



connections

Newsletter of the Presbytery of New Covenant

Growing congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples.

The 222nd General Assembly Meets in June



Portland, Oregon is the site for the 222nd General Assembly to be held June 18–23. This is the site where the Confession of 1967 was approved for inclusion in our constitutional documents. And this year, commissioners will take the final step in a six-year process for the inclusion of the Belhar Confession. Both of these documents address racism in our country and the world.

What is the General Assembly? It is the bi-annual business meeting of the PC(USA) where hundreds of commissioners (both ruling and teaching elders) will be making decisions on overtures that have been presented to shape the work of our church into the future. This year our presbytery has eight commissioners: RE Regena Bass (First, Wharton), TE Kevin Boyd (St. Paul, Houston), RE Johnna Cormier (Trinity, Port Neches), RE Gary Denmon (Atascocita), TE Becky Downs (John Knox, Houston), TE Nora Fitch (St.

Thomas, Houston), TE David Green (First, Conroe), RE James Hooper (Pinecrest, Houston), and Young Adult Advisory Delegate Aaron Seay (First, Sugar Land). They were chosen from large churches and small, representing diversity in age, gender, ethnicity and theology.

What are some of the HOT TOPICS for this year's assembly? As of this writing, there are 86 overtures for consideration by General Assembly. One of the big items for discussion is the structure of the PC(USA) and its agencies. We are organized currently in six different agencies (business), as well as 16 synods (geographical groupings). A committee called "The Way Forward" will be working with what are known as the "Foothills Overtures." In particular there will be a lot of discussion about the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly. There are recommend changes to

the various parts of the Book of Order, as well as business items which deal with the topics such as social justice, peacemaking, immigration, the environment, and the Middle East. For information you can find the text of the overtures at www.pc-biz.org, which is the website the commissioners will use. Look under each committee to see the business that they have been assigned.

How does the assembly do its work? All commissioners are assigned to one of 14 committees that will discuss their assigned overtures and make recommendations for action to the plenary (all of the commissioners meeting together). Overtures begin with a passionate person in a congregation advocating the larger church to take some sort of action. After approval by the church session, the overture is then sent to the presbytery for its approval. The Presbytery of New Covenant has approved several overtures including three regarding fossil fuels. Overtures now need a concurrence from at least one other presbytery in order to be considered by a committee. Committee meetings will begin on Sunday evening, June 17, and will go until Tuesday, June 19. The commissioners will meet in plenary beginning Wednesday, June 20, to hear the reports of the 14 committees. Their work must conclude by 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 23.



GA Commissioners, l to r: Aaron Seay, RE Gary Denmon, RE Johnna Cormier, TE Nora Fitch, TE Kevin Boyd, and TE David Green

How is the moderator elected? The moderator and vice moderator of the assembly must be commissioners to that year's assembly. At this point, there are three who are running for moderator: two are running as co-moderators, which is the first time this has happened. They are TE Jan Edmiston who is on the staff of the Presbytery of Chicago and TE Denise Anderson who serves as pastor of Unity Presbyterian Church in Temple Hills, Maryland. The third candidate is RE David Parker from First Presbyterian Church in Statesville, NC.

On Saturday morning, June 16, commissioners will have the opportunity to meet the candidates prior to the start of the assembly. That evening each will have time to address

General Assembly, con't. on page 3

Inside

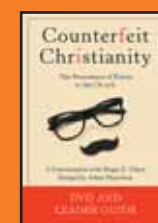
General Presbyter	2
Stated Clerk	3
Community News	4–5
Mission and Ministry	6–7
In the Resource Center	8
Youth News	9
Events	10–11



Page 4
Community News
1001 Worshiping Communities



Page 7
Ministry News
Street Ministry



Page 8
In the Resource Center
Counterfeit Christianity



NEW COVENANT CONNECTIONS

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From the Cole Mine

Rev. Mike Cole, General Presbyter
Presbytery of New Covenant

“They Can’t Take That Away From Me”

From State of the Presbytery Address on March 19, 2016

My first State of the Presbytery presentation was in 2003 and was filled with facts and figures. I relied on statistics to tell the story of our presbytery. Today, thirteen State of the Presbyteries later, I have learned that statistics barely scratch the surface of describing who we are as a presbytery. In fact, I’m going to do my best not to recite one statistic today in this, my final State of the Presbytery, because at the core of our being our presbytery is love.

So, a better way to begin would be, “How do I love thee, let me count the ways...” No, I’m not going to subject you to my rudimentary poetry skills, which probably would be too “schmaltzy” even for a Hallmark card, but I do want to share with you what I find most lovable about the Presbytery of New Covenant.

When our son, Colin, was very young Ellie bought a book by Sidney Simon entitled, *I Am Lovable and Capable*. She read it to Colin almost every night, doing her best to instill self-esteem and confidence in our son. Today, he is a very lovable and capable man, of whom I am proud. I’m going to borrow that title as I share with you just how lovable and capable we are as a presbytery. It’s important to note that the characteristics I list are not what make us lovable - our love-ability gives us these characteristics.

We are lovable and trustworthy. We are people of our word, even if the consequences of our promises are inconvenient, complex and complicated. I love that we can be trusted to keep our word and that our word is always based on our faith in Christ and reliance on scripture. We are lovable and faithful. What keeps us together is our faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We believe that Jesus really does make a difference in our lives and we want to share that faith with others.

We are lovable and grace-full. We are warm and welcoming to everyone and really work at being more than friendly. I can’t tell you how many Teaching Elders in our presbytery have commented to me about how wonderful a place this is, and it’s not because of my winning personality and warm smile... People feel welcome and included in this presbytery. Inclusiveness is not just a slogan or statement of political correctness. It is the gospel.

We are lovable and worshipful. Worship and prayer are not just a way we open our meetings: they are central to who we are. We are lovable and our meetings are not just “going through the motions.” Our meetings are designed to be learning opportunities where our faith and our practice are challenged.

We are lovable and responsible. In my time as General Presbyter, I have seen loving, grace-filled, generous responses to hurricanes, fires, floods, thefts, chaos and conflict. There is no doubt in my mind that we will respond to the folks in Orange who are impacted by flooding with great personal involvement. There are an incredible number of volunteers who give unstintingly of their time and resources to help others through times of turmoil.

We are lovable and creative. Many presbyteries are content simply to keep doing what they’ve always done, but not New Covenant. We are never afraid to examine and explore new ways of serving Christ and our congregations. We are adaptable and open to new directions in which Christ is leading us.

We are lovable and we confessional. We are not reluctant to confess our errors. We recognize that we are only human and we make mistakes, but the mistakes are not nearly as important as the

acknowledgment of them and the willingness to seek forgiveness and make amends.

We are lovable and fun! Laughter is a key ingredient in who we are. Almost every meeting I’ve been privileged to attend has had laughter, even when we are dealing with serious subjects. Someone once said that laughter is the sign of a healthy organization. That is certainly true for this presbytery.



Mike Cole

We are lovable and Staff-able. We have the greatest staff in the denomination! They are selfless, work hard, help one another and really care about every congregation, pastor and member.

We are lovable and opinionated. And we aren’t shy about expressing those opinions. And most of the time we know the difference between our opinions and truth.

With all this loveliness, one might think that the Presbytery of New Covenant is simply soft and mushy, but we are also capable.

We are capable of doing great things. We continue to explore new mission opportunities both here and abroad. We partner with others to bring the gospel to those who most need it. We have an exceptional youth ministry. We have six exciting new worshipping communities. We support a school in Jerusalem that seeks to build new generations of Muslims, Jews and Christians who practice mutual respect.

We are capable of doing courageous things. We have taken a lead in addressing climate change by partnering with the fossil fuel industry rather than divesting from them. We have engaged in open dialogue with Jews and Muslims to promote mutual respect and understanding. We

Cole Mine, con’t page 3

created a recovery organization after Hurricane Ike that was the last one standing two years after most of the others had vanished.

We are capable of doing loving things. We are the single largest supporter of the interfaith efforts to minister to unaccompanied immigrant children. We care for those in the medical center through POP ministry. We minister to the seafarers from all across the world. We host soup kitchens, food banks and all manner of ministry to the poor and homeless.

Yes, we are lovable and capable and we best not forget it. Others may say different things about us. Those who don't know us may mischaracterize us, but they can't take away who we are, who Christ has called us to be.



They Can't Take That Away From Me

Mike's version adapted from the original song by George and Ira Gershwin

There are many, many joyful things
That will keep me loving you
And with your permission
May I list a few?

The way Reformed faith sings
The way Christ sets us free
The memory of those things
No, no, they can't take that away from me
The way we offer grace
The way you humor me
The spirit of this place
No, no, they can't take that away from me

We will always, always meet again
After this bumpy road of love
Still I'll always, always keep the
memory of...

The way you love my wife
The way we serve with glee
The way you've changed my life
No, no, they can't take that away from me
No, they can't take that away from me

the gathering and to answer questions and then the voting will begin. There are usually multiple ballots cast until there is a winner. That person, and their co-moderator or vice moderator choice, will then run the meetings for the week. They then represent the PC(USA) at functions around the country and the world for the next two years.

Election of the Stated Clerk: The Stated Clerk is the permanent ecumenical representative and chief executive officer of General Assembly, promotes the harmony and efficiency of General Assembly and its agencies, and is the primary spokesperson for General Assembly actions. In 2015, TE Grady Parsons announced that he would not be standing for another term as the Stated Clerk of the denomination. Since that time, a nominating committee has been working to bring forth a candidate for this position to help to lead the PC(USA) into the future. They have reviewed 13 applications for the position. The announcement of the chosen candidate should be made on April 19.

How can I be involved? There will be live streaming of many of the meetings on the internet. The business of the assembly will be updated continually on www.pc-biz.org. Certainly prayer is in order as this assembly considers matters that will affect the future of the church. Notes of encouragement can be written to the commissioners. You may send those to Lynn Hargrove at the Presbytery Office, 1110 Lovett, Houston, TX 77006. If you are interested in being considered for service as a commissioner, please communicate that to the presbytery's nominating committee or through the presbytery's website (www.pbyofnewcovenant.org) under the File Cabinet—Nomination Form and Brochure.

If you should have other questions, please contact Lynn Hargrove, Mike Cole or Mary Marcotte. You may want to refer to The Presbyterian Outlook website (pres-outlook.org) for balanced reporting before, during and after the assembly.

Clerk's Corner

Rev. Lynn Hargrove, Stated Clerk
Presbytery of New Covenant



As I write this, I have just come off of a retreat that helped me reflect on some of my life experiences and to make meaning out of them so that I can learn how that affects who I am today. My dad was in the US Army and was in a branch where we moved every year. As a child I learned how to cope with these constant new adventures. What I have realized is that I did not develop the tools to deal with grief and loss. Moving every year meant saying "goodbye" to friends, to home, to school, to church, and to any other things to which I had connected. I realized several years ago that I don't have life-long friendships like someone who grew up in one community during the formative years.

It seems that one way to cope with grief and loss is to try to control that which I can. This is not unique to me. Many of us fear change, and when we have experienced a death, a move, an illness, or other sort of change, we grasp for that which we can control to help us get oriented in the chaos that we are experiencing.

This happens in churches, too. I have watched our various discernment processes with congregations unfold (and there have been 12). There are some who seek control or power and those who feel powerless. All of us are resistant to any impending change, and yet, every time we come together there are subtle differences. Someone might be a new visitor, someone might be facing a devastating illness, someone might have died, and someone might have been born. We think of our church as something that will be there for us in these times of joy and sadness... and that it should be the same.

How do we sing the songs of lament together as a community? Some congregations have been through devastating changes. I am mindful of those, like Community of the Servant Savior or Westminster in Galveston, who have lost their building in a fire. It is then that we remember that the church is not the building! The people are the church. Grief occurs when we experience the death of a beloved church member or when a pastor leaves. How do we grieve communally and individually?

I wonder how in our need to control things in order to feel balanced in the midst of tumult, if we end up causing more chaos and more hurt. Does one group band together against another, staking a claim to "their territory"? Do people bully each other? This can include relationships between pastor and congregation. All might be well when things are good. How do we contribute to the chaos when things seem not so good?

As we go through our lives, we are molded and shaped by past experiences. I began to realize that my unexpressed grief over a childhood of losses has been playing out in my adult relationships. Sometimes I have lashed out at others, and sometimes I have shut down. I am beginning to understand that all of this is based in fear. I have heard that there are 365 references in the Bible to remind us, "Don't be afraid!" I wonder if there is "one a day" since it is so hard to be calm in the midst of the mess.

How can we help each other to express our grief in healthy ways? How can we acknowledge that being afraid keeps us from the abundant life that God wants us to experience? I know that I don't have all of the answers and that my path towards healing is just beginning. And for that I give thanks to God, the source of our hope for today and tomorrow!

Dinner at General Assembly

Anyone from Presbytery of New Covenant attending General Assembly is cordially invited to a dinner on Tuesday, June 21 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Jake's Grill (611 SW 10th Ave, Portland, OR 97205). The cost is \$30 per person. Please rsvp to Patricia Brantley at pbrantley@pbyofnewcovenant.org.





Mary's Musings

Mary Marcotte, Associate General Presbyter
Presbytery of New Covenant

In the midst of Holy Week this year, my daughter, Meg, tagged me with a Facebook post, which included the photo you see here. Meg lives in Manchester, United Kingdom and occasionally sends me such treasures that catch her fancy. They are particularly noticeable because Manchester, like most British cities, is overwhelmingly secular.

This image of a Mercy Bus has captured my imagination. Meg tells me it was parked just outside a train station at one of Central Manchester's highest foot traffic areas. Sounds of contemporary Christian music filled the air. Passersby could either offer a



Mercy Bus

confession and receive absolution or just have a chat with a priest. They were also handing out medals picturing St. Jude Thaddeus, the patron saint of hope.

I found this 'take it to the street' action refreshing. I don't know how many were actually stopping to hear a kind word of hope. I suspect there were those who experienced a bit of gladness just looking at the signage on the bus.

I found myself wondering what special training those priests serving on the bus might have had. I hope they listened at least as much as they spoke. I hope they conveyed the truth that we are ALL dependent on God's mercy, not just those who walked in off the street. I wonder what words the priests might have used to convey the depths of God's mercy.

I found myself wondering if this would be an ongoing, episodic initiative or just a high profile action during Holy Week. Sometimes people who are struggling with deeply spiritual issues need time—and courage—to cross a threshold. If the sight of that mercy bus worked on them the way it has worked on my imagination, might they be able to find it again tomorrow, or next week, or next month or next year? Would they know they could go into a church and find that blessing—and would those in the churches be ready to affirm that message of grace and compassion and hope?

I found myself imagining what else might happen in that bus. What if there were washing machines and dryers where homeless folks could wash their clothes? Or what if there was medical screening for high blood pressure? Or what if there was fresh produce or even fresh crusty bread that might remind us of the one who fed the multitudes and who was The Bread of Life?

I found myself wondering how I might better be a messenger of God's love, hope and mercy. It is well known that Pope Francis focuses much of his message to the church on mercy. In his 2013 Easter message, referencing Isaiah 35 and Ezekiel 37: 1–14, Francis said, "God's mercy can make even the driest land a garden, can restore life to dry bones. Let us be renewed by God's mercy, let us be loved by Jesus, let us enable the power of his love to transform our lives too; and let us become agents of this mercy, channels through which God can water the earth, protect all the earth and make justice and peace flourish."

How might you – or your congregation – send out a Mercy Bus message to your community? Where might you park the bus? What signage might you have? How long would you listen before you jumped into fix-it mode? There is a hymn titled *God of Compassion in Mercy Befriend Us* (PH, #261, GtG, #436).

How might we be better friends to those who need to hear a Good Word, both within and beyond the church? This is a great challenge for an Easter people to embrace.

community news

1,001 New Worshiping Communities

Associate General Presbyter Mary normally plays as a more behind-the-scenes role at presbytery meetings, but she stepped up the microphone at the March 19, 2016 stated meeting to share why the work of 1,001 New Worshiping Communities—for our denomination and for our presbytery—is significant and addresses issues raised by Jan Edmiston in her keynote address and in presbytery meeting themes this year.



PC(USA)'s goal of 1,001 New Worshiping Communities over ten years started in 2012 at the 220th General Assembly. The vision was to reach people for whom the heart of Christ breaks but whom, for a variety of reasons, would be unlikely to walk through the doors of most of our existing congregations. Over the last four years, hundreds of diverse new worshipping communities have formed throughout PC(USA). In the Presbytery of New Covenant, we currently have six:

- **Amigos** is a Spanish-speaking group in the Katy area led by TE Aurelio Rodriguez and functions as a house church for a very small but very faithful group.

- **Houston Hope of the Nations** is a worshipping fellowship led by TE Eid Abdellmassih, nesting at St. Thomas Presbyterian (Houston), and ministering primarily to Arabic-speaking immigrants and refugees.

- **Love Community Vietnamese**, led by Evangelist Hien Nguyen, meets in a small rental property in the Alief area of Houston, and is evangelizing in Asian market places in the community.

- **Houston Korean New Life Community**, led by TE Edward Song and nesting at New Hope in Katy, hopes to serve bicultural families who frequently do not find welcome in many Korean congregations.

- **Presbyterian Church of the Redeemer**, led by TE Ebenezer

Boateng, has moved out of their nesting location at St. John's (Houston) and into a storefront location in the Mission Bend area in October, and is thriving in the neighborhood where many of their fellow Ghanaians live.

- **Bacliff Missional Community**, our newest worshipping community, is a project of and funded by Clear Lake Presbyterian, not as a congregational growth strategy but as a missionary endeavor, and is led by RE Jimmy McGregor with support of Clear Lake church staff.

Mary reminded us that these new worshipping communities are great partnership opportunities. There are opportunities for prayer, support, development, and financial support. Pines Presbyterian (Houston) is offering special grants to these groups, funded out of a tithe of their last capital campaign. Clear Lake Presbyterian is not only starting its own new worshipping community but just has made generous gifts to four of these communities. Former Westminster Presbyterian Church (Houston) made significant gifts of their final assets to one particular worshipping community and to the creation of a New Life fund assisting efforts to birth and rebirth congregations.

As for what's in it for all of us, Mary reminded us that this is Kingdom work. It is partnering assets with those who have the vision and energy to do work we might not be able to do ourselves. It offers us the opportunity to hear the stories and learn from the witness of these groups who start with little more than a dream of fulfilling the commandment to go, make disciples.

You can go to onethousandone.org to see inspiring videos from these communities and to find resources for prayer and discernment that might better open your eyes to the neighbors around you and how you might meet their need for the experience of authentic community shaped by the gospel.

highlights

Better Stewardship through Energy Management

By Colby May, LIT

“God does not exist to make love real, but love is real because God exists. God can come to us in love only because he comes to us as God...”-Stephen Mott

What does this quote have to do with Energy Management, and what does energy management have to do with changing the world? Let me first answer that question by stating that our firm, LIT, has partnered with the Presbyterian Foundation and the Presbytery of New Covenant in order to offer energy studies to churches. So why the partnership, why the collaborative effort? Is there value, meaning more than just financial value, in these energy studies?

Energy Audits: Often the second largest church budget item behind salaries is facilities and energy. According to the EPA, 30% of the energy we spend is wasted, which means that expense can be recaptured through no-cost behavior change. LIT has performed over 5,000 energy audits, and every single audit has identified no-cost opportunities (new and old buildings alike). LIT arrives at a church with an infrared camera, light meter, and other tools and uncovers energy use in all areas. We look at equipment and structures, such as HVAC, lighting, building envelope, and water. Even more importantly, we look at behavior in regards to temperature set points, scheduling, zoning, lighting, and more. We also uncover opportunities in utilities and peak demand. Almost 50% of our studies pay for themselves out of errors we find in utility costs. We prioritize all our findings into an easily understood master plan report that will walk the church through recommendations.

Capital Expenditures: There are also opportunities to save a

significant amount of energy through capital expenses. A number of aging churches need HVAC, lighting, and building envelope renovations but have little or no capital. The Presbyterian Foundation offers the Restoring Creation Loan in order to provide low interest loan options for the PC(USA). Ideally, there is no extra funding needed to purchase equipment, as the cost is paid out of the energy savings, verified by the engineer. An engineer provides an energy study, which is rolled into the loan, verifying and stamping a report that states (short of a guarantee) that the identified project will have a payback of ten years or less and that the savings will pay for the cost of the loan. This type of program is an excellent option for churches in need of assistance, but the energy study is also stand alone and an excellent resource for churches to save energy at no cost.

We want to prepare a church to think sustainably because it is the correct thing to do but also because it is connected to missions. What if by being good stewards of our energy we were able to free up 30% of our energy and maintenance budgets? We could, hypothetically, pour that money back into local and international missions or back into general budgets.

My hope is you would reach out to LIT. We do not charge a percentage of the savings as others do, as we want savings to go back to the church. We have also received funding from partnered organizations to offset up front costs. Our new goal is to work with more Presbytery of New Covenant churches, as we already have with New Hope, Korean Central, The Woodlands, and Webster. Feel free to contact us at Colby@consultlit.com, 512-971-2364, or visit www.consultlit.com.

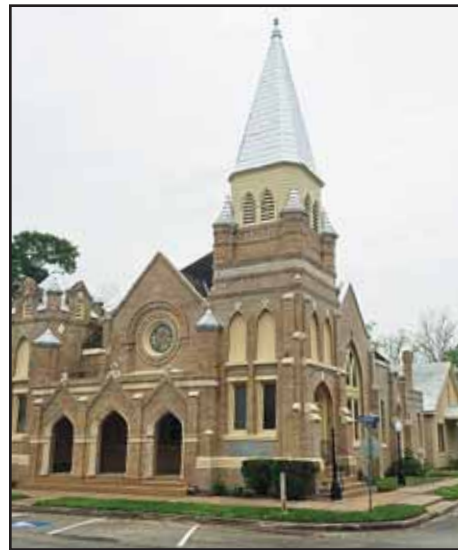
Making History Today

Rev. Dr. James S. Currie, Executive Secretary
Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest



Museums, Monuments, and Memorials

Recently I had the wonderful experience of driving down U.S. 59 to Edna, Texas where a Presbyterian church building that was constructed in 1908 had been restored. Two local history buffs had decided to pool their money and restore the structure that no longer served a congregation and had fallen into disrepair. The job now complete, with much of the original features still intact, several of us were able to tour this beautiful architectural edifice. It was fascinating to imagine the voice of Rev. Eugene McLaurin, pastor of that congregation 100 years ago, filling that space as he preached from that pulpit and served as pastor to that community. McLaurin's son was with us on the tour a few weeks ago. On that same day we drove about ten miles south of town where another structure that served as the “mother church” in that area in the 19th century, the Texana Presbyterian Church, stood. This was not its original



Allen Memorial Presbyterian Church, Edna, TX

location, but the building had also been restored.

Neither of these two buildings serves as home to a congregation anymore, but they do host community events. And so, as I drove home that afternoon, I wondered, “Why should anyone care about these buildings now?” Has the church become little more than an item of architectural or historical interest or, perhaps even worse, simply a museum? After all, we all know that the church is the people, not a building.

And yet, we have all kinds of museums, monuments, and memorials that jar our memories and serve to remind us not only of our past, but also of how and why we are where we are. In my part of the world, the San Jacinto Monument stands nearby as a reminder of those who fought and died for Texas independence. The Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee serves as a vivid reminder of the struggle for civil rights in this country that continues. Holocaust museums help us remember a tragedy that we forget at our own peril. Art museums celebrate the gifts of talented artists, past and present.

We hope that the church does not become simply an architectural memorial or a museum. We are the people of God who live, work, and serve in the present, but we do so knowing that we would not be here were it not for the faithful witness of those who have gone before us.

As we make history today, may we do so with a keen sense of gratitude to God for the communion of saints who *have fought the good fight, finished the race, and have kept the faith* (II Timothy 4:7). We stand on their shoulders.



Allen Memorial Presbyterian Church, interior

New Covenant International Student Fellowship Receives Matching Grant

By TE Rose Niles, Austin
Presbyterian Theological Seminary

The New Covenant International Student Fellowship at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (APTS) will support, in perpetuity, the final year of theological education for a student coming from across the globe to study and graduate from Austin Seminary. These students come to Austin Seminary to explore Christianity in another culture, but as you might imagine, their contribution to our understanding of Christianity in other parts of the world is significant.

Nancy Hathaway, from Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church, recently reflected on the background and impact of this powerful ministry:

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary used to have an arrangement whereby it hosted for one school year a pastor from Zambia every other year. (In the “off” years, the APTS guest student was from Eastern Europe.) During that year, the student would study to earn a Masters of Theology from the Seminary. The international experience was a most beneficial one--for the guest student and the members of his congregation(s) at home and for the seminary and its students. The exchange of perspectives, insights, and understanding of everyone involved and the nurtured relationships between international brothers and sisters proved extremely valuable for years to come. We remember hosting several Zambian friends, as each one, over the years, studied at APTS. We still

treasure the deepened friendships that grew during those visits and recall the joy of celebrating with each one upon graduation day in Austin.

Since 2008, this impactful program has been on hiatus due to lack of funding. Now, with the vision and support of friends in New Covenant Presbytery, we are close to being able to restore this global mission outreach, and establish it, to the Glory of God, in perpetuity.

A seed was planted with a generous presbytery offering of over \$4,000 in March of 2014. Friends from this presbytery have committed to raising \$700,000 to endow this fellowship and we are almost there! A generous donor has agreed to match dollar-for-dollar the last \$120,000 needed, with this match being in force until June 30, 2016. We have received about \$11,000 since the match has been in place, for which we are deeply grateful. We are so close! Your gift will go twice as far! Please prayerfully consider supporting this scholarship so that we can enroll an international student in fall of 2017, leading to lifelong friendships, fellowship, and global partnership in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Send a gift or pledge today at <https://giving.austinseminary.edu/donate>. Please mark the gift as “other” and in the “other line” note that it’s for the New Covenant International Student Fellowship. For more information, contact Rose Niles, APTS Development Officer, at 713-582-4112. Thank you!

mission an

7th Annual Sew-a-Thon a Huge Success

By RE Penny Bell, First PC, Conroe

Many Montgomery County children will soon have cozy handmade quilts, thanks to those who participated in the 7th Annual Sew-a-Thon held at First Presbyterian Church of Conroe on Saturday, February 27. Ten quilts were tied, and 49 quilts in various stages of construction will be completed by the church’s Mission Sewing Group. A record number of 89 tireless women and 12 devoted men were served lunch, made possible by the volunteer cooking team and donations from Kroger, Wal-Mart, HEB and Sam’s. All the quilts will be given to the “It’s My Very Own” project, which provides “Bags of Love” to children in Montgomery County who are removed from their homes



Sewers at work.

because of a parent’s drug addiction, abuse, or neglect. The bags contain a quilt, a stuffed animal, age/gender appropriate books, games, toys, and toiletry items. Participants also donated cash and items for the bags.

The Woodlands Community PC Named Earth Care Congregation

By RE Cinda Hitchcock, The Woodlands Community PC

The PC(USA)’s Office of Environmental Ministries has recertified The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church (WCPC) as an Earth Care Congregation. The Earth Care Congregation project encourages Presbyterian churches to care for God’s earth and certifies those that have affirmed the Earth Care Pledge and taken holistic actions in earth care in the fields of worship, education, facilities and outreach. WCPC was originally certified in 2014 and is currently the only church in The Presbytery of New Covenant certified as an Earth Care Congregation and one of 11 in Texas. The Creation Care Team, which reports directly to the Session, has encouraged earth-friendly actions in the four areas specified above. Among the accomplishments are the



following: annually, two Sundays are focused on earth care; an adult Sunday School series of classes on environmental issues is being conducted; the older buildings have been retrofitted with LED light bulbs; air conditioning units are being replaced with high efficiency units; each quarter, teams pick up litter on the church campus and surrounding area; recycling efforts have expanded; and the use of harmful chemicals on the grounds has been reduced. This is just a sampling of WCPC’s earth-friendly activities, and the work continues.

and ministry

Street Ministry

By RE Amy Gremillion,
ChristChurch PC, Bellaire and
Cameron Highsmith, St. Philip PC,
Houston

The Presbytery Center parking lot has been the site of a street ministry for the homeless in the Montrose area every Wednesday night for many years. Part of the ministry is to provide snacks, a worship experience, and dinner for whomever shows up. The ministry is supported by many different types of churches, but at the heart of it is Pastor Joe Williams.

About 18 months ago, one church that had been providing snacks could no longer do so, and Presbytery advertised for volunteers. A member of the mission team at ChristChurch, Bellaire read about this opportunity in Tuesday Connect, and it seemed like a perfect fit for the smaller congregation. In September 2014, ChristChurch committed to the monthly experience of serving the homeless chips, granola bars, and crackers but quickly found out that honey buns are their absolute favorite. They are currently serving on the first Wednesday of the month, and it has been a great mission opportunity for them because it allows some members of the congregation to contribute by bringing snacks to church and others to actually go to Presbytery and serve and minister to those in need. The members of ChristChurch



Street Ministry attendees.

are continually trying to heed Jesus's command to "Feed my sheep" by not only distributing sack lunches at their own campus but by also generously supporting Pathways Presbyterian's Food Pantry, making lunches for Search, and reaching out through the Montrose Street Ministry.

This year the Young Adult (YA) group at St. Philip, Houston has also started joyfully serving the Street Church Ministry. The YA group has been serving snacks and drinks on the fourth Wednesday evening of the month while the homeless gather in the parking lot of the Presbytery. This ministry has helped the YA group relate to so many people and see the wonderful things that can happen when various groups come together to serve others! The St. Philip Presbyterian Young Adult group has an average attendance of eight for this event each month.

Presbytery's vision statement is, "growing congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples." What great examples these are!



A mission team from St. John's Presbyterian Church in Houston is home safe and sound. Ruling Elders Glen Risley, Léonie Tchoconté, and Brad Urquhart from St. John's installed a water system in Haiti in April through Living Waters for the World. Now a village will have access to clean drinking waters. Their lives will be transformed. All in the name of Jesus Christ. Mission accomplished! Way to go team!

The 2017 Benefits Plan of the PC(USA)

By TE Kevin S. Keaton, Regional Representative, The Synod of the Sun, The Board of Pensions, PC(USA)



In an effort to meet the changing needs of a changing church, the Board of Directors of the Board of Pensions has approved a redesign of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church, (USA). The 2017 Benefits Plan will affirm the Board's commitment to installed pastors while allowing employing organizations flexibility in providing customized benefit packages to meet the needs of their other, non-installed employees. It is significant to note that these plan changes will not affect the benefits for over 80% of congregations—those for whom the only person enrolled in the Benefits Plan is the pastor. Meanwhile, those churches and other employers, which have multiple employees enrolled, have either already been contacted or will be contacted by someone on the staff of the Board of Pensions regarding the impact of the Redesign.

Congregational leaders, especially Ruling Elders who serve on committees that focus on personnel and financial matters, are urged to read more about the 2017 Benefits Plan at <http://www.pensions.org/AvailableResources/BookletsandPublications/Documents/2017BenefitsPlanRedesign.pdf>.

In May, each employee enrolled in the plan, as well as every employing organization, will receive an important mailing detailing the next steps required by employers, as well as by their employees. Thus, everyone should pay close attention to the printed materials received in the mail and read carefully the e-mail and online communications provided by the Board of Pensions.

The Board's Member Services and Employer Services teams will be available to assist or answer questions as congregations and members work through these changes together. In addition, as the Regional Representative, I will be available to consult with congregations and other employers as they develop benefits strategies.

Helping employers provide quality benefits to meet the needs of more employees, and helping them be the best employers they can be, are faithful ways to practice wholeness in the context of the community of faith. This redesign will enable the Church to serve the whole community, from the smallest congregations to the largest, in a way that helps those churches fulfill their mission and ministry in the service of Jesus Christ.

Interfaith Dialogue Helps Us Understand Ourselves and Others

In the 21st century, it is critical that we better understand people of other cultures and faiths. Webster Presbyterian Church (201 W NASA Road One) is seeking to understand the principles, texts, and faith practices of other religions through a series of Interfaith Dialogue classes. These began on Sunday, April 3, and will run through Sunday, May 22, during the Sunday school hour from 10:10 to

11:10 a.m. They are learning about Islam, Baha'i, Judaism, Buddhism, and how non-believers deal with the big questions. In addition, Rev. Keith Uffman is leading a class on interfaith competency. They really are trying to learn how to "love our neighbors as ourselves," and, in the process, are developing relationships with others. It's a journey worth taking in each of our congregations.

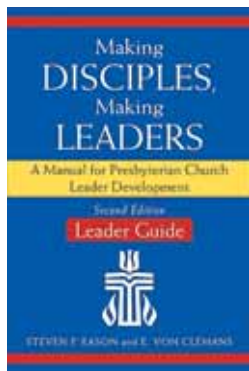
in the resource center new dvd and book resources

Making Disciples, Making Leaders: A Manual for Presbyterian Leader Development, 2nd edition

By Steven P. Eason and E. Von Clemans

What if you could find everything that is needed to prepare officers for their work, paying attention to theology and polity and its application in the life of the particular congregation? Here it is. Designed to “flip the classroom” of most training plans, participants engage in pre-meeting reading assignments and fill out worksheets. Classroom time then becomes primarily about application and discussion among participants. Twenty-two case studies in the participant’s book give those officers currently serving and in training an opportunity to work through thoughtful application of principles of polity and theology in responding to situations that frequently arise in the church. The entire process focuses on the building and equipping of spiritual leaders. This extensively revised second edition includes citation updates reflecting the Form of Government revisions to the *Book of Order*.

There is a comprehensive participant’s guide, which will become a go-to reference for officers, and a separate leader’s guide, which pays careful attention to the ways adult learners actually learn and offers suggestions for additional teaching resources, potential class outlines and answer keys to the participant’s worksheets.



Growing in Grace and Gratitude Summer Curriculum

For display only

Do you combine children’s classes in the summer? Are you not certain if your old standby curriculum is working well for you? Consider using these affordable resources designed for ages 3–5 and 5–10. Stories explored include many of the action-packed adventures of the early church as told in the book of Acts. The Resource Center has non-circulating copies and the curriculum may be purchased through pcusastore.com. You can read more details at www.growinggracegratitude.org.



Being Reformed: Grace and Gratitude

By Charles Wiley; 6-session adult study; for display only

It has been said that the heart of what Presbyterians believe can be summed up as God’s grace and our Gratitude. This 6-week study explores dimensions of these two words on the faith life of individuals and congregations. Learners are invited to reflect on ways the confession of sin operates as an act of freedom, how passing the peace is far more than saying, “Howdy, neighbor!” and why mission engagement is the task of ALL of us. The student guide contains a short weekly essay with materials drawn from scripture and the confessions. The leader’s guide offers helpful suggestions to make your study come alive. The Resource Center has non-circulating copies and the curriculum may be purchased through pcusastore.com.



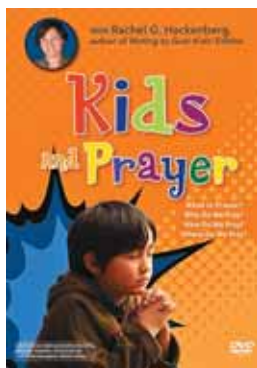
Kids and Prayer

With Rachel G. Hackenberg; 4-session DVD

This fast paced DVD study could be used in classes for elementary children or for parent groups. Each session is about 10 minutes long and includes interviews with children, a field trip that explores a concept for the week, and Bible study, too. Topics addressed include

- What is prayer?
- Why do we pray?
- How do we pray?
- Where do we pray?

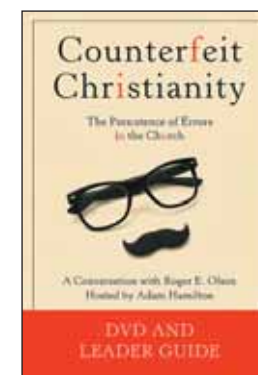
The DVD circulates with a brief discussion guide and sample prayers.



Counterfeit Christianity

By Roger Olsen and Adam Hamilton; 5-session DVD based on 10-chapter book of the same name

These five conversations (about 15 minutes each) between Adam Hamilton and Roger Olsen explore how some of the heresies of the ages present themselves in our modern church life. Conversations range from understanding what heresy is and what orthodoxy is to a critique of the prosperity gospel and moral therapeutic deism. The DVD comes with a discussion guide but could be augmented and enriched if participants read the book of the same name. A copy of the book circulates with the DVD.



PowerXpress Studies

Curriculum for Children

Each Power Xpress notebook contains all the materials needed to teach Bible stories through the lens of multiple intelligences. These Bible experiences were originally designed for use with workshop rotation model of teaching, but could be adapted and used for Vacation Bible School or one day events. Centers using art, computers, cooking, games music, science, storytelling and movies are included. A variety of stories are available, drawn from key passages in the Old and New Testaments. Check the catalog under Resources on the Presbytery’s webpage, pbyofnewcovenant.org, for particular topics.



Welcome to New Covenant!

TE Te-Tzu Hsu (Simon Kho) was installed as the pastor at Grace Taiwan, Houston on February 7. Pastor Kho was ordained in June 1994 and has transferred from Taipei Presbytery. He received his MDiv from Tainan Theological College and Seminary in 1984. (No photo available)

TE Jun Ho Kim was installed as the pastor at Korean Young Nak, Houston, on April 17. Pastor Kim was ordained in April 2002 and has transferred from Tropical Florida Presbytery. He received his MDiv and Master in Theology from Presbyterian College and Theological Seminary and his Doctor of Missiology from Grace Theological Seminary.



Rev. Jun Ho Kim

Next Connections Deadline

The next *Connections* copy deadline is Tuesday, June 14 for the July/August 2016 issue. Please send articles and photos to Theodora Pounds at tpounds@pbyofnewcovenant.org.



PYCC at the March Presbytery meeting

THANK YOU!

“You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us.” 2 Corinthians 9:11

On behalf of the young people of our presbytery, I sincerely thank you for your generosity and support! At the March 19, Stated Presbytery

Meeting, you graciously responded to the call to provide opportunities for youth to experience God’s love and strengthen their faith in Christ. Thank you for your generous donations towards our presbytery’s 2016 Youth Triennium Delegation!

Rev. Caressa Murray, Coordinator for Youth Ministry, Presbytery of New Covenant



Conclaves 2016 at Camp Cho-Yeh

Do You Wanna Revolution?

In February and March, our Presbytery’s Youth Connection Council (PYCC), comprised of 49 high school youth and 19 adults, led two weekend retreats called “Conclaves” for the youth groups of our presbytery. Attending these weekends were 300 junior and senior high youth and adults from 34 congregations.

The theme for this year’s Conclaves was “Holy Revolution” based on Micah 6:6–8. Young people explored what it means to “seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God” through the stories of Esther, the four friends and the paralytic, the parable of the Good Samaritan, and the testimonies of our PYCC youth. We were commissioned

to Be Unashamed, Be Brave, Be Bold, Be YOU as we go out into the world to ignite a Holy Revolution for Christ!

On the Saturdays of each Conclave, participants worked on the grounds of Cho-Yeh as the mission project for this year. The youth leaders of PYCC thought it would be important to give back to a place that gives so much to us! Two highlights of both weekends were the Saturday night Spirituality Center and Sunday morning worship with communion and anointing in small groups.

Our young leaders did an amazing job creating, planning and leading these two weekends. Dates are set for 2017 Conclaves: February 24–26 and March 3–5, at Camp Cho-Yeh.

PYCC is the place to be!



Do YOU know a young person who exhibits a mature faith and has gifts for leadership? Do YOU know an adult with a mentoring spirit and a strong relationship with Christ? Then encourage them to apply for the 2016–2017 Presbytery’s Youth Connection Council (PYCC).

Our Presbytery’s Youth Council is a wonderful opportunity for young people to share their gifts and explore their leadership abilities. Youth on the council work alongside adult members to design and lead fellowship, mission, and worship experiences for the young people of our presbytery. Through these events, this council seeks to deepen one’s faith and relationship with God as well as build relationships between youth and adults in our presbytery.

We need YOU to identify

young people and adults in your congregation who have gifts for ministry and leadership potential and who will be willing to make the commitment to be a member of the 2016–2017 PYCC. Information and applications can be found online at www.pbyofnewcovenant.org. Potential youth and adults should complete applications and submit them to their home church for review and endorsement. Churches will then select and submit up to four youth (in 10th–12th grades) and three adults (over the age of 23) to serve on the council and represent your congregation.

Don’t wait! The DEADLINE is July 1, 2016.

Thank you for empowering the youth of our presbytery to serve as leaders of Christ’s Church.

2016 Summer Youth Mission Trip



Youth Mission Trip in New Orleans

On June 12 through 18, six churches of our presbytery will unite for another Youth Mission Trip to New Orleans to work with Project Homecoming. Project Homecoming is a faith-based community development organization in the greater New Orleans area that helps restore neighborhoods by building homes and completing community projects with the help of volunteers. You can learn more at projecthomecoming.net.

Fifty-three youth and adults will

embark on a week of hard work, spiritual formation, and relationship building. The churches participating in trip are St. Thomas, Houston; St. Stephen, Houston; First, Sugar Land; Southminster, Missouri City; Covenant, College Station; and Community of the Servant Savior, Houston

The youth and adult participants of these churches will live together, cook and eat together, share chore duties, build a home or community project, and participate in worship each night. This will be one of the most challenging weeks both physically and emotionally that they will have ever experienced. Participants will be ready to return home with a deepened faith and a new outlook on mission in their own community!

2016 calendar

June 10–17

Presbytery CEDEPCA trip
Guatemala

June 18–23

General Assembly
Portland, OR

July 16

Presbytery Meeting
First PC
Orange, TX

July 19–23

2016 Triennium
Purdue University

July 21–23

PW Synod of the Sun Triennial
Gathering
First PC
Fort Worth, TX

August 2–4

Weekday Ministries Conference
Houston Marriott Westchase
Houston, TX

September 8–11

APA (Administrative Personnel
Conference of the PC(USA) Southwest
Region Conference
Hyatt Regency Houston Galleria
Houston, TX

September 29

A Day with Bruce Reyes Chow
Spring Branch PC
Houston, TX

November 19

Presbytery Meeting
First PC
Pasadena, TX

*Mark your calendars now for 2016
New Covenant Presbytery Meetings*

Saturday, July 16

First PC, Orange



Saturday, November 19

First PC, Pasadena

If your church is willing to host one of the meetings in 2017, please contact Lynn Hargrove at lhargrove@pbyofnewcovenant.org

what's happening ... upcoming events and gatherings

May 6–8

Mike Endicott to Lead Conference **Biblical Healing**

Rev. Mike Endicott, an Anglican priest from Cwmbarn, Wales, and Founder of the Order of Jacob's Well (<http://www.jacobswell.org.uk/>), will lead a Healing Conference at First Presbyterian in Pearland beginning Friday, May 6 from 7 to 9 p.m., with a light meal at 6 p.m. Teaching will resume on Saturday, May 7 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., including lunch. From 7–9 p.m. on Saturday, May 7, the church will hold a Celtic Healing service—open to all—in the sanctuary.



Rev. Mike Endicott

Sunday, May 8, Rev. Endicott will preach at the 9:15 a.m. service. The scriptures will be Psalm 91 and Luke 10:25–37, and the sermon will be entitled, “Mother’s Day on the Jericho Road.” At 11 a.m. in the sanctuary, after a time of food and fellowship, Rev. Endicott will spend an hour answering questions and providing further teaching for all who wish to attend.

There is no cost for any of these events, including meals, but offerings will be taken at each event to offset the cost of food and to support and bless the healing and teaching ministry of the Order of Jacob's Well. If you have questions, or if you plan to eat dinner Friday or lunch Saturday, please send an email to healing-pearland@att.net. For more information, go to www.pearlandpres.com.

May 15

Who is Jesus Christ for the Church Today?

Webster Presbyterian Church welcomes guest speaker, Rev. Dr. Thomas Currie on Sunday, May 15. Currie will lead a class for adults and youth from 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. on “Who is Jesus Christ for the Church Today?” in the Meeting Room and preach at the 11:15 a.m. service. From 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., Rev. Dr. Currie will present a lecture on “Bread for Life: Church in the 21st Century.” As an ordained minister in PC(USA), Rev. Dr. Currie served as pastor of congregations in Brenham and Kerrville before helping to establish the seminary’s Charlotte, North Carolina campus in 2001. He is the author of several articles and four books, the most recent being *The Joy of Ministry*. For more information, visit www.websterpresby.org. Webster Presbyterian Church is located at 201 W NASA Road One, Webster, TX 77598.

May 10–July 19

Creating **Healthy Boundaries**

The Professional Life Subcommittee of the Committee on Ministry is hosting a series of Healthy Boundaries classes for clergy, Christian educators, Commissioned Ruling Elders, those who work with youth and children, and candidates under care. The classes are held from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in various locations around the Presbytery. This is a DVD-based training that helps us set healthy boundaries in a variety of areas with a goal of thereby creating healthier churches. The training also satisfies the requirement of the PC(USA) and the Presbytery of New Covenant for sexual misconduct training (although that is NOT all we talk about!). Those who have attended so far have come, “because I had to” and left, “glad that I came—this was worth my time.” If you haven’t made it to class yet, here are the opportunities through July:

May 10: First PC—Lufkin

May 19: ChristChurch—Bellaire

June 9: First PC—Pasadena

July 19: The Woodlands Community PC—
The Woodlands

Additional classes will be scheduled for the fall. The training is free, and there is a charge of \$10 if you want us to provide lunch (you can bring your own if you prefer). There also are opportunities to learn to facilitate the training. If you are interested in facilitating, contact TE Helen DeLeon at hdeleon@websterpresby.org. To register for a class, contact Patricia Brantley, pbrantley@pbyofnewcovenant.org or 713-526-2585.

May 21



POP (Prayers of the People) is excited to announce the date for their next Lay Minister Training, which will be Saturday, May 21 at First Presbyterian Church (5300 Main St. Houston, TX 77004). Lay Minister training lasts from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration is free and includes lunch, training materials, and the book, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us* by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun. In order to register, simply go to <http://popministry.org/index.php/training> and click, “Click Here to REGISTER”

what's happening ... upcoming events and gatherings

June 16

Fresh Elastic for Stretched-Out Educators



Faith and Grief: Ministry in the Midst of Life

Just as we are called to service, so we are called to walk through life with those we serve. Fresh Elastic is delighted to welcome Fran Shelton to gather with us in June to take a look at how we prepare ourselves, in both our called professions and in our personal lives, to support others who have lost someone they love. Fran is the co-founder of *Faith and Grief Ministries*, organized to provide ongoing comfort to persons who have experienced the death of a loved one. This ministry values the gifts of:

- the Holy Spirit's gentle and restless source of comfort;
- community that understands grief and mourning;
- compassion revealed in silence, listening, tears, and surprising laughter;
- stories that speak truth in love and promote wholeness; and
- collaboration that joins strength to strength.

Please plan to join us on Thursday, June 16 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at The Presbytery Center, 1110 Lovett Blvd, Houston, TX 77006. You will be touched and inspired by what Fran has to share. If you are a volunteer, paid staff person, teaching elder or just curious, you are invited! It will be our pleasure to serve you lunch, complete with a beverage and dessert!

This session will be facilitated by folks with a seasoned heart for education. Please feel free to contact any one of them if you have questions:

Jo Ann Currie (jjcurrie5152@gmail.com)

Connie Nyquist (lnyquist@sbcglobal.net)

Kim Shrull (kshrull@earthlink.net)

Anne Wilson (anne.aiko.wilson@gmail.com)

Your RSVP will assist our planning. Please send replies to anne.aiko.wilson@gmail.com by Monday morning, June 13.

July 8–10

Houston Area Youth Celebration

Celebration is a weekend retreat event for high school students to explore their faith in a loving and supportive environment.

Activities during the weekend include music, worship, fellowship, and fun. Youth leaders guide the weekend's activities (with the assistance of adult leaders) to provide opportunities for focusing on what it means to be a young Christian in today's world. Celebration is run by teens and held at Camp Cho-Yeh. The total participant cost is \$140 and the next Celebration weekend is July 8 through 10. Register by June 30 at houstonareacelebration.com.

As one youth participant said, "I couldn't think of a better place to go to grow close to God and make lots of new friends while you're at it."



June 19–24

2016 Mo-Ranch/PAM Worship and Music Conference

(Presbyterian Association of Musicians)

In our Reformed tradition, every Sunday is a celebration of Christ's resurrection. But on the liturgical calendar, more than half of the year is called Ordinary Time. After we have celebrated the major seasons of the church year from Advent through Pentecost, how do we keep those other Sundays from becoming mundane—just ordinary?



With friends, colleagues, inspiring preachers and worship leaders, and nationally recognized faculty, we will gather in the beautiful Texas Hill Country June 19–24, to sing, ring, dance, play, pray, create art, play instruments, and explore together how every worship service of the year can be ExtraOrdinary! New this year: we are adding a mission project of preparing food kits for Kids Against Hunger.

Visit the Presbyterian Association of Musicians website (www.presbymusic.org/mo_ranch.html) to register online, learn more details, and get information about available scholarships.

July 21–23

Presbyterian Women (PW) Synod of the Sun Triennial Women's Gathering

Join women from all over Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Texas in Fort Worth at the Synod of the Sun Presbyterian Women's Gathering on July 21–23, 2016, at First Presbyterian Church, 1000 Penn St, Fort Worth, TX 76102. The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Rigby is the keynote speaker. The Gathering will begin Thursday at 7:00 p.m. and conclude Saturday evening. The registration fee is \$150 before June 1, or \$160 after and includes workshops, tote bag, leadership training, plenary sessions, and five meals. Registration does NOT include lodging or fees for optional outings and activities. Registration is available for individual days. View Facebook page "2016 Presbyterian Women's Synod Gathering" for updates and pricing on optional activities.



The Gathering partner-hotels listed below provide breakfast and shuttles to the church. (Mention the PW Gathering for the preferred rate.)

- Holiday Inn Express: \$99—1111W Lancaster Ave, Fort Worth, TX 76102 (817) 698-9595
- Spring Hill Suites by Marriott: \$120—3250 Lovell Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76107 (817) 878-2554

Other motels with lower prices are available on Interstate 30, which is within easy driving distance of the church.

Prayers for Praise and Concern

Praises

TE Keatan King, Associate Pastor of St. Philip, Houston, and TE Dr. Nathan Carlin, Associate Professor at McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics, McGovern Medical School, were married on Saturday, April 2, at University Presbyterian Church in Austin, Texas. Keatan and Nathan met in June 2013, at the meeting of New Covenant Presbytery in Galveston when both were being examined for ordination. A real Presbyterian love story!

Health Concerns

TE Jim Birchfield—First, Houston—Jim is recovering from sinus surgery.

TE Steve Thorney, HR—Steve is recovering from a broken hip.

TE Dr. Ben Stewart—Seafarers' Center—Ben is recovering from prostate surgery on April 14 and will be out of commission for six weeks.

TJ Edwards—son of TE Thomas Edwards, Seafarers' Center—TJ had a tumor removed from his chest and is waiting for the oncology report.

RE Dick Wolf—St. Andrew's, Houston—Dick is recovering after having a melanoma removed from his face and is thankful that the margins and lymph nodes were clear.

Deaths

Mother of TE Troy Jarvis—First, Eagle Lake—March 2

RE Dick Westfahl—Grand Lakes, Houston and former member of the Presbyterian Seafarers Board—March 6

RE James E. Paden—Webster—March 7

Mother of RE John Jo—Korean Central, Houston and former Moderator of the presbytery—March 8

Dr. Richard Hazelip—Organist at St. Thomas, Houston—March 12

RE Selma Nelson—St. Andrews, Beaumont—March 15

Father of TE Jim Gentner—Bethel, West Columbia—March 24

RE John F. Armstrong, grandfather of TE Kathleen Davies—A Community of the Servant Savior, Houston—March 24

RE Vernon Whitney—Christ Church, Bellaire—March 24

Posy Moore, mother of TE Helen Rose Moore—Member-at-Large—March 2016

Bud Cook, father of RE Fred Cook—Christ Church, Bellaire and member of Committee on Ministry—March 2016

Irene Coulter—Gulf Prairie Presbyterian, Jones Creek—April 4

Emily Harper, wife of TE Doug Harper, HR, Pastor Emeritus of St. Andrew's, Houston—April 9

Jacob Wright—Jacob drowned in April while on a family retreat at Mo-Ranch with First Presbyterian, Bryan

HR = Honorably Retired | TE = Teaching Elder (Rev.) | RE = Ruling Elder



PRESBYTERY OF
NEW COVENANT

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