



Welcome!

TO THE E-NEWSLETTER OF

THE PRESBYTERY OF TAMPA BAY

A publication of events in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.,
the Synod of South Atlantic and the Presbytery of Tampa Bay

Vol. 6, No. 3 ~March, 2009

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Senior High Retreat - Sign Up Now With Your Youth Leader!



Theme: Seriously Ridiculous
(if necessary, we can give explanation)

Worship band: In house band of youth leaders, etc.

Cost: \$110 per person, which includes pizza snack on Friday and 3 meals Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. However, for mature juniors or seniors or college aged kids, we need 16/20 work crew @ no cost each. Must be approved prior- Jeff Iosa is in charge of work crew.

Dates: March 20-21-22 **Registration Deadline is March 4.** All forms and payment must be in to Carol Walker at the Presbytery Office.

Where: Southwind in Ocala
Need to bring bedding for sleeping such as sheets pillows and blanket or sleeping bag.

Contact Jeff Iosa with questions - 727-733-2318 or pathcrx@aol.com.

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Resourceful Ideas

Vacation Bible School season is upon us! Join us for a Open House! On Saturday February 21 at the Resource Center we are hosting an Open House from 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. A variety of options will be available for your review and Cokesbury will be here with even more. Even if you have chosen your VBS materials, encourage your committee members to come and see the wonderful resources we have to offer!

We are here for you! Use us! Ask us! Let us come consult with you! Your Resource Center has many wonderful resources - books, video/dvd, curriculum, reference, Bible study and lots more. We also have *people* who can help you as you plan, teach, evaluate and dream. Leslee Kirkconnell is a certified Christian educator and is available to meet with your committee to help in planning, training, dreaming and more. You can also have your committee meet at the Presbytery office and see the many wonderful resources yourself. Both Leslee and Carol are available to help you in your search for resources. Call or email us and let us help you.

New! New! New!

Servant or Sucker - Wise & Compassionate Ways to Help the Poor is a new DVD study from EcuFilm. All of us have been approached by someone asking for money and inevitably we end up feeling

guilty for refusing to help (sometimes even if we do help!). This 5 session study (leader's guide is on the DVD) will help us learn Christ-centered actions that can help us address poverty. To view part of the study, visit:

<http://secure.umcom.org/ecufilm/product/Servant-or-Sucker-WiseCompassionate-Ways-to-Help-Poor,846,1.aspx>

Not Alone is a book of devotions and encouragement for caregivers. Those involved in long-term care for a relative often feel isolated from other people and sometimes from God. The author invites caregivers to understand their experience as a spiritual pilgrimage and to look for God's embrace along the way.

The Thoughtful Christian has just released 20 studies for Thoughtful Parents.

Especially for parents of teens, these studies explore issues of cheating, finding out your child is gay, staying connected in a text-messaging world, helping your child with schoolwork without *doing* the work for them and many more. Explore the options for parents, youth and adults at www.thethoughtfulchristian.com.

Explore these and other resources on the web - www.presbyteryoftampabay.com. Click on Resources, Resource Center and then Webrary. Email or call us and we'll send you your choices!

And remember - you are the **RIESEN** we are here - **Resourceful Ideas Enabling Service Education & Nurture!** Contact Leslee Kirkconnell or Carol Walker at tampaprc@pbtty.com or call 813-868-4800.

Is Your Church At Risk? Do you show videos at your church? Do you ever copy music to use in worship? If you do not have a license you are putting your church in serious danger of copyright violation! Violations of the Federal Copyright Law can cost a church up to \$150,000 per infringement. Getting the proper licenses protects you and is a wise stewardship of the money entrusted you. For videos, visit www.cvli.com and for music see www.ccli.com. Both sites can provide information about the law and what must be covered.



PRESBYTERIANS ORGANIZED IN

Nurture & Teaching POINT is

here to help you! Do you know who your POINT people are? POINT is Presbyterians Organized in Nurture & Teaching. The Presbytery of Tampa Bay has several active POINT people. Leslee Kirkconnell, Resource Center Director & Educator, Carol Walker, Resource Assistant and Hospitality Coordinator both work at the Presbytery Office (813-868-4800, tampaprc@pnty.com or cwalker@pnty.com). Kim Gunthner, Director of Christian Education at Faith Presbyterian Church in Seminole, 727-391-0596 or kim@faithrus.org and Carol White at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Dunedin, cwhite@sapcd.org, 727-734-5493. All have attended recent workshops by the denomination so they know what is brand new (and there are some exciting materials coming soon!). If you need help with curriculum, want consultation on your education program or training, call us - we're here to help you.

APCE Reflections - What a Great Week in San Antonio!

January 28-31 in San Antonio, Texas was the annual Association of Presbyterian Church Educators meeting. APCE is an organization that supports, trains,



encourages, empowers and advocates for those involved in Christian Education in the church. Each year there is an annual conference when educators (ordained, lay, volunteer, retired) all gather for worship, fellowship, learning and fun. This year's event was attended by nearly 1,000 persons from all over the world. We were treated to Eileen Lindner as our Keynote Speaker and the Rev. J. Herbert Nelson was our preacher. Both challenged us to be a "light to the world." In addition to our worship and keynote times, we were able to choose from a variety of workshops in Christian Education, youth ministry, worship, technology in the church and much, much more. Times of fellowship included a regional gathering for us who live in the SOAP (South Atlantic (GA, FL, SC & Puerto Rico) region and a luncheon where we heard updates from the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. APCE gathers several reformed denominations - PC(USA); Reformed Church in America, Presbyterian Church in Canada, Christian Reformed Church, and the Moravian Church. One of the biggest activities is support, training and advocacy for educators to complete the certification process. Certified educators work hard to earn certification and are thus recognized as having a level of knowledge, experience and expertise to bring to their

work in Christian Education. Our Presbytery is blessed with a number of Certified Christian Educators. More information about APCE, the annual conferences and certification is available at www.apcenet.org. Eleven educators from the Presbytery of Tampa Bay made the pilgrimage to APCE this year: Leslee Kirkconnell, Carol Walker, Carol White, Linda Beckham, Sue Moore, Denise Lay, Kim Gunthner, Tarcila Pimintel, Regina Marciano, Mark Orendorf & Gayl Lippert. Some of them shared their thoughts about their time at the conference:

"The annual APCE conference is just a fantastic place to go to reaffirm that the Holy Spirit is on the move within the Church. It is a great place to learn what educators are doing around the country, to see the latest books and curriculum, to hear great speakers and to fellowship with other Christian Educators. A highlight for me this year was the keynote speaker, Eileen Lindner. Eileen's speeches were humorous and insightful."

"APCE, was amazing. Being around Educators from all over USA, was a great time to share experience, struggles and get encouragement from. Don't forget the amazing contacts we always get. The Plenary teachings (with Eileen Lindner) were the highlight for me. I want to get the DVDs and do a special training with my YOUTH Advisory committee using the preaching we had at APCE - Light to the Nations. Both speakers were incredible." (this from a first time attendee!)

"Jan Snell from The House of Hope Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, MN, was an absolute delight. Her enthusiasm is totally catching. She spoke about a Milestones program she uses for children's and families' ministries. Also, Bonny Mulder-Behnia at Rosewood Christian Reformed Church has a

corner on the market of "marketing" to your neighborhood and community in a way that you don't even know you are being "solicited". Presbyterians in Covenant with Children, by Peggy Owens of Mid-Kentucky Presbytery, is soon to become my favorite new reference to our congregation. These were my favorites." (The booklet - Presbyterians in Covenant with Children is available in our Resource Center). "APCE is always a time of spiritual renewal and refreshment for me. Seeing friends from across our country and world is always a delight. The workshops are a great source of ideas, inspiration and learning. This year there were great opportunities to learn about the growing uses of technology in the church and how copyright law affects our activities. The Rev. J. Herbert Nelson was a deep inspiration with his exploration of scripture and how we are to be 'Light to the Nations,' especially in these trying times."

All of those who attended APCE are happy to share more directly with our churches what was learned. If you wish to contact any of these educators, please contact Leslee Kirkconnell or Carol Walker at the Presbytery office - 813-868-4800 or tampaprc@pbtty.com.

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News from Around The Presbytery:



Another Souper Bowl Victory! Nationally \$4,668,693 was raised by over 8300 groups for hunger causes on Sunday February 1. Our Presbytery had good participation with 12 churches who raised well over \$5500 in cash and over 4000 pounds (2 tons!) of canned goods. Souper Bowl makes an immediate impact on the community as *all* of the money raised benefits hunger programs. Nothing is spent on administrative or overhead costs. Food and money donated goes directly to the community agency of choice, so there is little gap between collection and the impact it has to help people. If you participated, but didn't report to the Presbytery, please let us know and we'll update our totals. If you didn't participate this year and want more information on how to help, visit www.souperbowl.org to get involved!

Spring Bash 2009 at Cedarkirk

Bring your 2nd through 5th grade Sunday school classes or other small groups for 24 hours of faith, fellowship and fun at Cedarkirk! You will enjoy a night



in the Rustic Cabins and participate in all sorts of camp favorites: zip-lining, rock climbing, group games, and crafts. Your group will have the unique opportunity to experience God's wondrous creation in worship and at play. There are two weekends to chose from: May 1st-2nd or May 15th-16th. The cost for the Bash is \$60 per person.

Cedarkirk Confirmation Retreat-- You are invited to join other church confirmation classes in this great tradition of combining study with community building at Cedarkirk. This is a time for confirmands to gain a greater understanding of the church within the Presbyterian Church (USA) and build relationships with their peers and adults who are helping to shape their faith. There are two dates to choose from for the Confirmation Retreat: March 6th-8th or March 13th-15th. The cost for this retreat is \$90 per person and includes two nights lodging in the Rustic Cabins and 4 meals.

For information on either Retreat, please contact the Cedarkirk office at 813-685-4224, ext. 1.

Shepherd's Sabbath - April 13-15 at Cedarkirk is a special time of rest and retreat for church professionals. Come enjoy some time away with time for rest, reflection, fellowship in the beauty of God's creation. This is FREE for pastors, educators, church professionals. For more information,(or to reserve a spot) call Cedarkirk at 813-685-4224, ext. 1.

Cedarkirk is hiring! Counselors and more for the summer camp season are now needed at Cedarkirk. Summer experiences at Christian camps can be life changing for campers and staff. If you have college students and young adults who want to share time with children and youth growing in faith while having all the fun summer camp offers, have them contact Cedarkirk at 813-685-4224.

Summer Camp Registration is Open! Some camps fill quickly, so visit www.cedarkirk.com/summer to get the summer schedule.

St. Mark's Presbyterian Church will welcome Joseph Martin in Concert on Sunday March 1 at 3:00 p.m. Joseph Martin is an accomplished pianist who composes choral compositions for both secular and sacred audiences. He is recognized throughout the USA and world for his work. His music is heard in places such as Carnegie Hall, the Lawrence Welk Theater and hundreds of worship services across the USA. You are invited to St. Mark's for an afternoon of wonderful music! Call 727-863-5646 for more information or directions.

Hope Presbyterian Church in Winter Haven will be hosting the College of Wooster's Scot Symphonic Band on Wednesday March 11 at 7:00 p.m. "From Fife and Drums to Bagpipes and Bassoons" is the title of the program. The College of Wooster in Ohio is one of the PCUSA related colleges and boasts an excellent academic program. If you would like more information about the band's upcoming visit, call 863-324-6382.

Important Information for Church Financial People!

[New I-9 Form Implementation Delayed Until April 3, 2009](#)

[Churches, like all other employers nationwide, must ensure that the I-9 Form is completed by all new employees. Changes are pending, so be aware of the needs as soon as they are made known.]

Posted on February 2, 2009 by [Robert Cohen](#)

On Friday, January 30, 2009, USCIS announced that it was delaying the implementation of the new I-9 form and regulations published during the final days

of the Bush Administration. On January 20, President Obama issued an executive order requiring review of all new regulations not yet effective.

Implementation of the new I-9 form, which for the first time requires new employees to distinguish between a representation of U.S. citizenship or non-citizen nationality and also reduces the number of acceptable documents, has been delayed for another 60 days. The new effective date for this form and the new requirements is April 3, 2009. The regulations also prohibited the use of some expired documents to demonstrate citizenship or identity. Existing regulations permit the presentation of expired driver's licenses or passports. The now delayed regulation, however, requires all documents to be valid at the time they are submitted.

Unlike prior changes in the I-9 form, employers cannot use the new form until its effective date, and must use it after the effective date. Prior changes permitted the use of either form until the effective date of the new form, usually announced several months in advance. Thus, employers should continue to use the existing I-9 form until April 3, 2009. It is also possible that the new Administration may change the form or regulations before the new effective date. Please continue to check our blog for future updates.

Endowment Seminars Continue.....

Presented by the Stewardship Committee of the Presbytery of Tampa Bay.

What are endowments? Why should our church set up endowments? What are the pitfalls to avoid? What can we learn from

other churches? Find out the answers to these and other questions in these important and informative 90 minute seminars. Pastors, elders, trustees, members of finance committees and other interested persons should plan to attend one of these events.

So the committee can plan effectively, please call Sue Moore, Stewardship Committee Chairperson, 727-799-1250 a week ahead of the seminar you plan to attend. You are welcome to attend any of the following meetings:

Monday March 2 7:00 p.m. North Lakeland Presbyterian Church

Wednesday March 4 1:00 p.m. Westminster Presbyterian Church, Lakeland

Tuesday March 16 1:00 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, Inverness

Tuesday March 16 6:30 p.m. St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Hudson

Monday March 30 7:00 p.m. Faith Presbyterian Church, Seminole

Tuesday March 31 1:00 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, St. Petersburg

Tuesday April 21 10:00 a.m. St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, New Tampa

Saturday April 25 10:00 a.m. First Presbyterian Church, Brandon

Are you on Facebook? Come join The Presbytery of Tampa Bay group! If you are not on Facebook yet, consider joining us! Once you join Facebook you can link up with friends all around the globe, share pictures, stories, send messages and much more. Our Presbytery group will enable us to reach new people who might not

otherwise stop in a Presbyterian Church. We will advertize our events and encourage others to attend. It's a new way to become and stay connected. It will not replace our current connections, but be an enhancement. To join Facebook, go to www.facebook.com and sign up. It's free and you are in control of your information. Questions? Contact Leslee Kirkconnell at (tampaprc@pbty.com) or Carol Walker (cwalker@pbty.com) or Doug McMahan (douglashmcmahan@gmail.com). All are active users of Facebook and can help you navigate the startup!

Newsletters Please! Presbyterians are connectional people and your presbytery wants to know what great things are happening in your congregation! Please be sure to add us to your newsletter mailing list. Our surface mail address is 4704 Kelly Road, Tampa, FL 33615. Email newsletters to newsletter@pbty.com. We will include events of interest to all, *if we get them well in advance*. The newsletter deadline is the second Monday each month. March 9 will be our next deadline. Articles can be sent in word or email format. Clip art is also welcome, please contact us - we have a large library already and may have what you want!

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Events coming at Eckerd College:

Monday March 30, 7:30 p.m. in Fox Hall - Dr. Gary Paul Nabhan will present "Protecting Sacred Lands & Species: Collaborative Conservations with a Spiritual Basis in the Middle East." Dr. Nabhan is an Ethno-biologist, ecologist, and research scientist at the University of Arizona. He has won the John Burroughs Medal for nature writing and has received a Pew Fellowship and the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship.

Save The Dates!

Educators! Come for fellowship and sharing, Thursday March 26, 10:30 a.m. We'll share information and experiences from APCE and make plans for a regular educator fellowship time. Bring your lunch, drinks and dessert provided!

The spring Stated Meeting of Presbytery will be Thursday May 28 at First Presbyterian Church in Lakeland.

Alternative Christmas Market will be Saturday November 14 at Cedarkirk. SERV, Equal Exchange, Fair Trade Olive Oil, gift making and more! Details to come, but save the date now!

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Mission News and Opportunities

Container for Honduras! The International Mission Partnership Committee is planning to send a container to the Presbytery of Honduras in April. This is an easy way to help make a difference for our brothers and sisters working to improve life for people in Honduras. Items for the container must be received by April 15 and are to be delivered to Plantain Products Co., 5821 E. Casueway Blvd, Tampa, FL (between Hwy 41 and US 301 in the Clair Mel area of East Tampa) by April 15. Donations are accepted between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. For a pdf list of needed items, click [here](#).

The Society of St. Andrew sponsors **Harvest of Hope Mission Work camps** for Junior & Senior High, Intergenerational and College/Young Adults. They also host Alternative Spring Break in Jacksonville for individuals or groups. Call 1-800-333-4597 or email sosahoh@endhunger.org for more information on these opportunities.

Youth Mission Trips are great ways to build faith, fellowship and help others. Check out New Wilmington Mission Conference at www.nwmcmission.org. The New Wilmington Mission Conference challenges youth with the Presbyterian tradition in Christ's church. NWMC uses its Presbyterian mission heritage to encourage a deep spiritual life of fellowship with God by promoting service and witness for Jesus Christ.

Did you know?

Sixteen Presbytery of Tampa Bay churches support a total of nineteen world Missionaries through the PCUSA by contributing \$56,878.59. Thanks to the following churches:

Faith Presbyterian Church in Seminole who supports [Michael and Rachel Weller](#) who provide evangelism and leadership training in Ethiopia

First Presbyterian Church, St. Petersburg who supports [Scott and Melanie Smith](#) who work in community development and team ministry in India

First Presbyterian Church of Winter Haven who supports **James and Carol Brees** who work at the Memorial Christian Hospital in Pakistan where Carol is an obstetrician; [Dr. Sue Makin](#) who serves as an obstetrician in Malawi; [Dennis and Maribel Smith](#) who serve in community and team ministry in Guatemala; and [John McCall](#) who is a professor at Taiwan Theological Seminary in Taiwan

Forest Hills in Tampa and Highland, Largo supports [general PCUSA GA mission](#)

Grace, Spring Hill who supports [Leslie and Cynthia Morgan](#) serving as staff physicians

at the Christian Mission Hospital in Bangladesh and **Virginia Gartrell** serving as a social worker for disadvantaged children with the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil

North Lakeland who supports **Farris and Thelma Goodrum** who serve as a professor at the Fortaleza Theological Seminary in Brazil

Northwood in Clearwater, who supports **Stephen and Ruth Cho** who work with the Reformed Church in Hungary; **John and Paula Ewers** who serve with the Presbytery of Colombia accompanying pastors, human rights workers and displaced persons at risk of paramilitary violence; **Greg and Christine Callison** who minister among the Kurdish people in Berlin; **Don and Martha Wehmeyer** who serve in the Yucatan, with Don as director of the School of Continuing Education at San Pablo Theological seminary.

Pasadena Presbyterian Church who supports **Gordon and Dorothy Gartrell** who serve as church planters with the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil.

Presbyterian Church in the Highlands, Lakeland who support **Leith and Carol Fujii** who serve through the Bangkok Institute of Theology in Bangkok Thailand.

St. Andrew, Sun City Center who supports **Ruth Farrell** who is a micro enterprise specialist with Joining Hands against Hunger, **Dorothy Hanson** who is the East Africa AIDS consultant, **Sue Kinsler** who works in relief aid to North Korea and is an advisor to Koinonia, a sheltered workshop; and **Leslie and Cynthia Morgan** who are staff physicians at Christian Mission Hospital in Bangladesh.

St. Andrews, Dunedin who supports **Dr. Sue Makin** serving as an obstetrician in Malawi.

Trinity Clearwater, who supports **Andres and Gloria Garcia** through the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Equatorial Guinea

Village, Tampa who supports **John McCall**, who serves as professor at Taiwan Theological Seminary in Taiwan.

Westminster in Lakeland who supports **Michael and Rachel Weller** in Ethiopia doing evangelism and leadership training.

Westminster in St. Petersburg who supports **Jeffrey and Christi Boyd** in Cameroon working as regional liaison for Central African and **Joining Hands against Hunger**.

Explore more directly what these missionaries are doing. Click on highlighted names and you will be taken to their website. Read recent newsletters and even email them! Let's help them to know we are praying for them and the work they do for Jesus Christ around the world.

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...Around the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.....

Enough for All Creation - Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice. March 13-16 in Washington D. C. This Seventh Annual event will explore ways to bring about a world with enough for all creation. Information and registration is available at www.advocacydays.org.

If you have ever wondered how your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing are spent.....
www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09082

Self-Development of People announces grant recipients. More than \$300,000 awarded to fund 12 self-help projects in the U.S.

by Margaret Mwale - Special to Presbyterian News Service

SAN DIEGO - The Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP) has approved grants totaling \$301,710 to 12 self-help projects in the United States. The money is from the One Great Hour of Sharing [<http://www.pcusa.org/oghs>] (OGHS) offering.

Self-Development of People receives 32 percent of undesignated OGHS gifts.

The grants were approved at a meeting of SDOP's national committee on Jan. 15-17.

For more information about Self-Development of People, contact the National SDOP Office at:

Self-Development of People
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202-1396
Toll Free Telephone: English
(888) 728-7228 X5791/5792
Spanish (888) 728-7228 X5790
Fax: (502) 569-8963

January 2009 SDOP grant recipients:

ShareCare Bank, Hattiesburg, MS: \$18,000 to assist this grass roots co-op. Members have time dollar accounts and earn or spend those time dollars for/on services provided to or by other members of the group.

Concerned Parents of Vidalia, Vidalia, GA: \$36,960 to enable a group of concerned parents who have come together to enhance their parenting skills and serve as a support

group for one another to support the positive growth and development of their children.

Kentucky Small Farms Project, Inc., Beattyville, KY: \$40,000 to purchase a refrigerated truck to be able to expand food distribution capacity. Group members in this rural Appalachia area need the refrigerated truck because they get refrigerated goods for distribution but they need this truck to be eligible to receive them.

Teach our Children, New Haven, CT: \$20,000 to assist a group of 18 Spanish-speaking parents develop leadership and advocacy skills and use those skills to bring about needed change in the New Haven public schools.

Youth Arts Group, Middletown, NY: \$26,750 to expand the Mentorship Program and develop a Leadership Academy for its participants to learn strategies and techniques that will bring about social change and justice in their communities. Workshops to be offered include using art for social change, writing and public speaking.

The Philadelphia Security Officer Union, Philadelphia, PA: \$20,000 to assist a group of security guards employed at one company obtain fair compensation, paid sick leave and adequate health and dental benefits.

Organizing Asian Communities, Bronx, NY: \$30,000 to provide leadership training to youth who are members so the youth can advocate for the Asian community with healthcare providers.

VAMOS UNIDOS, New York, NY: \$25,000 to empower low-income Latino immigrant street vendors organize for social justice and economic self-sufficiency. Becoming organized will help group

members to work collectively to obtain business licenses and small business training.

Sisters Overcoming Abusive Relationships, Warwick, RI: \$20,000 to assist 60 survivors of domestic violence with an advocacy project that empowers them to make positive improvements to court systems that deal with victims of domestic violence.

Coalition of Organized Residents of East Liberty, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA: \$20,000 to enable the low-income residents belonging to the Coalition of Organized Residents of East Liberty, Inc. to preserve the last deep-subsidy affordable housing for themselves and their families. Coalition members are fighting eviction from their homes and razing of their housing project.

Support for Harbor Area Women's Lives Alumnae Association, San Pedro, CA: \$25,000 to enable graduates from drug and alcohol programs equip themselves for the future through education and low rent housing options through this revolving micro-funding program.

Wee Care Center Inc., Lake City, CO: \$20,000 to assist this community-based parent operated childcare center with its child care needs. Wee Care provides state licensed and certified childcare, with curriculum and operating procedures agreed upon by the local parents and residents using the center.

Margaret Mwale is associate for community relations for the National Self-Development of People program
[<http://www.pcusa.org/sdop>].

One Great Hour of Sharing season is almost here! Our gifts do make a difference. This year marks 60 years of generosity! If

you have not received your shipment of materials or need additional items, contact Alan Krome at 1-888-728-7228 ext 5168 at the PCUSA headquarters.

Join us at the Big Tent! June 11-13, 2009
•Atlanta, Georgia

Big Tent is a first-of-its-kind event scheduled for June 11-13, 2009, in Atlanta under the theme, " ... and the word became flesh."

There will be some common meals and worship services, a shared exhibit hall, some common workshop sessions and a Saturday evening celebration event.

[Ten Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\) ministries and groups will hold their conferences in conjunction with the Big Tent event:](#) the Healthy Ministry Conference, the Presbyterian Communicators' Network Conference, the National Multicultural Church Conference, the Stewardship and Investment Conference, the Evangelism and Church Growth Conference, the National Elders Conference, the Peacemaking Conference, the PHEWA Social Justice Biennial Conference, the Racial Ethnic Convocation and the New Immigrants Ministries Convocation.

Registration is open -visit www.pcusa.org/bigtent. 1-888-728-7228 x 2417.



Where's John Calvin? We will observe the 500th anniversary of his birth this year with several events! A special time is planned for our fall Presbytery meeting that will be at First Presbyterian Church in

Inverness October 1. In celebration of Calvin's birthday, Witherspoon Press and the Theology Worship and Education ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) produced an awesome DVD on the life and legacy of John Calvin.

<http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/calvin.htm>

Consider joining the Celebration - with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Geneva, Switzerland May 29-June 3, 2009. Enjoy fellowship with our Reformed partners, hear how Calvin's legacy is still relevant and important and celebrate in the birthplace of Calvinism. Contact Kathy Reeves at katharine.reeves@pcusa.org or 1-888-728-7228 ext. 5402.

Calvin Now! is a colloquium sponsored by Columbia Theological Seminary April 20-22. This CTS event is centered around alumni/ae reunions, but all are welcome. Calvin Now! offers opportunities to consider Calvin as a resource fresh and vital for our practices of Christian faith today. For registration information contact Barbara Poe at poeb@ctsnet.edu or 404-687-4566.

Presbyterian Writer's Conference

Dates: Thursday-Friday, April 23-24, 2009
Registration begins at 8 a.m. on Thursday.
Conference ends at 5 p.m. on Friday.

Location: Harrington Center at Columbia Seminary ~ Decatur, Georgia. For directions to Columbia Seminary:
<http://www.ctsnet.edu/Directions.aspx>

For a map of Columbia Seminary:
http://www.ctsnet.edu/Files/Common/DirectionsMaps_campusMap.pdf

What to Expect: Keynote presentations, panel discussions, a variety of workshops led by professionals in the industry, opportunities for one-on-one consultations, inspiration, encouragement, and fellowship.

Keynote Presentations:

Writing from the Real You

Finding Wholeness in a Broken World

Workshop Topics: (Please note that some topics might change prior to the conference. We will run two workshops at a time. Conferees will have the opportunity to attend 9 sessions.)

How to Write an Article
Publicity & Marketing #1 and #2
Writing Personal Experience Articles
Finding Your Niche
From Pulpit to Print
Curriculum
How to Get Started as a Writer
Writing the Novel
Writing for Presbyterian Magazines
Writing Theological Books
Devotional Articles
Interviews/Profiles
Need an Agent?
Marketing Online
ABA or CBA?
Writing Books for Presbyterian Publishing House
Book Proposals
Panel Discussions:
Writing for the Presbyterian Church
Part-Time vs. Full-Time Writing

To Register: Contact Columbia Seminary to register:
<http://www.ctsnet.edu/LL/Events.aspx>
Scroll down to online at that location, or call 404-687-4587. **Registration Deadline:** April 9, 2009.

Questions: Contact Rev. Stephen McCutchan, Conference Liaison, at steve@smccutchan.com, or Twila Belk, Conference Director, at twilabelk@mchsi.com.

Presbyterian Women Churchwide Gathering will be July 11-15 in Louisville, Kentucky. The Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women gives you the opportunity to

- * nurture your faith in community with women from around the world;
- * learn about mission opportunities and justice and peace issues;
- * develop leadership skills;
- * participate in workshops;
- * hear from Bible study leaders and plenary speakers;
- * meet new friends, including Global Partners from around the world, and women from your area at the synod lunches;
- * and much more!

Go to the Great Room to see exhibits about justice and peace issues and mission opportunities. Shop for fair trade gifts in the Global Marketplace. Visit the Horizons space to learn more about your favorite magazine and Bible study. Buy PW and PC(USA) resources. Enjoy crafts and snacks. The Great Room will be a terrific place to wonder and wander!

Workshops in English, Spanish and Korean as well as tours will address mission, leadership, personal spiritual growth and much more. Learn from plenary speakers and Bible study leaders who will explore the theme, "God Will Work Wonders Among You," and Joshua 3:5.

More than 3,000 women (and children, youth and a few men!) will participate in the Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian

Women, which is being held in partnership with the National Presbyterian Association of Clergywomen. On-line registration is open - visit www.pcusa.org/pw.

Growing Christ's Church Deep and Wide

One of the greatest issues of concern in the Presbyterian Church is the decline of membership. Last year in 2007, we lost 57,572 active members. This is the largest numerical decline we have ever seen in recent history and every year the numbers get worse.

People often ask the Director for Evangelism and Church Growth what our plans are to reverse the decline. The fact of the matter is that the growth of the church is not dependant on any kind of strategic growth plan that comes from the national offices. Granted, our ministry area has influence on the outcome, but true growth to our denomination will only occur *when local churches take the initiative* to reverse the decline.

This past summer, the 218th General Assembly passed a resolution called "Grow Christ's Church Deep and Wide." This



initiative encourages our church to grow in evangelism, discipleship, servanthood and diversity.

What gives us hope about this resolution is that it is a grass roots initiative where churches embrace the challenge to grow in the above areas. We hope this initiative sweeps across the nation where churches inspire other churches to the challenge of

"Growing Deep and Wide." We are encouraging all participants to tell us their story of "Deep and Wide" through articles, pictures, and videos and to engage in dialogue with others who are doing the same. Hopefully this will encourage our church to reverse our declining numbers.

Jesus said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a bushel basket, or under a bed, and not on a lampstand? For there is nothing hidden, except to be disclosed; nor is anything secret, except to come to light. Let anyone with ears to hear listen!" - Mark 4: 21-23

Resources will be available from Louisville and from your Resource Center to help you as you seek to fulfill the Great Commission in Matthew 28. Visit www.deepandwide.net for stories, inspiration, blogs and more.

(This sounds similar to our REACH Initiative, and it is! **All** our churches should be considering how to grow deeper and wider, whether through participating in REACH or joining this grass-roots effort)

All of us need time away to relax, refresh, learn, worship and recreate. Here are opportunities available for Clergy, educators and more:

National Pastors Sabbath will be April 17-20 at Sawgrass Resort, Ponte Vedra, FL. www.pcusa.org/pastorsabbath. Walter Bruggeman is the keynote, and will be joined by J. Herbert Nelson & Frances Taylor Gench.

Shepherd's Sabbath, sponsored by Cedarkirk is coming in April. See the related article in Around the Presbytery.

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The Nominating Committee is always looking for folks to fill positions on our committees. If you're interested in serving on any of the above committees, please contact Mary McKey, Associate Executive for Nurture, at 813-868-4800 or nominate@pbty.com

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