

The News of San Fernando Presbytery

Every Church a Mission Center December 2008

North's Notes



Thoughts from Executive Presbyter Jerry North

LEADERSHIP OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ADDRESSES NATIONAL ECONOMIC CRISIS

As the US faces its worst economic crisis in decades, the PCUSA and its representatives have stepped forward to advocate solutions that will help all Americans, not just those on Wall Street. Citing scripture as a basis for its actions, the church is asking that Congress pass legislation which will benefit average citizens in danger of losing their jobs or their homes.

Sara Pottschmidt Lisherness of the General Assembly Council has sent a letter to Congress that begins: "As the nation struggles with the current financial crisis, I write to urge you to find a solution that will move our economy closer to a vision of a just economy, where human worth and the common good are valued above economic self-interest, personal wealth and greed." Lisherness goes on to ask that Congress refrain from giving a blank check to Wall Street, but rather that they insist on transparency and accountability in order to rebuild trust and restore financial security.

In order to protect the interests of all Americans, the letter suggests that the following provisions be included in upcoming legislation:

- Protection for homeowners in danger of foreclosure
- Ensure more equitable and just financial practices in our market.
- Public oversight to ensure accountability

- Safeguards on public funds to ensure that future generations will not bear this debt burden
- Eviction protection for renters who are living in properties facing foreclosure
- Limitations on executive compensation
- Aid for low-income families

Another letter signed by Bruce Reyes-Chow, 218th GA Moderator, Linda Valentine, GAC Executive Director, and Gradye Parsons, OGA Stated Clerk, acknowledges the uncertainty and anxiety facing the nations. They stress unity in their message, saying: "As followers of Jesus Christ, let us join in a call to our own people and to our fearful nation to hear God's word that "perfect love casts out fear." They go on to write: "As Reformed Christians, we are neither individuals nor congregations alone in times of crisis. With this social vision it will still be up to our communities – with our strong participation – to deal with these problems for the long term." They also suggest the following resources, available on the PCUSA web site, for members looking for guidance in dealing with the crisis:

- From Homelessness to Hope, adopted by the 218th GA
- The Just Neighbors "Tool Kit"
- A Social Creed for the 21st Century

Christmas Time! Another year of cherished memories, difficult challenges and a real change in how we conduct our lives with the economy. As we look over this year, let us recall the blessings that have come our way by God's grace and love. We could all share our stories about what God has meant to us, our families, friends, and church related involvements. This month is an extension of the Thanksgiving theme of November, as it needs to be, as well of being thankful all year long.

And we look ahead as we anticipate and celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Christ child. The coming into the world in human form so that we might be able to see and to some degree understand the love of God for each of us. I trust that all of us will find the time to give thanks to God for all that God has meant and does mean in our lives, and that we will share that wonderful gift with those we come in contact with during this Advent Season. The giving of oneself in love might just be the greatest gift those close to us could receive this year. And for those we don't know, but with whom we have contact, a smile and kind word might be the greatest gift they receive this Christmas time.

Blessings,
Jerry North
Executive Presbyter

WESTMINSTER, WESTLAKE CELEBRATES 40 YEARS



Westminster Presbyterian Church in Westlake Village spent the weekend of November 15 and 16 celebrating 40 years of God's faithfulness. Saturday evening was a "blast from the past" with a groovy fun night, including a show of 1960's cars, music and dancing with a '60's band (otherwise known as our praise team, headed up by Beau Wammack), decorations, food, and lots of people in their '60's costumes. Sunday morning's worship services included special music by our chancel and youth choirs, greetings from mission partners around the world, and a visit from founding pastor Rev. Dr. Robert Bos (now retired) and his wife Carole. Congregational Life Director Julie Sexton and volunteer Cindy Anderson organized this amazing weekend, which will be long remembered by all. WPC is grateful for the past 40 years and looking forward to continuing the work of God's kingdom, with his gracious help, for the next 40!



TRINITY ARMENIAN GATHERS FOR HARVEST FESTIVAL

Every year on October 31, it is a time filled with excitement and commitment as we at Holy Trinity Armenian Church prepare for our annual Harvest Festival. The church's Youth and College group prepare this event to provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for all families to enjoy. We plan games, give candy, prepare food, give candy, arrange carnival booth games including bobbing for apples, coin toss, basketball throw, balloon pop, organize costume contests, give candy and do face painting (did we mention the candy?!).



Over 150 people from the North Hollywood community joined in on the fun. Each participant at the Harvest Festival is honored to share the Love of our Lord Jesus Christ with everyone. This is one of our activities that we utilize to reach out to the unchurched in our community and have the church families to spend a fun time together.

MUSIC AND WORSHIP WORKSHOP

Saturday January 17, 2008

9:00am - 4:00pm

**Kirk O'The Valley Presbyterian Church
19620 Vanowen Street, Reseda 91335, CA**

Cost: \$10 includes lunch and resources
Registration: Contact Kirk office at 818-345-2535 or
kirkval@aol.com

Workshop Leader: Rev Dr. Paul Detterman, church musician,
sought-after conference speaker and former
Associate with the Office of Theology and
Worship of the PCUSA. He is presently
serving as the Executive Director of Presby-
terians For Renewal.

Dr. Detterman stresses the "ministry" of music which moves be-
yond texts and tunes, styles and stigmas to proclaim Jesus Christ
in and through our worship and to proclaim Jesus Christ to a con-
fused and broken world. The workshop will address the following:

- ▶ What anyone leading music and worship ministry must con-
sider, communicate and confirm repeatedly.
- ▶ Why and how to train worship leaders as we rehearse choirs,
teams and congregations.
- ▶ Why we should require "right" praise and what will it look like
when we get it?
- ▶ How music is the delivery system for mission and the Good
News.

This program is made possible through a Worship Renewal Grant
from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Grand Rapids,
Michigan, with funds provided by Lilly Endowment Inc.

Pastors, music directors, worship committees, choirs and worship
teams are invited.

THE VITAL LINK: CHURCHES AND SEMINARIES

The Carnegie Foundation did a massive study of theological education and came to some very interesting conclusions. The study affirmed a "vital link between congregations and seminaries which encourages the support of theological education for the good of the church....Vital churches thrive only under strong and sensitive pastoral leadership.... Theological schools and their sponsoring churches should cooperate more closely in evaluating and strengthening theological education."

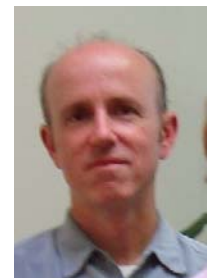
The study suggested that seminaries and churches are inextricably bound together to raise up exemplary pastors:

- The local church forms and empowers men and women to receive God's call.
- The seminary educates and equips them for strong and vital ministry.
- These new leaders go back into local churches to help form the next generation of believers, many of whom receive God's call to a passionate ministry.

Our ten denominational seminaries across the nation receive financial support from our denomination only through contributions to the Theological Education Fund from individual churches like yours. These funds are used for student financial aid and for general support of seminary budgets.

Each church in our Presbytery is asked to prayerfully consider including the Theological Education Fund in your annual budget planning to ensure that your church is a "vital link" to the future leadership of our denomination's ministry.

WISHING YOU A JOYOUS CHRISTMAS!



THE PRESBYTERY STAFF

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2008 CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

A Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need.

Fifty percent of the receipts to the Christmas Joy Offering are distributed to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs that provide support to retired and active church workers and their spouses and families. The other fifty percent supports Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education through the General Assembly Council.

The Christmas Joy Offering is usually received the Sunday before Christmas. Resources are mailed to each congregation in early September. Free promotional materials include a poster, bulletin covers, bulletin inserts, minutes for mission, place mats, coin boxes, worship resources and offering envelopes. All resources are available through Presbyterian Distribution Service by calling 800 524-2612, or you can order on-line at Presbyterian Marketplace. There is also a PowerPoint presentation that can be downloaded by going to:

<http://www.pcusa.org/cjoffering/powerpoint.htm>

This contains different resources that may be useful, including: background visuals, music and hymn lyrics. There is also a two-minute presentation that can serve as a minute for mission.

The Presbytery of San Fernando News is published monthly by the Communication & Church Support Committee of the Presbytery. Contributions are welcomed. Deadline for each issue is the 25th of the preceding month.

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