is a vibrant community of faith reigniting the passion for Jesus with ministry and mission for the entire family.

With the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Sam Rutland this congregation continues to increase and expand their witness to the community and the world. They support missionaries in Ethiopia and Lesotho, Africa. They have helped with clean water projects in Haiti and ministry to Cuba.

This summer they are focusing on mission trips to El Salvador, Haiti, and Daytona’s food banks and children ministries. Their food pantry ministry, their local school, and their ministry to all family members are but a few of the mission and ministry of this great congregation.

They are also developing ways and relationships to reach out with local congregations in our presbytery. Their witness is impeccable as they glorify God in ministry and mission.
On Sunday, April 14, 1912, one year after the City of Fort Lauderdale was incorporated; the First Presbyterian Church was chartered. During its first few years, worship services and Sunday school classes were held in other local churches and movie theaters. But it didn’t take long for the faithful congregation to grow into the largest church in the Presbytery of Tropical Florida.

On Sunday, April 15, 2012, more than 1,000 people crowded into the church’s sanctuary for a single service to celebrate 100 years of leading people to Jesus Christ, growing in faith, living a Christ-centered life, and loving their neighbors through ministries of service and compassion.

The festivities began 100 days before the centennial with a 5K run-walk to the beach and back and a tile-painting project. The tiles were fired, then installed on the foyer wall in the Richard E. and Ruth S. Neumann Education Building and revealed on Centennial Sunday.

A small committee researched the history of the church and assembled an 18-month commemorative calendar bursting with photos and facts tracing the church’s growth and development in parallel with the City of Fort Lauderdale. Members of the congregation were given the calendars in January.

Another committee researched the history of the church’s stained-glass windows, architecture and art work, and conducted a weekend of tours called “Secrets of the Sanctuary.” The facts and photos were assembled into a colorful book.

The church’s time capsule was unearthed, opened, and its contents carefully displayed in Fellowship Hall for all to see.

The church’s retired children’s ministry director and long-time church member headed up an effort to collect “love letters” to the church. More than 100 letters written by church members are currently on display for members and visitors to read.

The Cathedral Choir’s annual Lenten concert, held on Palm Sunday featured a single piece of music appropriately titled “Legacy of Faith.” Performed with orchestra, the piece is a collection of anthems written by Joseph M. Martin for other church celebrations, each one connected by prose and scripture read by senior pastor Dr. Douglas Brouwer.

On Centennial Sunday, the church abandoned its regular two-service schedule to unite the congregation in a single service in which all five choirs and all ministers participated. During the service, the congregation was treated to a slide show of the church’s first 100 years and a peek at designs for the new Family Center, currently in the city-approval process. Dr. Brouwer also announced that members of the congregation had already given or pledged more than $20,000 toward the purchase of a new church bus as a birthday gift to the church.

The joyful service was followed by an old-fashioned picnic in Colee Hammock Park on the Tarpon River, directly across the street from the Sanctuary. After the new time capsule had been buried, and the new playground for Happyland Day School dedicated, everyone gathered under the trees for a delicious lunch of roast pig and birthday cake. Members of the church’s ballroom and salsa dancing classes and the Sweet Adelines entertained on the stage, while people ate, talked and enjoyed the blue skies and ideal weather.

Around 3:30 pm, the picnickers began to leave the park, reluctantly and slowly saying goodbye to friends with thanks for a heartfelt, joy-filled tribute to a church they love. The first 100 church members to have made their reservation for the picnic departed with a small orange tree in hand, a gift from a First Church family who owns orange groves in Central Florida. Like First Presbyterian Church, the trees will be carefully planted, tended with love and watched with pride as they grow strong and bear fruit.

It was a perfect beginning to the church’s second century.
Shari’s Shout-out

The Presbytery meeting on the 15th was not easy as we graciously parted ways with nine congregations and many friends and colleagues. The next day I left for the Regional APA Conference in Sarasota. What a blessing! The five Tropical Florida members who attended returned refreshed, renewed and even more confident that we are exactly where we should be at this time in our lives and the life of the church.

Our membership chair (and now president-elect) Nancy Fine does a wonderful job of keeping all of our church administrative folks (and pastors) aware of what APA is about, the merits of joining and any opportunities for participation. One of our pastors mentioned that he wished there would be opportunity for local fellowship. Pastors have been similarly meeting for years and seem to enjoy this time with their colleagues to share. This is something we have discussed in the past but wondered how it would work with such a long, spread-out Presbytery. Although we realize that it might need to be done more regionally going forward, our first attempt has been set for Saturday, August 11th, meeting initially at First PC Fort Lauderdale and then going to lunch.

Will you join us? There will be no intense recruitment (promise)! Many of us have only spoken on the phone. This will be a time to connect, enjoy each other’s company and put faces to those voices. Realizing for some this will be a long drive (our past president Barbie Prieto will be traveling from Riviera), we really hope you will come. RSVP by August 1st to nancyfine@covad.net or 561-276-6338 x10. Say yes!

Have a safe and happy summer.

We have received our order of Planning Calendars which may be purchased and picked up from the Presbytery office. Cost: $9.00 each.

The Administrative Personnel Association

Today’s churches need up-to-date, fresh and prevailing leaders to guide them through the many facets of church administration. The Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA) can provide your staff with the resources and tools to be the best they can be for your church.

Established in 1976, the APA is a professional organization created for the purpose of providing a supportive association that promotes continuing education, individual growth, communication, and fellowship for its members. It is a group that strengthens lives both spiritually and professionally.

APA members have the opportunity to become certified in Church Administration at three levels. The core of the APA is this certification program which allows members to gain expertise in all fields associated with their position(s) within the Presbyterian Church (USA). Courses are offered at regional conferences and at an annual national conference. The 2012 National Conference will be held in San Antonio, Texas from September 13th through 15th. More information about the conference can be found on the Florida Region’s website.

For more information about joining the APA, visit the Florida Region website (www.floridaapa.org) or contact Allyson Criminger, President, at 904-733-8277.

Nancy Fine
Membership Chair, Florida Region of the APA

Educational Opportunities & Events:

Recent Grads Seeking Positions:

Region Two and Three – We have recent grads seeking positions as Christian Educators, pre-school teachers, part-time youth pastors, and any ministry that needs support or development.

Please contact Amalie at amalie@tfpby.org or 954 785-2220 for more information.

New Church Plant Needs Help!

Wellspring Community Church has been meeting at Riverglades Elementary in Parkland Florida since Palm Sunday. We hope to have our public launch on August 26th at 10:00 am, but we could some help before that date. If you have a passion for supporting new church plants financially or prayerfully, participating on an advisory team, and/or helping with ministry development, then we would love to talk to you. Check out our website for more information: www.cometowellspring.com, and remember to mark you calendar to plan to join us at our launch! If interested in getting involved, please call our church office 561-922-5374 or email: willy@cometowellspring.com.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT/MEETING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 7</td>
<td>12 – COM Regions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:00 – COM (No Meeting in July)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 12</td>
<td>10:00 - <strong>Covenant Group</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 14</td>
<td>2:00 - <strong>HRC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 14</td>
<td>8am-4pm <strong>Embracing, Creating &amp; Sustaining a Positive Work Culture in Healthcare,</strong> Palm Healthcare Foundation’s Healthcare Workforce Partnership” United Methodist Church, 900 Brandywine Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33409, Cost: $25. 6 CEUs. Register online at: <a href="http://www.palmhealthcare.org">www.palmhealthcare.org</a> by June 7.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18-22</td>
<td>9am-5pm <strong>Annual Faith Community Nurse Basic Preparation Course</strong>, Duncan Conference Center, 15820 S. Military Trail, Delray Beach. For Registered Nurses interested in holistic care –body, mind and spirit. Faith-based nursing practice is one of the fastest growing specialties recognized by the American Nurses Association. 33.5 CEU. Contact Bernadette Macy, Interfaith Health &amp; Wellness, ph. 561-379-1972 or <a href="mailto:wellness@catholiccharitiesdpb.org">wellness@catholiccharitiesdpb.org</a> for more info.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 19</td>
<td>1:30 – <strong>MOSJP –conference call (no meeting in July)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 20</td>
<td>5:30 pm <strong>Alumni Dinner &amp; Mini-Health Fair –Open to the Public.</strong> Join the Faith Community Nurses and Nurse Mentors along with local health service providers for an enjoyable evening at Duncan Conference Center, 15820 S. Military Trail, Delray Beach. Please RSVP by June 15. Email: <a href="mailto:wellness@catholiccharitiesdpb.org">wellness@catholiccharitiesdpb.org</a> or 561-379-1972.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 21</td>
<td>9:30 - <strong>FRC</strong></td>
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<td>June 22</td>
<td>Noon – <strong>PUP AC at Second PC</strong></td>
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<td>June 24</td>
<td><strong>Ruffin Stepp Installation</strong> at Palms West .</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 26</td>
<td>Noon – <strong>Region 2 Pastors Gathering at Sunset PC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 28</td>
<td>10:00 - <strong>CON/COR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 28</td>
<td>4:00 – <strong>Multicultural Network</strong> (Not meeting in July or August)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 30-July 7</td>
<td><strong>General Assembly – Pittsburg, PA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 14</td>
<td>10:00-2:00 – <strong>CPM Preparation for Ordination Exams</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td><strong>Doug Hood Installation</strong> at First, Delray</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 31</td>
<td>2:00 – <strong>COM Region 1 conference call</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2</td>
<td>Noon- <strong>COM Regions 2 and 3</strong></td>
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<td>August 2</td>
<td>1:00 - <strong>COM</strong></td>
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<td>August 9</td>
<td>2:00 <strong>HRC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 16</td>
<td>10:00 – <strong>CON/COR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 21</td>
<td>1:30 – <strong>MOSJP – conference call</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 29</td>
<td>10:00 - <strong>Council</strong></td>
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<td><strong>November 1 to 4, 2012</strong></td>
<td><strong>Florida Presbyterian Cursillo.</strong> A lay-led, spiritual renewal weekend for Presbyterians will be held November 1 to 4, 2012, at the Christian Church Conference Center in Silver Springs, FL. Pastors and wives are complimentary and some scholarships are available. Information and applications available at: <a href="http://www.FloridaCursillo.org">www.FloridaCursillo.org</a>. Questions to Rev. Dick Anderson or Gail Auguston-Koppen (FPC, Ft. Lauderdale) or Rev. Jack Noble (FPC, Pompano Beach).</td>
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Birthdays

06/01 Rev. Rosalia Orta - HR
06/02 Dr. Kenneth Smith - MOS
06/04 Rev. Charles Croghan - HR
06/04 Dr. Richard B. Anderson - HR
06/09 Rev. Donald Davis - HR
06/19 Rev. Cecelia Armstrong – Grace, Lantana
06/25 Rev. Martin Anorga - HR
06/26 Dr. Leon Lovell-Martin - Myrtle Grove, Miami
06/27 Rev. Benjamin Davis - HR
06/27 Dr. Charles Denison – First, Stuart
06/28 Rev. Antonio Welty - HR
07/03 Dr. Kenneth White - MOS
07/05 Rev. Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz
07/06 Rev. Daniel Gerhardt - HR
07/06 Rev. Otoniel Bermudez, Jr. - El Cordero, Miami
07/07 Dr. Ronald Hilliard First, North Palm Beach
07/13 Rev. Jose Manuel Capella-Pratts - First Spanish, Miami
07/15 Dr. Gustavo Astudillo
07/15 Rev. Thomas Slager – Community, Clewiston
07/21 Rev. Luis Mercado- Perez - MOS
07/28 Rev. Patricia Ashely - HR
07/29 Rev. James E. McNaull – HR, Glades
07/30 Rev. Pedro Rivera – Sunrise, Miami
07/31 Rev. Aida Diego - Pan Americana, Miami
08/02 Rev. Robert Vance - HR
08/03 Rev. Jose Rivera - HR
08/03 Rev. Linda Lader - MOS
08/04 Rev. Kennedy McGowan – First, Hollywood
08/08 Dr. Arlene Gordon - HR
08/15 Rev. Shirley Saunders – First, West Palm Beach
08/25 Rev. Maria Luisa Hernandez - HR
08/26 Rev. Pierre DuBose - HR
08/28 Dr. Thomas Culberson - HR
08/28 Rev. Guihag Hwang - MOS

Ordinations

06/01 Rev. V. Neil Wyrick - HR
06/01 Rev. Edward Peachey - HR
06/01 Rev. Daniel Gerhardt - HR
06/01 Dr. Maurice Stone - HR
06/01 Dr. James Nimmo III – First, Port St. Lucie
06/01 Dr. Thomas Culberson - HR
06/01 Dr. Kenneth White - MOS
06/03 Rev. Juan Perez
06/03 Rev. Gary Favel - HR
06/04 Dr. Stephen Sapp - MOS
06/08 Rev. Frank Allard - HR
06/11 Rev. Robert Vance - HR
06/11 Dr. Albert Bush, Jr. – Gardens, Palm Beach Gardens
06/11 Rev. Otoniel Bermudez, Jr. - El Cordero, Miami
06/15 Rev. Donald Davis - HR
06/16 Rev. Robert Polland - HR
06/16 Rev. Brace Bateman - HR
06/17 Rev. Kennedy McGowan – First, Hollywood
06/17 Dr. Gwendolyn Magby – Trinity, Key West
06/19 Rev. Donald Meeder - HR
06/21 Rev. Ervin Joslin - HR
06/23 Dr. Arlene Gordon - HR
06/23 Rev. Jose Manuel Capella/Pratts - First Spanish, Miami
06/23 Rev. Leah Meador - HR
06/23 Rev. Rosemary N. Welton - MOS
06/25 Rev. Suk Won Han – Korean, Palm Beach
06/26 Rev. Randolph Bare – Memorial, West Palm Beach
06/30 Dr. David Thomas - HR
06/30 Dr. Keith Riddle
07/01 Dr. Sam Rutland - Miami Shores, Miami Shores
07/01 Rev. James Goldsmith – Community, Lauderdale By The Sea
07/02 Rev. Robert S. Norris - MOS
07/02 Dr. William Stepp - HR
07/03 Dr. George McIlrath - HR
07/07 Rev. Pedro Rivera – Sunrise, Miami
07/09 Dr. Leon Lovell-Martin - Myrtle Grove, Miami
07/09 Rev. Constance Bright - New Covenant, Miami
07/09 Rev. Benjamin Davis - HR
07/10 Rev. Robert Collins - HR
07/12 Rev. Ricardo Green - MOS
07/14 Rev. Elias Collado – Palmetto, Miami
07/21 Rev. Roberto Hernandez - HR
07/22 Rev. Howard Westin - HR
07/26 Dr. Timothy Stover – Calvary, Coconut Creek
07/31 Rev. Angel Ramos - MOS
08/01 Dr. Kenneth Smith - MOS
08/01 Dr. Patrick Shaffer – First, Tequesta
08/07 Dr. John Vaughn - HR
08/13 Dr. Raymond Anglin - Ascension Peace, Lauderdale
08/18 Rev. Jose Rivera - HR
08/24 Rev. John Kirkham - HR
08/25 Dr. Richard E. Neumann - HR
08/25 Dr. Audley Reid - MOS
08/25 Rev. John Stewart - MOS
08/28 Rev. Pamela H. Barras - MOS
08/29 Rev. Jack Noble - First [Pink Church], Pompano Beach
MAJOR TRENDS EMERGING IN SOCIAL MEDIA AND MINISTRY FOR 2012:

- Church is becoming available everywhere at any time with apps on mobile digital devices like iPad 3’s and iPhones.
- The central role of video continues to expand, particularly with the streaming of live and recorded sermons, services, and special events.
- Digital technology and a variety of social media platforms provide smart channels for networking, collaborating, mobilizing, and creative, dynamic interaction.
- Online chats are taking on an increasing significance, especially Google+ hangouts, and Google+ on Air.
- Networked churches with Internet campuses continue to grow and innovate.
- Creative initiatives like Global Media Outreach, Multiply Movement, and Mobile Ministry are having an expanded impact.
- More churches are establishing Pinterest accounts.

As we look beyond 2012, there is clearly a place for an expanded role in the church for such cutting edge technologies as geo-location, mobile money, and AR. If popular music artists can include holograms as integral parts of their live performances, why can’t the iChurch use similar technology to creatively share and communicate the incomparable Gospel of Jesus Christ!

WHY A FOCUS ON TECHNOLOGY?

If you have been avoiding the waves of technology that are changing the way we communicate, it is time to embrace it. It is here and it is how we will be learning, connecting and reaching others. Delphia Sullivan, the Presbytery’s IT and Communications Specialist, has researched information to demonstrate how technology is key to ministry in 2012. Social Media such as Face Book and Twitter may not be your way to stay in touch, but it is how your congregations are staying in touch with their work and family.

It is our goal to have 100% of Tropical Florida’s churches with active and inviting websites. The Presbytery has an inexpensive and effective website development program for your church. We will help your church get on the technology train.
June 24, 2012

July 15, 2012
Installation Commission for Rev. Dr. Doug Hood’s installation at First Church, Delray Beach
September brings new energy to the Presbytery and the staff can feel the pace quicken. The phone calls and emails increase and we feel the stirrings of committees and projects. In this issue, you will see that the summer was not a typical slow summer.

In July, the 220th General Assembly gathered in Pittsburg. In stifling heat, our Commissioners and YAAD gave eight exhausting days to the Presbyterian process. Tropical Florida was well represented with eighteen people who traveled to Pittsburg to support organizations, observe the process, or speak to the issues.

This summer churches held Vacation Bible Schools, an Art and Drama Camp and Community Beach-theme parties. Church groups traveled on mission trips to Haiti, Cuba, Guatemala, Tennessee, New Orleans, Nicaragua, South Africa and more. Some attended conferences on Hunger, Evangelism and Transformation. Tropical Florida congregations spent the summer reaching out to their neighbors or working on how to strengthen their church.

Back to School has become a target summer mission for the Presbytery. In its third year, the backpack program has grown from 100 to 685 backpacks distributed to 17 Tropical Florida churches. In early August, congregations contacted nearby schools to inquire about their specific needs, the congregations then purchased the supplies and stuffed the backpacks. The combination of the Presbytery’s 685 with the many ongoing Presbytery church backpack programs provided approximately 1,700 backpacks to South Florida children.

A backpack makes a big difference in a child’s start at school. It lets the teacher know that the child is ready and it gives the child a sense of belonging. Supplies make a difference, recently we learned that Palm Beach County Schools cut copy paper out of their budget. Children coming to school were asked to bring two or three reams of copy paper with their supplies. Paper is a significant supply item to the teachers who use it for reports, tests, projects and homework. We can do a lot for our communities by adopting a school. We can send a principal a case of copy paper ($40.00), or really make their day and send colored copy paper. Willie Figueredo, the pastor at our NCD Wellspring Community, provides snacks to the teachers on Fridays at his Elementary School location. He said that it helped the teachers recognize that the Well Spring Church is part of their community.

This has been a summer of mission and outreach and you are all making a difference.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Presbytery Meeting September 25th.
Blessings, Amalie

For some of us, summer time is a down time; less activity and fewer programs. Some take time to refresh, relax and recharge. Yet for others is a time for ministry opportunities. I am thinking of those valiant, hardworking, creative and loving VBS workers, and the many mission workers who traveled and gave themselves. Hopefully you had the chance to do a little of both. God be praised for the church is alive!

This summer several churches had mission trips to places such as El Salvador, Cuba, and Haiti. Many had wonderful VBS, and several joined the Presbytery in the Backpack Outreach (Myrtle Grove, El Cordero, 1st Spanish, All Nations, New Life, Trinity, and Riviera) where Presbytery provided the backpacks and congregants filled them with school supplies before offering them to schools and children in their communities. God be praised for the church is alive!

A group of over 15 from this Presbytery representing 5 congregations and Presbytery staff (Sunset, Sunrise, Calvary, Wellspring Community NCD, and 1st Hollywood) attended the Evangelism, Transformation, New Church Development, Collegiate and Youth Ministries Conference at St. Petersburg Beach. It was an amazing time as over 500 Presbyterians responding intentionally to God’s call to action gathered, worshipped, and got equipped for ministry. We appreciate the Committee on Transformation for providing resources for so many to attend. God be praised the church is alive!

This coming fall most will be launching your congregational program year for ministry and mission; in children church, Sunday school, adult bible studies, ministry teams (committees), outreach and church growth opportunities, ministry to the hungry the needy, and ministries of justice and promotion of peace, ministry to youth, and seniors… do them all for the Glory of God! Make new friends, and above all, follow Jesus. Then, you will praise God, for you (the church) are alive!

From the Adventure
Rev. Edwin Gonzalez- Gertz
Associate Missional Presbyter
Hope everyone been having a great summer! As we turn our calendars to September, please be sure that you’ve set aside Tuesday, September 25th, for the Presbytery meeting at First, Boynton Beach.

It’s not too early to make lunch reservations, so why not go ahead and take care of that little detail? The packets will go out to churches and be posted on the website on September 13th; however, the reservation link is ready and waiting!

On October 27th, a Sexual Misconduct (Boundaries) Workshop will be conducted at Myrtle Grove PC in Miami Gardens. An email has been sent to those who need to attend, including those who attended five years ago (must be repeated). Please go to our website www.tfpby.org for a registration form or ask me to email one to you. There is a very long list of those who need to be registering vs. a very short list of affirmative responses (thanks to those who have).

The Nominations Committee is always looking for folks who want to become involved in the life of the Presbytery. At year end when those serving in the current class rotate off, it becomes a huge task. Please, if you have a desire to serve in some way (or have been considering this) on any of the committees or task forces, let us know. Please don’t wait to be asked. You may contact CON Chair Arlene Van Kirk directly at ASVanKirk@comcast.net.

Gracious separation has cost us and we need your gifts.

Shari Lowe
Executive Assistant
Presbytery of Tropical Florida

The Finance Committee met over the summer to balance the Presbytery’s administrative budget. With careful study of each line item and thoughtful cuts in expenses the budget was finally balanced. The Finance Resource Committee has faithfully managed the funds of the Presbytery and had made sure that unnecessary expenditures have been removed. They have played a key role during a time of change and financial stress.

We are thankful for their diligence and commitment to the growth and future of the Presbytery.
**WHY IS THE APA A GOOD FIT FOR YOUR STAFF?**

Personnel Committee members search for the right person to do the job required. Whether it is a financial person, website administrator, secretary or office administrator, there are skills unique to each position. But what happens after the position is filled?

Are you providing the necessary continuing education to keep your staff members up-to-date with the latest information? Are they familiar with the Book of Order and how it applies to your church? Do they know how the latest marketing trends affect attendance? Is your website targeting the right people to grow your church?

By having your staff join the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA), they will keep current with the latest denomination issues, marketing trends and administrative skills needed to help your church thrive and grow. For an annual $75 membership fee, they will have a network of individuals to help them succeed. And for approximately $500, they can attend a conference and take classes to enhance their skills. Skills that you know they possess and skills that they want to enhance.

Visit the Florida Region’s website ([www.floridaapa.org](http://www.floridaapa.org)) and see why so many PCUSA staff members are excited about the association. Take some time to review all of the classes offered through the APA and see how they will benefit your staff and your church. And, most importantly, take a few minutes to see why the APA is a good fit for your staff.

For more information, contact Allyson Criminger, President of the Florida Region, at 904-733-8277 or acriminger.apunte@staugpres.org.

Nancy Fine
President-Elect and Membership Chair
Florida Region of the APA
Being selected by Presbytery to have voice and vote at General Assembly is an honor and an awesome responsibility. The sheer number and nuances of issues (800 items of business this year, including 115 overtures) seemed overwhelming at first. But somehow, the 688 elected commissioners and 207 advisory delegates working on 21 committees and at plenary meetings managed to handle all this over the seven and a half days and nights of official business, often into the wee hours of the morning.

Our source of energy and hope was expressed by the GA220 theme of Isaiah 40:31, and in the context of worship and prayer that we shared every day, reminding us that we are a body of worship, not just business. Col 3:17.

As individuals of faith and as a church, we are living through a crucial time of change, where the emotions can be paralyzing. But GA helped me to remember that God can use even broken vessels like us. We need a connectional, collaborative approach, to form and grow relationships – even with those who don’t agree with us – and we need to be creative even as we cherish tradition.

In the committee I served, all views were given an opportunity to be heard, and individuals were given fair and balanced opportunities to speak. When I was assigned to the Polity Committee, I expected a dry, boring subject, but that was not the case. Our most important work was on the property clause of the Book of Order. By overwhelming committee majority recommendation and very strong voice vote at plenary, it was confirmed that all property held by or for a congregation is “held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the denomination” and not deemed to be the property of that congregation.

I think the most important thing about GA itself was the ability to make collective decisions, despite emotional and controversial issues. It was an affirmation that our form of government works, and that our new Form of Government is simpler and easier to follow.

At GA I saw diversity in a multitude of forms: generational, ethnic, linguistic, geographical, racial, theological, political and ideological. But I also saw connection and fellowship, plus outstanding dedication and commitment. I was especially impressed by the Young Adult Advisory Delegates, whose positive participation and teamwork, in committee and plenary, gave me hope and confidence in the future of our denomination.

In plenary, I was disappointed at the use of parliamentary procedure to circumvent discussions on the recommendations of committees that had worked diligent, long hours, and to avoid a direct vote on some controversial issues. Sometimes there seemed to be too much emphasis on time consuming and costly process and study, instead of taking action.

But overall, I found GA to be a worthwhile and valuable experience, and I hope to attend another GA in some capacity.

Until the next GA, commissioners have a two year commitment to resource the issues from GA220, and to be available to give verbal and written reports to our local churches, Presbytery, synod, special interest groups, and ecumenical groups. It has definitely been an experience worth sharing with people who want direct input from those who attended in person.

Marianne Shine,
Ruling Elder Commissioner, GA220
I like the title of The Presbyterian Outlook magazine which effectively describes what I experienced; “A wonderfully Difficult GA”. One of the things I did expect was a lot of reading in preparation for our decision making. I even expected a bit of politicking, after all we are Presbyterians. I expected a lot of soul searching, prayer and seeking out the will of God in the process. All of these expectations were realized.

The commissioners are selected by a computer to be a member of a certain committee. In my case I was selected to be on the Mission Coordination Committee. Being on this committee required a lot of intense reading prior to arriving in Pittsburgh. I did read most of the material sent to us via the internet and regular mail as well. But all the commissioners were advised to pay particular attention to the business coming before their committee. I was also invited to read some of the minutes of the General Assembly Mission Council, now known as, Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

This General Assembly will forever be remembered as the one that elected two vice moderators within 48 hours. Now that was something different and difficult. And with God’s help we did it. After completing the first order of business on the agenda, the election of the Moderator and Vice Moderator, the Commissioners went into committees.

A couple of the committees were overwhelmed with people who wanted to speak to the issues coming before them. These committees worked hard listening to the testimonies of the people and far into the night. For three days we deliberated on the reports, overtures and testimonies. We prayed, listened with our ears and hearts, many times trying to come away with a consensus to very hard decisions.

The Committee on Mission Coordination had a few decisions to make and bring before the General Assembly. I will list a couple as examples.

1. Name change for the GAMC to PMAB (Presbyterian Mission Agency Board)
2. Special Offerings: The committee agreed to approve this report from Special Offerings Advisory Task Force except for section 4 dealing with the One Great Hour of Sharing, the Christmas Joy Offering, the Pentecost Offering and the World Communion Offering. We brought before the Assembly our recommendations. The General Assembly voted to retain the four special offerings as they are.
3. Approval of the 2013-2014 mission budget was approved.

Other items that may be of interest to the Presbytery that was discussed at GA were the following:

1. Church property: the GA affirmed that this be held in trust for the use and benefit of the denomination.
2. Not to change the language of the Book of Order in regards to marriage.
3. There will be a study on per capita giving.
4. The Board of Pensions will hold conversations with other denominations on sharing benefits plans.
5. The Mid Council Report was on nongeographic presbyteries was not approved. GA voted on creating a 14 member administrative commission to continue discussing some of the issues raised and to report back to the assembly in 2014.
6. A task force was created to discuss racial ethnic ministries in the Church.
7. A goal of 1001 new worshipping communities was approved.

There were a lot more decisions made at GA220, some as Commissioners from Tropical Florida we agreed on and others we did not. This was a learning experience for all of us, and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve our Church and Presbytery.

Thanks be to God.
This past 220th General Assembly was the first one I have ever attended. I attended as a Young Adult Advisory Delegate and I think that, despite all the people telling me not to let anyone think less of me because I was a YAAD, I never had a problem. I felt like people were trying to be inclusive and supportive of the YAADs. The YAAD advisors were wonderful and also offered constant support and help. The YAAD orientation was very much appreciated and helped a lot. I learned all about plenary procedure and I also learned a lot about how to better connect with God during the nightly YAAD meetings. I enjoyed how spiritually awakened I was beginning to feel.

I also think that the moderator of the entire General Assembly did the best he could. He dealt with everything very well and remained calm and level headed throughout the entire assembly. I do feel like there may have been too many big issues to sort out in a short amount of time. Everyone has a very different view and opinion and they all wanted to be heard. This caused a lot of stress because while a lot of people wanted to be heard a lot of the people didn’t want to listen. They already had their own opinion that they came into the assembly with. I feel like maybe the issues weren’t given the attention to detail that they deserved, but they were given what the assembly could give them with the amount of time that everyone had together.

I served on committee number 16 which was church growth and PILP. I think that the moderator for this committee was excellent. He did a very good job making sure everyone had a clear understanding of the movements and what each vote was for. He displayed great patience and diligence. Our parliamentarian was also excellent. She was worked to the bone and was great with helping everyone accomplish what they wanted. I think that all of my fellow YAADs in this group also really wanted to make a difference and be helpful and that they accomplished that. Everyone worked really hard trying to make the best decisions for the church and I saw that.

The people all around were very lovely and welcoming and I made wonderful friends and learned a lot. I thoroughly enjoyed attending the 220th General Assembly and I hope everyone else had an experience as positive as mine.

**BEAT THE HEAT**

The first “Meet to Beat the Heat” celebration at Community Presbyterian, Deerfield Beach, was held on June 23. Snow cones, pizza, face painting and a bounce house, along with live music welcomed young and old alike, many who wandered in from the neighborhood.
Anticipating a quiet day off to spend painting her porch, Laurie Kraus awoke, as all of us did on July 20th, to news of the horrific mass shooting in Aurora, Colorado. While many of us were transfixed at the television screen, Laurie knew that her phone would soon be ringing from calls from the PDA, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Because of Laurie’s work as a volunteer disaster responder for the Presbyterian Church USA, and her experience with mass shootings, she was called to work on the Aurora, Colorado movie theater shooting. The Presbyterian national domestic disaster associate, John Robinson, called on Laurie to begin the task of putting together a team. The team would be on the ground in Aurora within 24 hours of the shooting; they would come from around the country and would be in place within 48 hours.

Because Laurie had just returned from a deployment in Colorado Springs, for the fires that destroyed so many homes she knew she would not be deployed in the first wave to Aurora. Instead, Laurie had the privilege of engaging with the Presbytery leadership and with her colleagues on the National Response Team as they tried to support local resources and congregational leadership as they, in turn, supported their own community in response to the tragedy.

Laurie shared how the PDA responds to human caused tragedies with the following explanation of how PDA response teams are organized and the service they provide. She explained that following the first news of a disaster, PDA’s John Robinson contacts the Presbytery in which the event occurred. In Aurora, the Presbytery staff was out of town so a pastor, serving as the Presbytery moderator, became the point person for an invitation to PDA. With the invitation in hand, the team then proceeds to recruit a response team. In this case, multiple phone calls were necessary before the appropriate number of responders with the skills to support Aurora and Denver Presbytery were located. In the case of a mass shooting like Aurora, a typical deployment group would include at least one pastor (experienced in shooting responses) a clinician (social worker, therapist) also with experience in human caused disaster response, and a third responder. The third responder in this case was a newer member of the team, a pastor and former police officer whose own community of Tucson experienced a similar disaster in 2011. While those selected for the response were organizing travel and re-assigning work and home responsibilities for the next week, John and I monitored the situation, and made contact with people in the affected Presbytery and in the larger disaster response community.

In this case, two of the four PCUSA congregations in the town of Aurora are also union congregations with the United Church of Christ (UCC). Robinson called his cohort in the UCC, and learned that they were requesting PDA support for their union and their UCC congregations in Aurora. (Though most denominations have disaster response entities, very few have teams trained and able to respond to human-caused violent events.) So, the team engaged with both Presbyterian and UCC congregations, at the request of the UCC nationally and in the Denver area.

Additionally, (as is customary in any disaster response) the staff of Church World Service aids in gathering representatives from the interfaith community and coordinate a multi-faith response.

Meanwhile, on the ground in Colorado, the local congregations and pastors of Aurora put together an interfaith service to be held that evening as a way of gathering the community in prayer, grief and support, especially as many victims were still severely wounded in hospital.

When the PDA team gathered in the morning, they followed up on conversations that were held with the moderator of the Presbytery, the pastors of churches in the affected community, and the ecumenical neighbors who were to developing a communal response to tragedy. The PDA team visited each church in Aurora and sought to support and listen to their pastors and people. The PDA team joined them again on Sunday morning in worship. (Tropical Florida will recall how, only a few days after Hurricane Andrew, representatives of the PCUSA from California and Louisville were in our Presbytery and worshiping in the churches of South Dade on Sunday).

In the following weeks, the team listened, and offered information and theological reflection on mass violence and its effect on communities, religious practice, and especially in the lives of children and youth. The PDA team may be there a few days, or as much as a week to ten days. PDA will return to Colorado in months to come, to offer pastoral respite and reflection, Care for Caregivers, Compassion Fatigue and Resilience workshops. They will broaden their pastoral and institutional support to embrace the leadership in the three adjoining Colorado presbyteries who have in the past month been afflicted by fire as well as human violence.

Laurie Kraus summed it up by saying that, “along the way, all of us will pray; some of us will donate funds to support rebuilding and recovery, and PDA will continue to refine what we have learned and will be learning in Colorado about the resilience of spiritual communities in order that we may improve the effectiveness of future responses. All of us weep when one of us suffers. And, each in our own way will hope and help to bandage up the wounds that have been opened that day in that small Denver suburb. In this way, we make visible the face of God, and practice our belief that we are, all of us, the body of Christ and belong to one another. The congregations in Aurora will hear what we heard from similar PCUSA visitors that long ago August Sunday in Miami: we are here to stand with you, and to help you in your recovery. We are here to tell you: you are not alone.”

Tropical Florida has three members of the PDA National Response Team: Laurie Kraus, Pat Ashley and Tim Stover
Overview
As of April 2012, 53% of American adults age 65 and older use the internet or email. Though these adults are still less likely than all other age groups to use the internet, the latest data represent the first time that half of seniors are going online. After several years of very little growth among this group, these gains are significant.

As of February 2012, one third (34%) of internet users age 65 and older use social networking sites such as Facebook, and 18% do so on a typical day. By comparison, email use continues to be the bedrock of online communications for seniors. As of August 2011, 86% of internet users age 65 and older use email, with 48% doing so on a typical day.

Looking at gadget ownership, we find that a growing share of seniors own a cell phone. Some 69% of adults ages 65 and older report that they have a mobile phone, up from 57% in May 2010. Even among those currently age 76 and older, 56% report owning a cell phone of some kind, up from 47% of this generation in 2010.
Tech planning needs to be prominent in your church’s culture. Here’s how to do it.

As technology increasingly drives our culture, it’s tempting to wield it as a patch rather than a solution. But savvy church leaders who use technology—rather than letting technology use them—understand that it is a strategic support, not a fix. That means tech planning needs to be prominent in your church’s culture. Here’s how.

- **Put together a tech team** to make church technology decisions. Include a pastor, a tech-savvy member, church ministry representatives and a finance team member. Also obtain outside professional help as an objective resource.
- **Divide technology into four areas**: administration (manage operations and finances), communication (build relationships), education (intrachurch and outreach) and worship—only after the other three areas are operational.
- **Decide how you will purposefully use** technology and let that mission—not perceived “need”—drive your plan. For example, a direct mail solution will allow you to reach people more easily, while real-time reports from your database will let you analyze the church’s effectiveness in a number of areas.
- **Talk to other churches** about what equipment and software is working for them, which vendors they recommend and what kinds of training they do. Copy the successes and avoid the pitfalls.
- **More than 75 congregation management systems are available today**, such as Fellowship One or ChurchMetrics.com. Assess whether you want a software-based system, which allows you to own and customize the software, or a less expensive, Internet-based system that can be accessed anywhere. Try it before you buy it.
- **Buy only what you need**. Equipment tends to last only three years before requiring maintenance, which is often more expensive than simply replacing it. For that reason, only accept donated equipment that is a year or two old.
- **Make training a major part** of your tech plan.
- **Be sure your plan includes** methods and policies for backing up all data at least once a week.

### WHAT CAN CLOUD COMPUTING DO FOR YOUR CHURCH?

**By Christy Scannell • 04/10/2012**

**5 ADVANTAGES OF INTERNET APPLICATIONS**

Cloud computing—using an application from the Internet rather than your computer’s hard drive (think Gmail or Yahoo email apps)—has hit pay dirt for a number of churches. Yet many churches fear the virtual nature of how it’s delivered. So why should you consider cloud computing?

1. It’s cheaper. No server to back up. Updates automatically. Plus it softens the workload for your system.
2. You can get access from any device with Internet—laptop, iPad, smartphone, etc.
3. You can use it anywhere. Want to access your church membership software at the beach? Done.
4. Better security than most churches would implement.
5. Multisite churches can connect to the same system.

Cloud services—also called Software as a Service, or SaaS—are increasing rapidly with the success of Google Apps, one of the first and most feature-rich. Don’t plan to use a single provider, however. You’re likely to find help such as email, calendars and document storage in one location, and more specific data services (such as ChurchOfficeOnline.com, Salesforce.com, SugarCRM.com) at another.
Pinterest is taking the social media landscape by storm. With more than 10 million users, and climbing steadily, churches need to stop and take a look to see if this might be another great way to marketing their churches and connecting with people online.

While many sites have unpacked the basics of what it means to “pin,” here I hope to share with you five ideas on how to market your church using Pinterest.

Pinterest will force churches to up their game on design, as it’s a visually-dominant platform. In order to get noticed, you have to have great photography and art. Churches that want to gain traction should start making design a significant part of their content strategy so that sharing images can depict the heart of your church.”

That said, let’s look at five ways to market your church using Pinterest:

1. Pin images of your church members, events, and community. Pinterest is all about images and visual stimuli. By pulling photos you might already have on Facebook and your church website and pinning them to your church Pinterest page, you’ll be well on your way to engaging with people through this new platform. Create separate boards for annual events such as vacation Bible school, youth auctions, service projects, etc. Encourage participants to share and upload their own photos.

2. Pin images of your worship services. While websites still feature more text than images, Pinterest is a great place to feature what the “vibe” of your worship services are like. Hire a photographer to shoot candid shots of members worshipping, the music ministry team, children gathering, pastors preaching, you get the idea. Don’t be afraid to take close up shots of artistic aspects of your building, décor, or other interesting elements of your church.

3. Pin images to accompany your current sermon series. Pastors often mention books that correlate to topics they are preaching about. Include images of these books along with images that go with a theme. For instance, if the sermon series has to do with transformation, search and pin images that depict transformation. The goal is inspiration through images; to provide fodder for engagement and thought.

4. Pin images of books and articles your pastor or church staff has written. Include images of other reading materials or Christian ebooks on growth, leadership, and church issues that might interest your congregation. Link images to your blog where you unpack why the book was meaningful to you and how it relates to the Church.

5. Pin images that depict your church culture. Does your church focus on overseas missions? Compassion International or World Vision sponsorship? Feeding the hungry in your community? Most of these ministries could be well-depicted and told through photography and images. This is just another way to share the heart of what your church does well with the world online.

There are many more wonderful ideas for using Pinterest in your church social media marketing.

### 8 GREAT REASONS FOR USING TWITTER IN CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

1) **What you have to say is important.**
   Every church is different. If you haven’t already uncovered your church’s personality and ministry goals, so do this first, then reach out to people with similar desires.

   Share the heart of your church. Share how you envision impacting the community. Chances are people will listen if what you have to say is genuine.

2) **Your givers are on Twitter.**
   Believe it or not, people want to give to causes they care about, and many of these people use Twitter. Many technologically savvy folks are quick to donate online to causes they believe in; better yet, lots of millennials are looking for churches that are adept at using social media.

3) **Future church members are on Twitter.**
   With millions of people on Twitter and hundreds, if not thousands, in your community, it’s a great place to meet with people who just might become the next church member, giver, and volunteer.

4) **You can monitor your church’s reputation.**
   Using Twitter to search for your church’s name and any conversations about it or its ministry staff can be a valuable
tool. If negative things are being said or communicated, better to know sooner rather than later.

5) You can cultivate authority.
By spending time developing simple ways to reach out to people, you can become the authority in your area of expertise, whether that is a specific ministry, or just loving on people organically.

6) You can provide immediate feedback.
When someone reaches out to your church with a question via Twitter, or prayer request, or donates to a specific fund, you can provide immediate feedback to that person and connect with them instantly (as long as you or someone at the churches make sure to monitor the Twitter account closely). Responding immediately has the potential to create a feeling of connection instantly.

7) You can acknowledge staff and volunteers for their hard work.
By sending out tweets like: “Kudos to our worship team for today’s set – I really felt God moving in church today” You can acknowledge and thank volunteers and staff while encouraging followers who haven’t yet visited or missed the weekend services.

8) You can send updates on church and individual needs.
Long quarterly letters are great for sitting by the fire with a cup of tea, but for most of us who are on the go, reading quick updates about how specific ministries are doing or getting an immediate prayer request can be impactful and help us stop and thank God and present prayers to Him in the now.

7 TIPS TO LEVERAGE SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR CHURCH
By Christy Scannell • 07/05/2012

If your church is like most, you have a social media presence, but your efforts are scattered. Harness social media power using these tips. Does your church have a Facebook page? Yes. Is your youth group’s latest jam session on YouTube? Likely. Is your pastor featured on LinkedIn? Maybe. Who are your official church tweeters?

Uh, let’s form a committee for that.

If your church is like most, you have a social media presence, but your reach is like an octopus on roller skates—plenty of action with no forward momentum.

Harness social media power using these tips.

- **Embrace texting.** It might seem counterintuitive to pastoral care, but millennials—the future of the church—are text-centric, often praying via digits.
- **Be an Avid Facebook and Twitter User.** “Church” is happening everywhere. Find seeker- and believer-created Facebook pages and join the conversation.

Similarly, track and use popular Twitter hashtags such as #Jesus, #prayer, #church and even #spirituality or #Allah.

- **Use the “check-in” feature:** Check in using the special feature on Facebook, Foursquare or Google to let people know you’re available for a chat at the nearby coffee shop or to remind them of a ministry meeting.
- **Make connection your primary social media goal.** Sure, deep thoughts and Scriptures are important, but study after study has shown that people use social media to engage with others. That means discussion, not monologue. Save the sermon for Sunday morning.
- **Turn YouTube into a revival portal.** Post videos of the good things happening at your church as a witness to God’s goodness.
- **Take advantage of online outreach tools.** Websites such as StickJesus.com, InternetEvangelismDay.com and ChurchMarketingSucks.com will help you maximize your tech time.
- **Develop churchwide social media guidelines.** The best—and worst—thing about social media is it’s a free marketing tool anyone can use. Make sure your pastoral staff and leaders have a clear vision for social media’s purpose in your church. Even better: Hire a social media pastor.
I have to admit, I rarely study the Bible without my Droid Incredible 2 smartphone in hand. Sometimes I use my husband’s iPad AND my phone side by side. I prefer to do my Bible study on the couch or somewhere comfortable.

That said, here are five ways I use my smartphone for Bible study:

1) Merriam-Webster Dictionary App: This is a wonderful app to use for Bible study. We use an inductive style Bible study worksheet to go through books of the Bible verse by verse, chapter by chapter. One of the sections in our study asks us to interpret scripture by finding out the meaning of words. I love this aspect of scripture study as it helps me really dig into what God is showing me through. Phone in hand, I look up word after word and make notes. This app makes this an incredible simple process.

2) YouVersion Bible App: If you haven’t yet heard of YouVersion, you’ve probably been doing missions work in Africa for the past 20 years. With millions of people worldwide reading the Bible on their digital devices, YouVersion is here to stay. Read 100 different versions, in multiple languages, share verses in online community, bookmark pages, the features and uses go on and on.

3) Evernote App: Evernote is a helpful tool to sync your notes and tasks between all your devices – from your phone to your computer to your tablet. I type in notes during sermons on my phone, make notes on the run, and even write blog posts on the go with this wonderful app. If you want to learn to use Evernote in more detail, I highly recommend Evernote Essentials or Evernote for Pastors.

4) MyStudyBible.com Mobile Site: Instead of lugging around a study Bible, concordance, and several commentaries, get them all right at your fingertips with this amazingly easy mobile Bible study site from the folks at LifeWay Christian Resources. The primary version is the HCSB, and the commentaries are very helpful and accessible anywhere you have your phone (even when the Starbucks internet access is down).

5) YouTube App: It occurred to me today to search the YouTube app on my phone for Ephesians 2, the scripture I’m studying this week. I found a plethora of resources from John MacArthur to John Piper to random everyday people who have set scripture to music. Very cool and worth checking out if you have the time.

OTHER NEWS

**Certificate in Lay Ministry (Online)**

Oct. 2012-June 2013

Now offered online, the non-degree Whitworth Certificate in Lay Ministry Program is designed to meet the goals of the on-campus program (above) in a format that allows students both inside and outside the Spokane area to participate fully. Classes are held for nine months, from October to June.

[More...](#)
Our Presbytery strives to be a connectional, not just congregational, body of Christ. First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach modeled that vision when their Associate Pastor Aaron Janklow and Mission Outreach Committee Co-Chair Jeanne Heavilin led a mission team to Haiti that included FPCODB members Gaby Ajram, Barbara Connelly, Daphne Hartley, Becky and Melissa Knapp, and Nancy Long, plus David Janklow from New Orleans, and three members of First Presbyterian Church of Pompano Beach, Patricia Lesesne, and Marianne and Randy Shine.

In the mountains above Port au Prince, our twelve member mission team worked with the Haitian Masons to build three homes of cinder block construction to house 21 adults and children, who had been living in fragile shelters next to the site of each new home since the big earthquake almost three years ago.

New skills were learned to stucco and float the walls, move and lay cinder block, fill and carry buckets of sand, sift sand, and mix cement.

It was a profound spiritual experience for all of us. Before work every day, we prayed at the work site, we had devotions each evening, attended Bible Study and worship at the local church, and shared hymns and prayers at the dedication of each home, where we gave each family a Bible and a lantern. The Haitian people we met witnessed to us with their kindness and deep faith, despite all the hardships they have and continue to endure, with 250,000 still in fragile shelters.

Missionary Flights International (MFI), based in Ft. Pierce, flew us and supplies there and back in one of their work horse DC-3’s. Together, we put wings to the Gospel, one home at a time!

PRESBYTERIAN LEADERS MEET IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

by Héctor Rodríguez
Racial Ethnic and Cross Cultural Ministries
SANTO DOMINGO -- More than 100 leaders — including teaching and ruling elders and PC(USA) national staff — and the Evangelical Dominican Church met here from Aug. 8-13 to participate in the Hispanic/Latino Pastoral Development Seminar.

The 35th edition of this seminar focused on the theme: “People with a theological mindset, part 2: the word in action.” It included a keynote presentation about Deuteronomist literature by the Rev. Edesio Sanchez-Cetina, an expert in bible translation from the United Bible Societies.

Workshop topics included “Multicultural ministries in the Hispanic context”; “Financial planning for the church and for the pastor’s family”; “The art of being a pastor’s wife or husband”; and a dialogue about actions adopted by the 220th General Assembly (2012) related to Hispanic/Latino leadership development.

The Rev. Hector Rodriguez, associate for Hispanic/Latino(a) congregational support, shared that this is the first time in 35 years the Hispanic/Latino Pastoral Development Seminar has been held in the Dominican Republic. He and Marissa Galvan-Valle, co-director of the event, said it was “a very successful experience for the participants.”

They expressed appreciation for the presence and support of General Assembly Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons, Associate Stated Clerk Loyda Aja, Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries Director the Rev. Rhashell Hunter, Theology Worship and Education Director the Rev. Chip Hardwick, Board of Pensions Regional Representative the Rev. Ernesto Badillo, Associate for Multicultural Congregational Support the Rev. Raafat Girgis, and national Hispanic/Latino(a) leaders Yudit Bermudez, Norma Sayago and the Rev. Tony Aja, among others.

Each year, leaders from all around the United States and Puerto Rico attend the seminar to study, reflect, rest and share issues related to the life and mission of the PC(USA) from the Hispanic perspective. At the same time, Presbyterian Hispanic leadership is in direct contact with local PC(USA) church partners in order to strengthen denominational relationships and to find ways to increase mutual cooperation in mission.

The next Hispanic/Latino Pastoral Development Seminar may take place in El Salvador, Central America.
The Presbytery of Tropical met at its regular Stated Meeting on September 25, 2012, at the First Presbyterian Church, Boynton Beach – “The Gateway to the Gulfstream”.

Staff

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The Moderator, Ruling Elder Dwayne Black, Jr., called the meeting to order. The Rev. Jack Noble, chair of the Worship Task Force opened the meeting with prayer. We sang two hymns from the new Presbyterian Hymnal available in 2013. The Rev. Randy Gill, Host Pastor, greeted the Presbytery and thanked the Presbytery for loaning First of Boynton money to repair the Sanctuary roof after the 2005 hurricanes. The Rev. Dr. Albert W. Bush, Jr., Pastor of Gardens Presbyterian Church and Interim Stated Clerk gave the message “Build Your House on the Rock of Jesus’ Teachings”. We were left with two eternal truths:

(1) God the Father loves us individually as a person and

(2) Jesus is our Savior.

The Rev. Dr. Leon Lovell-Martin reported for the Committee on Ministry. The Presbytery said good-bye and thank you to the Rev. Ryan Baer, Pastor of Lakeside Presbyterian Church, who has received a call to Fort Worth, Texas. Ryan was thanked for his service on COM. The Presbytery granted Honorable Retirement to The Rev. Carol Trax and The Rev. Connie Bright. Many members paid tribute to Connie as she begins the next step in her ministry. Rev. Trax was not present. We also said good-bye to the Rev. Van Lahmeyer and the Rev. Jeff Binder both of whom received calls outside the Presbytery.

The Presbytery examined for ordination and affirmed the call of Hallie Hottle to become the Associate Pastor at Miami Shores Presbyterian Church. Ms. Hottle shared her faith journey and answered questions about her theology. She is a recent graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary which continues the tradition of fine PTS graduates being part of our Presbytery.

The Peace, Unity and Purity (PUP) Administrative Commission reported to the Presbytery and offered as a first reading eight amendments and changes in the Gracious Separation Agreement (GSA). These were discussed and questions were asked. These eight will be presented at our December 1st meeting for a second reading and vote. The PUP AC asked that amendments be forwarded to the AC before the meeting. Four churches already in the process were assured that they would not have to “start over” with the GSA process.

Committees reported. Per Capita for 2013 was set at $31.54 per active membership. It was noted that the departing churches paid three years per capita. This means that in 2015 we will lose one-third of our per capita funding. The Presbytery must make changes in the way we do ministry.

The New Church Development Committee was the last to report. The organizing pastor of Wellspring Community Church reported on their successes in the City of Parkland. They had 60 persons at their opening service. Praise God! The NCD Committee entered into a covenant with the Rev. Otoniel Bermudez to be an Evangelist pulling together a new Spanish-speaking church in the Miami area. May God prosper this ministry. Amen and Hallelujah!

The Moderator closed the meeting with prayer.

Dr. Albert W. Bush
Interim Stated Clerk

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Dr. Albert W. Bush
Interim Stated Clerk
Shifting Gears

The dictionary defines paradigm as a pattern, an example or a model. These models give order and understandings in our lives. Recently, at the Transformation conference we heard a great deal about paradigm change, shifts, transformation, re-starts, and even new beginnings. But where do we start? Where is the transformation “click here” to get started? How do we begin to shift gears? During the conference I heard of three main areas that may need shifting gears before the ministry can move.

First, the leadership, including the pastors and elders need to shift from “tending people” to “leading people”. This shift recognizes the essential role of pastoral care and nurturing, but the shift in emphasis of leading by developing initiatives, mentoring new ministries, and leading change in the congregation needs to be added. Leading implies that both, pastors and elders adopt, embrace and move together in the same direction of change. Leading implies that pastors and elders should explore, and together reimagine their community. Leading implies that pastors and elders dream up stories of transformation for their congregation and community’s future. Transformation begins in us.

The second shift that can help transformation get started is making “disciples” versus getting “members”. The two are not the same anymore. It used to be that membership was equated to service and commitment within one committee or another, financial generosity, and talent sharing. That is how we built hospitals, universities, seminaries and thousands of church campuses around the country and the world. The second shift encourages a rediscovery and reclaiming of true discipleship of our talents, treasures and time as we shift from a consumerist way of life to a giving way of life. This shift emphasizes and celebrates the reform call of all believers as priests. In this shift we develop ministers in the Reform and Pauline sense of the word.

As I visit congregations in our Presbytery I cannot avoid the sensation of an elephant in the room, and is the same one in every congregation. Congregants are expecting the pastoral leadership to do all the work of ministry, while pastors are waiting for congregants to take it away. I have heard the unspoken word that travel through our worship spaces; from the congregation side: “when is she/he going to fill up this church”. From the chancel the quiet voices claim; “when are they going to own up to their call”. You see, both are wondering, but none are listening to the other. The third shift requires all to come together in ministry and mission for the glory of God.

One way in which congregations can begin to explore if they wish to start a process of transformation is our denomination’s model called “New Beginnings”. This is an assessment process for all involve in a congregation. It allows exploring their resources, viability, and challenges to have a future story; to have a period of revitalization and transformation.

I am starting to put a cohort of congregations together to move through this process by combining resources and with help from the Committee of Transformation. Let me know. We got to start shifting gear... let’s do it together!

From the adventure, Rev. Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz, AMP South
**MISSION TO CUBA**

Dr Jonas Georges, Chair of Mission Outreach, Social Justice and Peacemaking group (MOSJP)

My recent trip to Cuba was a dream comes true. A burning desire to minister to the Cuban people inhabited my heart many years ago when I had a conversation with a colleague who visited the Island on a trip by a group called “Pastors for Peace.” Then about 10 years ago the Pastor and an elder of the Korean Presbyterian Church of Miami shared their vision to plant churches in Cuba working through several outlets mainly Korean Christians implanted in the Island. I confess the presentation of their intention sounded a bit far-fetched and illusory at the time. Little did I know that God had already planned for me to be personally associated with such a venture. The dream is reality and I am part of it.

Last July, we were 14 in total to travel to that Island carrying with us several bags of religious supplies suitable to support our government-authorized mission to conduct religious activities in churches and homes throughout the Island. We were clergy and business people, college students and housewives experienced in the mission field as well neophytes. But all equipped with one tool: The Bible; animated by one ambition: Share Jesus’ love with the Cuban people. That the Holy Spirit helped us do from the very moment we stepped on Cuban soil to the time we left it one week later.

Upon arrival in Cuba, our hosts led the group to the “La Primera Iglesia Reforma” de Havama where the Reverend Pastor Hector Mendes opened his tired but strong arms to receive us.

Cuba is of course the only country in the new world with closed borders and limited access to religious activities. Based on our experience, it is appropriate to assert that the Island is open to religious activities that are conformed to the current laws, and, apparently, there is no restriction to religious activities in private settings (temples, synagogues, churches and private residences).

History teaches us that prior to the revolution in 1959 Cuba was a fertile ground for all types of missionary endeavors. However, for the past 50 years or so, the leaders of the revolution and the government have adopted policies believed to be favorable to human, political and economic development of the country that restrict public expressions of religious activities, among other things. However, recent development towards a wider exposure to outside influence has facilitated collaboration between the Church and the Cuban state. As beneficiaries of such opening and working in concert of other recognized groups, leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Cuba, obtain from the government the authorization to invite their foreign counterparts to the Island to undertake religious activities. Such activities are to be carried out solely within the membership and never in public places.

Over the past few years, the Korean Presbyterian of Miami conducts regular annual mission trips to Cuba through close collaboration with Korean-Cubans on the Island, who provide logistics for in-country hospitality; Korean business people who help with transportation and the Cuban Council of Churches whose reputation as a patriotic non-partisan institution is well-known and largely appreciated in the country. Pastor Shin and the Church Session keenly and meticulously tie those knots together to make careful and judicious utilization of the invitation.

The trip in question took place on Monday July 16 at 5PM. With a prayer and a great deal of enthusiasm we boarded the charter plane that took us across the bay some 35 minutes later. As the team landed on Cuban soil, our expectation-fed by unbalanced information-blended with the local manifestation, the reality of the moment, to make God’s mission a distinct possibility rather than a daring adventure. The land is hospitable, the people are warm and inviting, (though very careful how they interact with foreigners), the boundaries are well delineated and the way forward is encouraging.

The team ministered from one end of the Island to the next. We spent the first night in the comfortable facilities of the First Presbyterian Church of Havana (La Primera Iglesia Reformada), enjoyed a copious Cuban breakfast in the morning and took off in two different directions. The one team led by Pastor Shin traveled took a short trip to Cardenas in the Western end while the group I worked with took residence some 600 miles away in the Eastern provinces in the city of Holguin. Over the next five days (Tuesday through Saturday), the work was relentless, but rewarding. We conducted 10 encounters in house churches settings. They consisted of a 4-hour well planned children Bible training in the morning and a 3-hour evangelistic service in the evening each attended by 40-50 people.
During those five days we those of us in the Eastern province, traveled to 5 distinct locations, overnighted in 3 cities, one of which is a Quaker boarding house in Holguin for 3 nights, in private residences in the mining town of following day of activities in sugar cane country in a remote area. There in the middle of nowhere we came close to real missionary life conducting meetings in an open tent, eating our meals in the open air and not having access to running water. We spent the final night out of Havana in Catholic Church campus in the city of Camaguey. The place looked familiar, inviting and very comfortable. The facility was a far cry from what we have been used to thus far. It is hostel-like with comfortable room and a clean and peaceful environment. The following morning as we woke, I was pleasantly surprised to encounter dozens of young men and women assembling in the church courtyard and preparing themselves to embark on a retreat in the mountains. That unlined the fact that religious activities are well and alive in Cuba. Following a typical breakfast in the cafeteria of the Church along with other residents, we took of on the last leg of the trip to Havana where we arrived some 7 hours later in early afternoon. At that point our mission was virtually over. There we met with the other group that returned earlier on for Sunday services at the packed First Presbyterian Church. Though their itinerary was somewhat different, the program was quite similar as they too taught young children about Jesus and the Bible, preached the gospel to many in home settings and in churches, enjoyed fellowship with welcoming and friendly people as well overnighted in exotic places.

At that point, the mission was over. The message is preached to many, hundreds of children carried school items with Christian motifs and wore t-shirts with “Jesus Saves” signs, church leaders and their followers are revived and a bunch privileged American Christians will never be the same for having been where Jesus commanded to be.

Later that evening, we took a stroll down the street from La Primera Iglesia to the city center where we visited a few places of attraction before settling in a downtown restaurant for ice cream. The following day we flew back home to Miami, and, ironically, the team was briefly detained for questioning about the trip. All is well that ends well.

Cuba may well present the aspects of a mission field to the extent that active Christian life is not as visible as we know it in most western countries, but the country does not show the regular clichés of human decrepitude associated with mission lands. In large cities, especially Havana, the distressed infrastructure is reminiscent of the economic decline of the past couple of decades; nevertheless the equalitarian revelation of the society is visible in every community visited, every child that attends our vacation bible schools, every church leader that works with us and every homemaker that welcomes us in their humble but safe residence.

If I sound too upbeat about my experience in Cuba, unduly optimistic about the religious life there and too hopeful about the future of the land, it may well be due to the excellent accommodations arranged by the Korean Presbyterian Church of Miami and their associates on the Island as well as my refusal to measure my personal lived experience there to the living standard of the United rather than to that of the average country in the region.

The Church is on the move. Opportunities for preaching the gospel and sharing life with others are opening up in unlikely places, some of which are in our back yards in the inner places of our towns and cities and villages; they are in our schools and high rises; in our offices and upscale neighborhoods. Should we heed Jesus’ call and launch in the deep?

As the chair of the Mission Outreach, Social Justice and Peacemaking group (MOSJP), I am delighted to say that many of our churches are doing just that. Our aim is to encourage many more be the Church and get involved in mission.
Sept 28th eight pastors came to the Presbytery office to discuss ministry to the retiring Baby Boomers. The pastors had read Amy Hanson’s *Baby Boomers and Beyond, Tapping the Ministry Talents and Passions of Adults over 50* (Leadership Network, 2010). Amy Hanson agreed to meet with the pastors via Skype to discuss her findings and ideas for ministry to this significant demographic.

What we learned is the aging population in South Florida is and will be transforming retirement. And the demands on the church will be different as this group seeks to fulfill both their spiritual needs and fulfill a desire to make a difference with their time and resources.

The pastor’s conversation with Amy included the importance of understanding the stages of retirement and that retirement counseling will be important. Other suggestions were to offer opportunities for grandparents and grandchildren to worship, do mission or activities together; to hold a Technology event for the youth to teach tricks and shortcuts with cell phones and computers. Most importantly, we should find ways to encourage their creativity and passion for meaningful contribution.

With 78 million people identified as “boomers” moving into retirement, the impact on ministry will be significant, especially in South Florida. According to the U.S. Census Bureau a baby boomer is a person who was born during the demographic Post-World War II baby boom between the years 1946 and 1964. In 2012, the first of the baby boom generation reached 66. In addition, for the next 17 years, boomers will be turning 66 at a rate of about 8,000 a day. “As this unique cohort grows older, it will likely transform the institutions of aging — just as it has done to other aspects of American life”. (AARP)
Gearing Up for the Season

Your Administrative Personnel are gearing up for the coming season. These Secretaries, Administrative Assistants, Receptionists, Bookkeepers, and Business Administrators are preparing for the increased workload of Stewardship Campaigns, Sunday School Programming, Advent and Christmas.

With the increased workload is the realization that they may have questions to help them, their congregation and you, do their jobs more efficiently. Who do they go to when they have questions? If they are members of the Administrative Personnel Association of the Presbyterian Church (USA), they have the support network of individuals working in churches and governing bodies throughout the entire United States.

Members of the APA provide support and fellowship to one another. These are individuals who are willing to share what has worked or not worked for them. Isn’t that what Christians do for one another?

How can you support your administrative staff? Make sure to include Continuing Education funds for them in your upcoming budget. The annual membership fee is $75 and the approximate cost for attending a Regional Conference is $500. At those conferences, your staff will have opportunities to take classes geared towards their job responsibilities.

Interested in finding out how the Administrative Personnel Association can benefit your staff? Contact Allyson Criminger, President of the Florida Region, at 904-733-8277 or by email at allyson@staugpres.org. Or, visit our website at www.floridaapa.org. You will be glad that you did.

Nancy Fine

Membership Chair, Florida Region of the APA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT/MEETING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/04</td>
<td>COM Reg 2 and 3 – 12:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/04</td>
<td>COM – 1:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>10/11</td>
<td>FRC – 9:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>10/11</td>
<td>HRC – 2:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>10/16</td>
<td>Mission Outreach – 1:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>10/18</td>
<td>CON/COR – 10:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>10/19</td>
<td>Council – 10:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>10/23</td>
<td>MOSIP Conference Call – 1:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>10/27</td>
<td>Misconduct/Boundaries Workshop – 9:30 a.m. (Myrtle Grove)</td>
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<td>10/30</td>
<td>CPM – 10:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>10/30</td>
<td>COM Reg 1 – 2:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>11/1 – 11/4</td>
<td>Florida Cursillo</td>
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<td>11/1</td>
<td>Covenant Group – 10:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>11/1</td>
<td>COM Reg 2 and 3 – 12:00</td>
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<td>11/1</td>
<td>COM – 1:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>11/8</td>
<td>CPM – 10:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>11/10</td>
<td>PW Fall Workshop</td>
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<td>11/13</td>
<td>Region 1 Gathering – 12:00 (First, Tequesta)</td>
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<td>11/15</td>
<td>Council – 10:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>11/20</td>
<td>Packets Mailed</td>
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<td>11/20</td>
<td>Mission Outreach – 1:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>11/27</td>
<td>Region 2 Gathering – 12:00 (First, Ft. Lauderdale)</td>
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<td>11/29</td>
<td>Multicultural TF - 10:00 a.m.</td>
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“Save the DATE: Presbytery Leadership Day January 26, 2013.”

**FLORIDA PRESBYTERIAN CURSILLO.**

A lay-led, spiritual renewal weekend for Presbyterians will be held November 1 to 4, 2012, at the Christian Church Conference Center in Silver Springs, FL.

Moderator for FLPC #7 will be Dan Hallenbeck, FPC/Ocala, (352)615-0092.

Pastors and spouses are complimentary and some scholarships are available. Information and applications are available at: www.FloridaCursillo.com.

Or, questions to Rev. Dick Anderson, FPC/Ft. Lauderdale; Rev. Jack Noble, FPC/Pompano Beach; Gail Auguston, FPC/Ft. Lauderdale.

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**Join Brian McLaren for a discussion of his new book**

*Why did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha and Mohammed Cross the Road?*

http://lifeinthetrinityministry.com/mclarenbooktour/locations_1

When: Friday, October 19, 2012
Where: First Presbyterian Church
1530 Hollywood Blvd
What time: Event Time: 7:30 p.m.

For Advance Tickets go to
Tickets at door are additional $5.
Receive a 20% discount and Pre-Order Book $20 each, price at door $25.

For more details go to First Hollywood’s website
Birthdays

Rev. John Kirkham - HR
Dr. Dwayne Black - HR
Dr. David Massey - Plantation - Plantation Church
Rev. Jason Hefner - MOS
Rev. Brace Bateman - HR
Rev. Christopher Atwood - Miami - First
Rev. Howard Westin - HR

Dr. Douglas J. Brouwer - Ft. Lauderdale - First
Rev. Eliane Menezes - MOS
Rev. Charles M. Falcone - Hobe Sound - Community
Rev. Carol Trax - HR
Dr. John Vaughn - HR
Rev. Norman Dalton - HR

Ordinations

Rev. Jason Hefner - MOS
Dr. Dennis Andrews - Deerfield Beach - Community
Rev. Noe Juarez - Ft. Lauderdale - Sunset
Rev. Rosalia Orta - HR
Rev. Cornelius Kostrub – HR (Pastor to Pastor)
Rev. Cecelia Armstrong - Lantana - Grace

Rev. Brad Klostreich - Palm City - Palm City
Dr. Jonathan Swanson - Miami - Central
Rev. Charles M. Falcone - Hobe Sound - Community
Dr. David P. Welton - MOS
Rev. Eliane Menezes - MOS
Rev. Edwin Gonzalez-Gertz – MOS (AMP)

First Presbyterian Church of West Palm Beach

![Image of a community event]

Our Monday Night Meal Ministry is an outreach that strives to feed over 100 guests every week nutritionally and spiritually. The guests participate in the devotion led by the pastor every week, followed by a eating a delicious dinner prepared by wonderful volunteers from various churches (including Lakeside Presbyterian). We have very faithful volunteers who have experienced the joy of serving in Christ’s kingdom. We are also trying to expand this outreach by having available other supplies. We need your help and would love for you to join us in this ministry. We are always looking for the following:

- Tooth brushes, tooth paste, shampoos, soaps, deodorants and razors
- Blankets (do not have to be new.....)
- Men’s pants, tee shirts, jackets, hoodies, and socks

We consider it a privilege to be part of our CONNECTIONAL Church as we respond to Christ’s Words, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me!'

Increase offertory

![Image of bulk envelopes]

In a welcoming church environment with our variety of bulk envelopes.

AmericanChurch Inc. understands there are many ways to help people deliver their gifts, and remains committed to working with churches, schools and other organizations to enhance offertory.

800-446-3035
What Will The Top Tech Trends Be In 2013?

Michael Wolfe, CEO, Pipewise, Inc.

Nothing happens overnight; next year’s trends will be an outgrowth of what is happening already this year. But a few markets may see an inflection point in 2013:

Cheap tablets – most people still think of tablets as expensive premium Apple toys. But these things are going to be $19.95 soon, cheaper than a hardcover book. This has some implications:

Every kid in every school can have one or more than one. They’ll be widespread in Africa, Asia, South America, even in places without landlines. Many folks may skip smartphones completely and move directly to small tablets.

You can own multiple tablets, optimized for different purposes (same as how you own multiple hardcover books today).

This will bring in changes in education, health care, retail and restaurant experiences, automobiles, etc, as we stop thinking of these things as expensive computers and start thinking of them as replacements for paper.

Wearable computing – a revamped iPod Nano, the Pebble watch project, and/or other things like them will make this the year you’ll finally see people checking a watch or a necklace regularly for messages from their friends vs. whipping out their phone and turning it on constantly.

Corporate IT moves to the cloud – this is already happening but is large enough that it still deserves a mention. Trillions of dollars of IT spending are moving from data centers and software licenses to cloud services. Soon you’ll be able to read about companies with 10,000 employees who don’t have dedicated data centers.

TV – this may be wishful thinking, but something significant could finally happen in the living room in 2013. It could be the long-awaited Apple iTV, or it could be Tivo getting acquired by Apple or Google or Microsoft. The ideal TV experience is a single box that lets you both record and download any content you want at any time via a single interface. We’ll take at least a step towards that this year. My bet is on an upgraded Apple TV box plus a true iTV with built in DVR functionality, a revamped interface and set of services, and an app store.

Mobile payments – as NFC becomes more widespread, and services like Square and Paypal roll out, 2013 might finally be the year where walking into a store and paying with your phone or just by giving your name becomes common and not just an early adopter experience in a few markets.
SHARI’S SHOUT OUT

Attention: Administrative Professionals

Following the Presbytery meeting on December 1st, you are invited to early dinner with regional APA (Administrative Personnel Assn.) members.

We met for lunch over the summer and I believe everyone who attended had a good time and left glad they came. No pressure to join APA but you will probably want to!

This is for you in the same way pastor gatherings bring renewal to them.

Join us on December 1st at First PC in Hollywood and witness Presbyterian polity first-hand (attend a Presbytery meeting) and/or meet us in Hollywood at 4.

A personal invitation will follow.

Our thanks to those who shared upcoming events planned at their churches. Please keep them coming throughout the year!

Specifically, we’d like to include special speakers, authors, preachers, musicians, or concerts you are hosting that are open to the public.

Sorry, we do not advertise garage sales.

For those who still need to take the Sexual Misconduct (Boundaries) training, you next opportunity will be listed in the December newsletter.

Register asap and keep your membership in good standing.

A number of churches have called regarding the minutes review. Again, the schedule will be announced in the December newsletter. We are anticipating beginning in February.

When the dates are announced, please register. If the Clerk cannot attend, please arrange for someone from the church to bring the books and be prepared to stay for the educational review.

We will be sharing a new Session Minute Review Form with our Clerks of Session shortly. The form has been updated so as to insure your records are in compliance with the new Book of Order.

This being the month of Thanksgiving, I would like to thank all of you who volunteer your service on Presbytery Committees. The work has been particularly difficult this year as our Presbytery has undergone so many changes.

Please don’t lose heart and don’t look back. Shed feelings of negativity, distrust and hurt. True, we’ll remember; but let’s not dwell. Let’s embrace the new year saying “We can and, with the grace of God, we will!” Let’s join together in programs and mission. What are your gifts? Will you share them? Together, let’s make a difference!
**LET’S TALK ABOUT MONEY**

**Use Your Grant Funds!**

Attention all churches with Coral Gables Mission Grants: all grant funds must be accessed in the year they are granted. Thus all 2012 grant requests for payment must be received by the Presbytery Office by December 15th for processing before the end of 2012.

If your church received a Youth Activity Grant for 2012 and you have not requested payment please do so by December 15th. These funds cannot be carried over.

Call Susan at the Presbytery office if you are unsure of the balance of funds due to your church. Thank you,

Marge Hellgren, Treasurer

**BIRTHDAYS**

Dr. Audley Reid -- MOS
Dr. Timothy Stover - Calvary, Coconut Creek
Rev. Jacob Krch - MOS
Rev. Noe Juarez – Sunset, Ft. Lauderdale
Dr. Connie Ast Caldwell – First, Ft. Lauderdale
Rev. Edward Peachey - HR

**ORDINATIONS**

Rev. Amy Baer – Member-at-Large
Rev. Jacqueline Brovold – Pinecrest, Miami
Rev. Mardoqueo Munoz - HR
Rev. David Kwon – Korean, North Miami
Rev. Maria Luisa Hernandez - HR
Rev. Carol Trax - HR
Dr. Jonas Georges - All Nations, North Miami Beach
Dr. Connie Ast Caldwell – First, Ft. Lauderdale

**INVITATIONS FROM AROUND OUR PRESBYTERY**

**First Hollywood**

“The Josephs” in Concert (violin concert for rebuilding in Haiti)
11/10 at 7:30 p.m. $10 admission
www.friendsofmusicforhaiti.org

**Sunrise, Miami**

Ciro Fodere in Concert – 11/17 at 7:00 p.m. ($20)
Thesunrisechurch@aol.com
305-821-5841
The Food Trucks will be there before and after concert.

**First Spanish, Miami**

Noche Espanola (Spanish Night) – 11/03, Show and Spanish Aperitifs at 5:00 p.m. ($10)
Annual Christmas Program – 12/08 at 4:00 p.m. ($5)
Fellowship and fun: games, crafts, face painting / dinner at 6 / candlelight processional with the 3 Wise Men to light Christmas tree.
Purchase tickets in advance for events.
305-642-4755 or primerapresbi@comcast.net

**Second, Ft. Lauderdale**

Florida Singing Sons – 12/07 & 08 at 8:00 pm
The Girl Choir of So FL – 12/14 at 8:00 pm
secondsanctuary@bellsouth.net
954-564-7600

**First, Fort Lauderdale**

Christianity & Culture Nights
Selected Mondays, 7:00—8:30 p.m.
Study and Renewal Center, 1417 SE 4th St.
Res: 954-598-9312 or lauraz@firstpress.cc
11/12: Icons for Protestants
12/17: God in the Workplace
1/14: The Gift of Life…Water
2/11: Reading for 2040: Biblical Interpretation in the 21st Century
3/11: Postmodernism and American Culture
4/15: Florida’s Economic Future
5/06: How to Represent Yourself in Count
EMPLOYMENT

Sunday School Director (Educator) for elementary and youth
Korean Presbyterian Church of Palm Beach
301 S. Olive Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33401
www.pbkc.org

1. Qualification: Person who is Attending or graduated from Seminary or Bible college
2. Required documents: Resume, Faith Statement, Education planning
4. Contact: Invitation Committee Chair, Elder Hanlim Chae 561-809-0937

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE AT WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

Since 2002, Westminster College has offered a very special scholarship opportunity to PC(USA) young men and women. The scholarship was designed to invite students who are outstanding both in their academic abilities and church involvement to consider Westminster as their college choice. This year Westminster is inviting congregations to nominate two (2) students not just one. Deadlines for nominations are December 1st, with student application deadlines being December 15th. The scholarship has been increased to $18,500/year or $74,000 over four years.

Qualifications:
3.5 (cumulative) H.S. GPA (through Jr Yr.)
PC(USA) Membership
Nomination by Pastor/Congregation (written or online form) www.westminster.edu/yps

For questions or additional information, contact Carey Anne LaSor
724-946-7365
meyerca@westminster.edu

CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday, November 8</th>
<th>10:00am CPM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, November 10</td>
<td>PW Fall Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 13</td>
<td>12:00pm Reg. 1 Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, November 15</td>
<td>10:00am Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 20</td>
<td>Packets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 18</td>
<td>1:30pm Mission Outreach, Social Justice &amp; Peacemaking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 6</td>
<td>1:00pm Monthly COM Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 9</td>
<td>8:30am Presbytery meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 15</td>
<td>1:30pm Mission Outreach, Social Justice &amp; Peacemaking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, November 23</td>
<td>Presbytery Office Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 27</td>
<td>12:00pm Reg. 2 Gathering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, November 29</td>
<td>10:00am Multicultural TF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, December 1</td>
<td>8:30am Presbytery meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, December 6</td>
<td>1:00pm Monthly COM Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 18</td>
<td>1:30pm Mission Outreach, Social Justice &amp; Peacemaking</td>
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Access the annual calendar online: [http://www.tfpby.org/calendar.html](http://www.tfpby.org/calendar.html)
The Presbytery of Tropical Florida met at its regular Stated Meeting on Saturday, December 1st, 2012, at the First Presbyterian Church, Hollywood, FL. The meeting was called to order by the Acting Moderator Rev. Dr. Leon Lovell-Martin (2009 Moderator) due to the illness of the current Moderator, Ruling Elder Dwayne Black, Jr.

Other members who are ill were remembered in the opening prayer: Rev. Bob Coleman, pastor, Goodwill Presbyterian Church, Fort Pierce; Rev. Dr. Chuck Denison, pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Stuart; Rev. Jim Goldsmith, pastor, Community Presbyterian Church, Lauderdale by the Sea; and Rev. Leah Meador, Honorably Retired.

A quorum being present, the meeting began with greetings from Rev. Kennedy McGowan, host pastor. He welcomed us to a church very much a part of the community.

Members of the Youth Task Force were introduced. They invited the churches of the Presbytery to participate in a local youth retreat and the triennial youth gathering at Purdue University. Handouts were in the packets for all the churches. The Committee on Ministry presented a consent agenda, which was adopted.

The Presbytery then turned to Worship. The Rev. Dr. Arlene Gordon, HR, former Executive Presbyter, delivered the sermon based on Mark 4: 35-41, in which Jesus calmed the storm and the waves. “Don’t you care that we are about to drown?” Dr. Gordon spoke about the hardships we are facing, both individually and as a church. She reminded us that we follow a Lord who has the power to still the storm and calm the waves. We are not to be afraid, but have faith that we will get to the other side. An offering was taken to benefit PDA’s relief efforts following Super Storm Sandy in the Northeast. $850 was raised and is being sent to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

As an Order of the Day, the Presbytery then considered the eight amendments to the Gracious Separation Agreement that were before the body for a second reading. Amendments were considered, votes were taken and the eight amendments with some changes were accepted. There are still four churches seeking to leave the denomination. The Discernment (PUP) Administrative Commission will be meeting with these four to follow the now amended GSA. These additional amends to GSA were received for a first reading. Other motions failed to be passed.

The Presbytery Coordinating Council, Treasurer and Financial Resources Committee also reported. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry presented three persons seeking to move from Inquirer to Candidate: Yeon Chang Korean Church of Miami, Cooper City Chris Reny First, Fort Lauderdale Evelio Vilches Palmetto, Miami The Presbytery questioned the three and voted to move them to the Candidate phase. Pastors from their churches lead the Presbytery in prayer.

The Mission Outreach Social Justice and Peacemaking Task Force invited Rev. Raymond Anglin to describe the many ministries of Ascension Peace Presbyterian Church. Presbytery Administrator Amalie Ash spoke about the ministry of Community, Lauderdale by the Sea, due to Rev. Jim Goldsmith’s illness. The final report was from the Presbyterian Chaplain to Florida State University who spoke about his ministry and invited the Presbytery to partner with him to reach college-aged students.
The Stated Clerk reported that the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) had upheld the Synod of South Atlantic PJC’s decision to dismiss the last complaint against the Presbytery. The meeting was adjourned by the Rev. Dr. Laurie Kraus, Moderator Pro Tem.

**Grace Point Hispanic Church**

On November 11, 2012 Grace Point Hispanic Church had its first worship service in McArthur Chapel at Miami Shore Presbyterian Church.

There was a spirit of unity, love and grace which the Lord challenged us to a new beginning to share the message of God's grace to a new community in Miami.

55 people met, to celebrate together the Lord's Supper, and the Word of the Lord was encouraging and challenging us.

The Rev. Edwin Gonzalez was with us from Presbytery of Tropical Florida, and he shared some words of encouragement for our new Church.

Our trust is in the Lord of the Church who goes before us open doors for a new Hispanic Presbyterian Church at Miami Shore community.

Yours in the Lord's service,
Rev. Otoniel Bermudez Jr.
Grace Point Hispanic Church (Ministry of PCUSA)

**Birthdays**

Dr. Patrick Shaffer – First, Tequesta  
Rev. Cornelius Kostrub – HR  
Dr. Raymond Anglin – Ascension Peace, Lauderhill  
Rev. Douglas Smith – HR  
Dr. Winston Sosa – Friendship, Hialeah  
Dr. Randall Gill – First, Boynton Beach  
Rev. Robert Polland – HR  
Dr. Angel Ramos – MOS  
Rev. Katie Fellows Christie – MOS  
Rev. Frank Allard – HR  
Rev. Leah Meador – HR  
Dr. Elaine Klaasen – HR  
Dr. Jonas Georges – All Nations, North Miami Beach

**Ordinations**

Rev. Antonio Welty – HR  
Dr. Evangeline Tolley – MOS  
Rev. Diane Shoaf – MOS  
Dr. Theodore Bush – HR  
Rev. Shirley Saunders – First, West Palm Beach  
Rev. Christopher Atwood – First, Miami  
Rev. Jacob Krch – MOS  
Dr. James Bailey II – Peace, Stuart  
Rev. Ben Sorensen – First, Ft. Lauderdale  
Dr. Gustavo Astudillo – MOS
Season’s Blessings To You And Yours!

Important Dates For Your 2013 Calendars.

Please plan to attend one of the scheduled Session Records Reviews. Although recommended, it is not necessary that the Clerk of Session attend. Someone from the church needs to bring the records and participate in the review on one of the following dates:

Saturday, February 2nd  
Lakeside Presbyterian Church, WPB  
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday, February 26th  
Second Presbyterian Church, Ft. Lauderdale (immediately following the Stated Meeting, approx. 3:00 p.m.)

Saturday, April 20th  
Myrtle Grove Presbyterian Church, Miami Gardens  
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Annual Statistics to General Assembly and Clerks Questionnaires

The Statistics program for both the churches and presbyteries have been turned on. **2012 data can now be entered.** Your user names and passwords are those used last year. Please contact me if you do not have this information. GA has pretty much gone paperless and everything can be handled at [http://oga.pcusa.org/stats](http://oga.pcusa.org/stats). **You have until February 20th to enter your information.** Presbyteries have a little longer. As always, I am available to assist; however, this coming year I do not plan to repeatedly prompt you to allow me to do so. I’m taking my cue from the GA Statistical Associate and who recently wrote regarding those Presbyteries (not us!) who submitted nothing or only partial information last year (Yes, Presbyteries have a set of annual reports to submit as well). For those Presbyteries in non-compliance this year, she will be listing the names in the Minutes of the General Assembly, Part II, Statistics. Likewise, the names of those churches who do not submit their Annual Statistical Reports and Clerks Questionnaires will be listed in the Presbytery Minutes. It gives me great pleasure in having our Presbytery achieve 100% participation and would be happy to enter each and every one of your reports if you would only let me, rather than ignoring the process.

Region 1 Pastors’ Gathering  
Noon, Tuesday, January 15th  
First Presbyterian Church, Boynton Beach

Region 2 Pastors’ Gathering  
Noon, Tuesday, January 29th  
Community Presbyterian Church  
Lauderdale-by-the-Sea

As this year comes to an end, I want to thank the Presbytery for approving my new four-day workweek. It is my pleasure serving with you.

Wishing you Joy, Hope, and Peace this holiday season as we celebrate the coming of the Christ Child.
Confirmed Speakers include:

**Book of Order and Church Leadership:**

**Rev. Dr. Daniel Williams**, Transitional Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk of Central Florida Presbytery

Dan served as Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of Huntingdon and the Presbytery of Shenandoah. He also served as the vice moderator of the General Assembly Committee on Form of Government revisions and later served as co-moderator of the FOG Task Force. This year, he is serving as parliamentarian for the Church Orders and Ministry Committee, and standing as a nominee to the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, Class of 2018.

There will be a special break out for Clerks, Elders and Deacons.

**Finance Track:**

**Susan Carpenter**, MBA, CPA Presbytery Finance Administrator  
Avoiding tax pitfalls for your pastor and church

**Rhett Everett**, ARM, VP Insurance Office of America  
Risk and Insuring the Church

**Local Mission & Outreach Track:**

**Rev. Dr. Dennis Andrews**, Pastor at “Steeple on the Beach”, Deerfield Community PC  
As a former Sherriff, Mayor and Chamber of Commerce CEO Dennis will talk about building relationships with the press and community leaders.

**Barbara Haley**, Director of Education at Community Church, Lauderdale-by-the-Sea  
Seed Seeking (from basics to abundance; growing Mission projects on spiritually rich terrain). Barbara has led an extensive number of mission programs such as: Dress for Africa”, military “Share Packages”, Sunset Gap Community Center in TN, “Living Waters for the World”, nursing home projects, foster family projects, literacy/education, special needs programs, “Operation Christmas Child”, “Souls for Soles”, community outreach, independent living, foster pet program, and many knitting and quilting support programs.

**Expanding Ministry Track:**

- Opening Doors for a Multi-ethnic Congregation
- Reaching the Boomers
Bookkeeper

The Sunrise Presbyterian Church seeks a part-time bookkeeper. Works with the latest versions of Quick Books 2010 and Excel programs (required).

Expectations: This is a one day a week job done on Monday in 5 hours. The hours are:
10 AM to 3 PM

Tasks: Maintain all income and expense records for Church and Academy. Prepare weekly checks to pay bills and payroll every 2 weeks. Provide weekly income/expense summary reports and monthly full financial reports of the Church and Academy through the Pastor and Director.
The person hired will work with the Pastor of the church and Director of the Sunrise Christian Academy and is accountable to the Pastor as head of staff.

Salary (2012) for this position is $20.00 per hour (a Form W-4 is required).
Submit your resume by email to thesunrisechurch@aol.com or fax to 305 821-6068.
Address: 18400 NW 68th Avenue, Miami, FL 33015