



# Albany Presbytery E-News

Volume 5, Number 2

February 2010

*"Take delight in the Lord and you will be given the desires of your heart."--Psalm 37:4*

Our E-News is for all members of Presbytery, not only ministers and clerks of session. Please share this issue with your congregation and home-bound members. Forward it using your email distribution list. Post it on your bulletin board. Print extra copies as handouts. A calendar is on the last page. The E-News is distributed around the First of Each Month and posted on our website. Thank you!

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*A New Year...A New Decade...A New Vision....  
We are Doing a Great Work.... ~ Nehemiah 6*

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## ALBANY PRESBYTERY BEGINS SEARCH FOR STATED CLERK

Interested and qualified candidates for the part-time position of Stated Clerk should submit a cover letter with resume to Albany Presbytery (Attn: Stated Clerk Search) via email, postal mail or fax. Submissions must be received no later than Monday, February 22nd.

## PRESBYTERY FURNISHINGS SALE

**Furniture and other office supplies are now for sale at the presbytery offices during regular business hours**  
**TERMS:** All items are cash or check at time of purchase. Sold As Is. No holds. No deliveries. All items must be removed from premises no later than Friday, February 19th. If you do not pick up your items by that date, they will be forfeited with a full refund. See the non-inclusive list in the presbytery meeting packet and on our [website](#) – posted later this week. It is preferable that all questions regarding merchandise for sale and/or terms be [emailed](#)

## SDOP RECEIVES TWO GRANTS

Do you ever wonder where the money given to the One Great Hour of Sharing goes? A good portion of the money goes to the work of the Self-Development of People (SDOP).

Glad News! Albany Presbytery's Committee for SDOP is pleased to report on the funding of two projects:

- Refugee Education and Development in Schenectady: A grant of \$6905 has been received to help the needs of Sudanese refugees and immigrants in our Capital District region.
- "Rated G" Classic Children's Theatre: A grant of \$17,693 has been received to establish this theatre in Cohoes. The vision of this project is to provide middle school and high school youth a safe meeting place when school is not in session. The discipline of good theatre production will enhance youth self-esteem while teaching creativity, good decision-making, life skills and core values. The theatre will be located in the Good Ground Family Church in Cohoes.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR HAITI RESPONSE

Special thanks go out to every one of you for your prayers and your immediate response for tangible emergency assistance during the aftermath of the earthquakes in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti and its environs. See our [home page](#) for continued support.

## PAF STEERING COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

The Pakistani-American Fellowship (PAF) Steering Committee is in need of additional members. This is a vital and rewarding volunteer ministry assisting Rev. Nadeem Sadiq and the PAF congregation – currently meeting at St. Paul's Church on Hackett Boulevard in Albany. Please [contact Rev. Miriam Lawrence Leupold](#) to find out more about the Steering Committee and how you can help support and grow PAF by joining!

# BONNIE ORTH RECEIVES GRANT

Bonnie Orth, pastor of Mayfield United Church, is excited to learn that she is one of 149 pastors chosen to receive a Clergy Renewal Grant from the Lilly Endowment. This opportunity will allow Bonnie, her family and friends and her congregation to grow in ministry together and fill her renewal time with learning and growth. Thanks to the Lilly Endowment, this grant will cost Mayfield Church nothing, providing monies to cover her time away and to provide educational opportunities for the Mayfield Congregation in her absence.

Bonnie quoted a poem by Helen Lowrie Marshall: The Patchwork Quilt as part of her application because of Mayfield's ministry as a quilting church and as a reminder of our ministry journey together. Bonnie is looking forward to this coming year believing, as Robert Browning once wrote: "The best is yet to be!"

## *The Patchwork Quilt*

*Life isn't given to us all of a piece  
It's more like a patchwork quilt –  
Each hour and minute a patch to fit in  
To the pattern that's being built.*

*With some patches light and some patches dark,  
And some that seem ever so dull –  
But if we were given to set some apart,  
We'd hardly know which to cull.*

*For it takes the dark patches to set off the light,  
And the dull to show up the gay –  
And, somehow, the pattern just wouldn't be right  
If we took any part away.*

*No, life isn't given us all of a piece,  
But in patches of hours to use,  
That each can work out his pattern of life  
To whatever design he might choose.*

## Malta Church has a new Sunday School/Fellowship Hall



Malta Presbyterian Church has a wonderful new Sunday School/Fellowship Hall addition to their charming historic 1845 Sanctuary. The groundbreaking was September 13, 2009 and the building was ready for occupancy in late January. God's blessings, grace and miracles were certainly with the congregation as they met and overcame many obstacles during the construction. There will be a dedication service and celebration of the 10th anniversary of chartering of the church on May 10, 2010.



## Amy Manning of Church World Services to be at Presbytery Meeting



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

Be sure to come early to view the CWS display. The earthquake in Haiti reminds us more than ever the good work that Church World Services provides during emergencies on our planet.

Information about various Kits and brochures for you to take home to your church will be available.

## Cass Shaw to Meet with Board of Pensions Leadership

Our General Presbyter, Cass Shaw, will be attending the Board of Pensions (BOP) Executive Forum with other Presbyters **February 9-10th** in Philadelphia. If you have questions or concerns about BOP or your coverage, please express your concerns regarding your medical or pension coverage to her via email with "BOP QUESTION FOR PHILADELPHIA" in the subject line. Cass will personally deliver your question or message to the Executive Forum meeting in February.

## Report on a Ghana Mission Network Conference

*In October, Rev. Kathryn Shaffer and Lois Wilson were sent by Albany's Westminster Church to Cincinnati, Ohio, to represent them at meetings of the PC(USA)'s Ghana Mission Network and the World Mission Celebration. This is Lois' report and Kathryn's will be in an upcoming e-news).*

The Ghana Mission Network was organized in 2002 by the PC(USA). It defines the network as "a community of PC(SA) entities and individuals committed to supporting, advising and exhorting one another in Christ's work in Ghana and the USA through partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana."

Westminster has been represented at network meetings since 2004. We have what the Stated Clerk of the PCG (a church with more than 600,000 members) describes as an "education partnership" directly with the PCG. It is the only such partnership between the PCG and a US congregation. The purpose of a network meeting is for representatives of the three church groups and each partnership to "support, advise and exhort."

Participants in October were from:

- The Akrofi-Christaller Institute in Ghana. The institute was founded by Kwame Bediako, one of Africa's leading Christian interpreters of Africa and of African Christianity
- The oldest PC(USA) Ghana partnership, organized in 1985 by the Foot Hills Presbytery in South Carolina with the Kwaku Presbytery (PCG), to provide financial aide to the Donkorkran Clinic. In 1985, Westminster's US minister from Ghana – Rev. Alice Kyei-Anti – was working as a missionary, midwife and chaplain at Donkorkran.
- The newest PC(USA) Ghana partnership organized in 2008 between the Milwaukee Presbytery and the Dangme Tongu Presbytery in Ghana. Two representatives from the Milwaukee Presbytery joined Westminster's Ghana mission team for a party at the Osu Children's Home in Accra in July.

The Butler, Pennsylvania Presbyterian Church described their Christmas card exchange program with the scholarship students they fund in Ghana. Kathryn and Lois, with Jeanne Bianchine, followed up by sending cards to students we sponsor in Ghana.

On behalf of this year's Westminster Mission Team, Lois described the workshop for caregivers of dementia patients and recruited a nurse from Pennsylvania to join the 2011 workshop in Ghana.

## YOUTH NEWS

### Discover Who God is Calling You to Be

High school students: Are you serving as a leader in your youth group or other church activities? One day could make a difference in your life as a church leader. Pathways is a one-day event designed to assist in leader development through music, keynote presentations and workshops. Participants will also experience vocational weavings — opportunities to connect the event topic with the way they live their faith in their own lives.

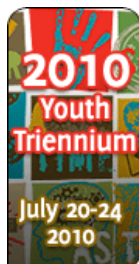
Explore pathways to excellence in youth ministry in one of six cities in 2010. [Learn more and register.](#)

Pathways

YOUTH MINISTRY  
LEADER SEMINARS

### UN Trip President's Day Weekend

High school students: [Click Here](#) to learn more about this exciting weekend visiting the Presbytery Offices in the United Nations in New York City. Cass Shaw and Tim Coombs will be traveling with you!



### Youth Triennium 2010 This Summer

High school students: [Click here](#) to learn more about attending this wonderful opportunity and fun time with youth from around the country.

## Attention All Committee and Task Force Chairs!

Guess what? It's time to start planning for the 2011 budget! In the next few weeks, Bill Ramage, Financial Manager, will be sending each of you a form to use to help in formulating your financial needs for the 2011 budget year. Please plan to discuss your funding needs in the next couple of months, as these requests are **due back to the Budget and Finance Committee by March 31**.

**For 2010: Planning Calendars and Mission Yearbooks** are available in limited quantities for \$7 each. Order now! Shipping is available by priority mail for an additional minimum charge of \$5. If you still owe for calendars and yearbooks, please remit your balance due today.

## Changes to Prayer Chain

In order to cut back on emails from the Presbytery Office – so that you are not overwhelmed ☺, prayer requests will be sent weekly unless there is an urgent need. If you would like to be part of the Prayer Chain, please [email](#) the office to have your name added to the distribution list.

## Thank You to Helen King

Many of you have notified the presbytery office to say how much you enjoy receiving the bulletin inserts each week for the Yearbook of Prayer. What you may not know is that Helen King of COM was instrumental in gathering the information on each church, pictures, etc so that we could have ongoing prayers for our churches and their many ministries in Albany Presbytery. When you pray for a congregation and minister each week, please remember Helen and if you see her in person, be sure to say: "Thank You!"

## Housing Needed

One of our pastors is in need of housing for himself, his wife and his two small children in the Albany area. His all-electric rental apartment is increasing in price beyond his means, both in utility cost and rental cost. There are no pets and they are non-smokers. If you have housing for rent, please [contact the office](#).

## Greenwich Interfaith Fellowship Van Donation Application

Greenwich Interfaith was successful in a grant request to obtain a handicapped accessible bus and would like to donate their current vehicle: a 2002 Ford passenger van with about 45,000 miles on it. Because our group was the benefactor of great generosity initially, we would like to "pay it forward" and donate the van to a similar group. Preference will be given to services provided in a rural area to youth and/or elderly populations. The van will be released when and if all legal responsibilities of both parties have been addressed. The application is attached to the email with this e-news or [click here](#).

## Plans Unveiled for Interfaith Community at Stony Point Center

A boundary-pushing experiment, designed to revitalize financially troubled Stony Point Center, began at the pcusa-related facility in January. Christian, Muslim and Jewish residents will begin living together in the conference center's new Community of Living Traditions – an interfaith intentional community dedicated to nonviolence and peacemaking. They will work, worship and learn side by side for at least five years.

"We've asked them to do a very different thing," Stony Point co-director Rick Ufford-Chase told a group gathered to celebrate Stony Point's 60th anniversary in October. Ufford-Chase was Moderator the 2004 General Assembly. He and his wife, Kitty, became co-directors of the conference center in August 2008.

They say the Community of Living Traditions will offer workshops, camps and internships focusing on interfaith traditions and nonviolence. The Jewish leader of the community is Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb, a founder of the Shomer Shalom Institute for Jewish Nonviolence. The Muslim leader is Rabia Harris, founder of the Muslim Peace Fellowship, the first Muslim organization specifically devoted to the theory and practice of Islamic nonviolence - *Bethany Furkin, PNS from [Presbyterians Today](#) magazine, December 2009, page 28.*

## Save the Date - Ecumenical Advocacy Days Conference

The 2010 Advocacy Days conference will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Crystal City, VA, just outside of Washington, DC. The theme is, "A Place to Call Home: Immigrants, Refugees, and Displaced Peoples." Visit the [conference website](#) to learn more and to register.

## Calling all photographers



Get out your cameras and your creativity. Enter the *Presbyterians Today* photo contest — submit photos inspired by the theme of the upcoming 2010 General Assembly: “Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38). Winning photos will be published in the June/July issue of *Presbyterians Today*. [Learn more today.](#)

## Discover an old country

[Join a study tour](#) to Armenia with Jinishian Memorial Program, an ecumenical relief and development agency of the PC(USA). Participants on trips in May and September will learn about Armenian history, culture and politics, socio-economic problems in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh and discover ways to become involved in positive social change.



## Celebrate Witness Season



The Witness Season mission education emphasis is a gathering point for information about the PC(USA) in mission. Get minutes for mission, Bible reflections, a guide to mission resources and opportunities to tell your congregation’s mission stories. [Help make every season Witness Season.](#)

## Plan early for Earth Day

Earth Day resources 2010 urges congregations to make wise stewardship decisions regarding their worship space. Plan early — [get resources](#) and work to begin to implement changes now to honor God and the earth, and then to celebrate these steps on the Sunday before or after Earth Day, April 22, 2010.



## Learn from the Spiritual Practices of Others



In some Indian cultures it is customary to receive an elephant blessing. The ritual is tied to cultural tradition more than to a particular religious tradition, but what are the theological questions someone outside the culture might ask before deciding to participate in an elephant blessing?

This is just one of many questions that arise when representatives of the world’s religions gather to discuss faith and spiritual practice. In our own neighborhoods, many of us are also asking questions that arise in multifaith settings. The current issue of *Hungryhearts* deepens our understanding of Christian prayer and opens up an appreciation for what we can learn from the spiritual practices of others in faith traditions different from our own.

[Read the issue and bonus materials now.](#)

## New Mission Program Grants & Reference Materials

The General Assembly Council Office of Mission Program Grants is pleased to be able to share that they and the Mission Development Resources Committee (MDRC) have been able to redesign the Mission Program Grant (MPG) programs. The strategic redesign encourages more local accountability, rewards risk-taking, innovative thinking and enables greater flexibility in the types of ministries that are considered for Mission Program Grants.

Grant funding for new churches is funded in layers. First-Level funding supports the first 18 months of ministry. Second-Level funding is available for the next 30 months to new churches that have made significant process in reaching their goals and objectives. Grants at both levels are for up to \$25,000. If small churches show 15% increase in worship attendance, they can get \$10,000 for worship space and media improvements. For more information locally, [contact Tim Coombs](#). For information, applications and reference materials, contact: Tim McCallister in Louisville: [Tim.McCallister@pcusa.org](mailto:Tim.McCallister@pcusa.org), 888) 728-7228, X5230, [www.pcusa.org/missionprogramgrants](http://www.pcusa.org/missionprogramgrants)

# Haitian Hospital Approved for \$200,000 from PDA

**LOUISVILLE, Ky.** — Hôpital Sainte Croix (Holy Cross Hospital) and an affiliated nursing school in Léogâne, Haiti, have been approved to receive a \$200,000 grant from Louisville-based Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). The grant request was sent to PDA by email on Friday, Jan. 22, and the much-needed funds were approved within two hours. The hospital and nursing school are ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti and have been a major focus of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission in Haiti. Léogâne is near the epicenter of the Jan. 12 earthquake and both facilities sustained serious damage.

“We’ve been told by our Episcopal partners in Haiti that despite the damage, the nursing school began operating as a makeshift hospital within a half-hour of the quake,” said Randy Ackley, PDA coordinator. “In addition, nursing students have established 10 first-aid stations around the main part of Léogâne. The people on the ground are working hard to help one another and this grant is one way we can support their live-saving efforts.”

News media have reported that 80 to 90 percent of the buildings in the main part of Léogâne were destroyed. The PDA grant will support electrical power and distribution needs, water and sanitation facilities, fuel for generators and vehicles, and salaries for local staff involved in the cleanup.

PDA is accepting donations [online](#); by phone at (800) 872-3283; and by mail: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. To date, more than \$1.2 million has been donated to PDA for relief and recovery efforts in Haiti. PDA is a ministry of the [Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\)](#), which comprises 2.2 million members in more than 10,000 congregations, answering Christ’s call to mission and ministry throughout the United States and the world.

## Lenten Reflections on Climate Justice

From *Eco-Journey* (*pcusa*) and the [National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program](#):

This year, the National Council of Churches with help from clergy, activists and friends around the country, will be offering a Lenten Resource exploring Climate Justice and how it relates to each one of us in our daily lives and communities.

Each week, the series will explore a new issue, lifting up stories from around the globe and providing ways that you and your congregation can help address climate change in your own lives.

Here are the topics that will be covered during Lent:

- Climate change and Health
- Climate change and Economic
- Climate change and Development
- Climate change and Disaster/Migration
- Climate change and Food Security
- Holy week reflections on climate justice

If you would like to receive these Lenten reflections and explorations on climate change please email [Tyler Edgar](#) with the subject "Lenten reflections" and your name will be added to the list.

About *Eco-Journey*: *Eco-Journey* is the blog of the [Environmental Ministries Office](#) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It will include a wide array of environmental topics: upcoming environmental events, links to interesting articles and studies, information on environmental advocacy, eco-theology topics, and success stories from churches that are going “green.”



**NATIONAL PREACH-IN  
ON GLOBAL WARMING  
FEBRUARY 13-14, 2010**

[Interfaith Power and Light](#) (IPL) is sponsoring a [National Preach-In on Global Warming](#) on the weekend of February 13-14. The organization, which works to mobilize a religious response to global warming by promoting renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation is asking houses of worship to preach on global warming on the 14th and/or host a program or discussion about global warming.

To register your church for to participate in the Preach-In, or to learn more about the event, [visit IPL's website](#). IPL will offer resources and sample sermons to congregations that have registered for the event.

The Preach-In is being held on Valentine's Day weekend as action against global warming goes hand in hand with loving your neighbor and loving creation.



***The Church and Its Money* - Saturday, February 20 with Rev. Norman Tellier, CFP™**

All those who deal with money in the church, whether it is organizing the annual stewardship campaign, church accounting, filing IRS paperwork, setting up pastor's annual pay package, or whether you are the pastor who needs to be more informed, this seminar is for you!

Cost: \$75

**Registration deadline: February 5**

***Family Systems Theory & Practice for Congregations\****

**Part of the CRTC Distinguished Speaker Series - March 12 & 13 with Rev. Dr. Peter Steinke**

Don't miss this opportunity to hear from Dr. Steinke, leading speaker and author on the power of family systems theory as applied to congregational dynamics. See our website for more information on each days' topics.

Cost: \$95 per day, or \$165 for both days

**Registration deadline: February 25**

***Backpacking Retreat* - Friday through Sunday April 30 to May 2 with Rev. Kent Busman**

Come and spend a few days in nature. Enjoy the beauty of the earth and reflect on the creation! This is a wonderful opportunity for a small group to get away and do some reflection on the care of creation. One of the goals of this course is to help participants see their role within creation and how they can better live as God's images who are created to protect and keep God's world.

Cost: \$225

**Registration Deadline: March 19**

***Social Media for Churches: Web 2.0* - May 15 with Valerie Venezia**

This course will give a live review of current social media resources and answer the big questions you've been wondering for each tool: What is it and how does it work? What does it look like and how do I join? What can it do? How can I use it in my ministry? Time will also be spent reflecting some of the dangers of online social media tools and exploring the tough ethical questions inherent in their usage.

Cost: \$70 by April 15, \$80 thereafter

**Registration Deadline: April 29**

***"Come Alive and Thrive" Conference* with Rev. Dr. Tony Campolo**

Co-sponsored event with the Capital Area Baptist Association and FOCUS Churches  
and part of the CRTC Distinguished Speaker Series

**Session 1: sponsors only    Session 2: May 21, 3 - 5pm    Session 3: May 22, 9am-5pm**

You can anticipate hearing Dr. Campolo's unique perspective on what the church may look like in the coming decade and how it can address issues of the modern world while remaining faithful to core values and beliefs. How can the church remain relevant, energized, pro-active and connected? How can the church thrive and be significant in an ecumenical and diverse world? Dr. Campolo is known for his provocative lecture style. Don't miss the opportunity to hear a truly gifted presenter, educator and author.

Cost: Session 2:\$20, Session 3: \$50

**Registration Deadline: May 5**

**Scholarships are available for all classes**  
**Please [contact CRTC](#) for an application and to register**

# PRESBYTERY OFFICE HOURS FOR FEBRUARY

The Stated Clerk's Office is closed on Friday, February 5th.

The Presbytery Offices are closed on Monday, February 15th for President's Day

**NOTE: DURING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 21ST, WE WILL BE PACKING FOR OUR EXPECTED OFFICE MOVE – COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL AND PHONE MAY BE INTERRUPTED BY SERVICE TECHNICIANS**

~February 2010~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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Black History Month continues to be a time for all Americans to learn about and celebrate the lives and legacy of people of African descent in America. [Click here](#) to learn more about pcusa resources for celebrating all month long!

Start Lent with the Solemn Assembly of Ash Wednesday - The 2008 General Assembly called for us to confess our sin in solemn assembly. Ash Wednesday is a day of solemn assembly built into the church year. On this day we request that the Lord remember our creation and breathe new life once more. [Prepare for your Lenten Solemn Assembly.](#)

	1	2 11am Staff Mtg 1pm COM Exec Mtg 3pm Trustees Mtg 	3 4:30 Hebron Board	4	5	6 PRESBYTERY MEETING BEGINS AT 9:30AM AT AMSTERDAM UNITED CHURCH
7	8 7:30 TV Task Force	9	10 Noon Strategy Mtg 4-8pm COM Mtg	11 4:30 Nominating	12 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR MARCH E-NEWS	13
14 Valentine's Day 	15 President's Day PRESBYTERY OFFICE IS CLOSED  UN Youth Trip This Weekend 	16 10-12 CLP Mtg	17 Ash Wednesday 	18	19	20  Subscribe Now The first episode, "Listen Up!" includes an inspiring story by a longtime mission worker in the Philippines. Listen to this episode, <a href="#">learn more about the podcast and subscribe</a> today
Chinese New Year 	21	22 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR STATED CLERK POSITION	23	24 10am Personnel	25	26
						27