

The News of San Fernando Presbytery

Every Church a Mission Center

June 2009

North's Notes

Thoughts from Executive
Presbyter Jerry North



REVISED BUDGET APPROVED AT MAY PRESBYTERY MEETING

The Presbytery may have set a record for its shortest stated meeting ever when it met on Tuesday, May 26 at Community Presbyterian Church in Littlerock. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm and business was finished around 4:30 pm.

The only major item on the agenda was approval of a revised budget for 2009. Elder Bert Schmid spoke to the assembly about the financial realities that the Presbytery faces, and the need to drastically reduce spending. After hearing Bert's presentation, commissioners voted to accept the new budget which will slash funds for the Committee on Ministry, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and Christian Formation. Support for Synod and General



Community Presbyterian Church, Littlerock

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On June 1, 2009, a special group met at the presbytery office for the last time. For some twenty years this group of volunteers have met the first Monday of each month to fold and seal the presbytery newsletter. The next edition of our newsletter will be sent by e-mail to all of the people on our list, with a few being sent by mail.

It is with a great deal of thankfulness to God and to the many persons who have served as our folders for these many years. Volunteers came from as close to the office as Panorama Presbyterian Church and as far away as the Acton Community Presbyterian Church, and from many congregations in between these two churches.

Technology changes how we do tasks and so we say a fond "Thank You" to the many persons who have served so faithfully all these years. Also, due to the internet, we no longer have volunteers in the office on a regular basis. We offer thanks to the many women who worked the phones and copy machine for so many years. As all of us know so well, the volunteers in our churches and presbyteries are invaluable in continuing the work of God in each locale. It is a special gift to serve as a volunteer, and we acknowledge that gifting as we change to internet service.

Summer is all but upon us, and I pray that you will find time for relaxation and rest during these next three months. Resting is just as important as working, and may we do it well this summer.

Blessings,
Jerry North

SAY GOODBYE TO THE PRINT EDITION OF THIS NEWSLETTER....

AND HELLO TO THE PSF NEWS ON-LINE!

STARTING IN JULY, YOU WILL NO LONGER RECEIVE THE NEWS BY MAIL. IT WILL ONLY BE AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY.

Budget cuts have made it necessary to discontinue sending print copies of The News to church members. We have asked the churches to send us email addresses for all their elders and deacons so that we can distribute the newsletter electronically. By making this change, the Presbytery Office will save hundreds of dollars every month. Not only that, but members will now be able to view the newsletter in full color.

If you have an email address and are not currently serving as an elder or deacon in your church, or on a Presbytery committee, please send an "add me to the list" email to Pat Johanson, pjohanson@sfpresby.org. (A note to Earthlink users: Please add johanson.pat@gmail.com to your list of safe senders.) We appreciate your cooperation in our efforts to be good stewards of the Presbytery's resources.

We will have available each month a limited number of hard copies for those without internet access. If you fall into this category and wish to receive one, please call Casey Maddren at 818-891-4781.

PRESBYTERY MEETING

(continued from page 1)

Assembly were cut as well. Also the Presbytery newsletter will no longer be available as a print edition as it makes the transition to an electronic format. (See page 1 for more information.)

The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Committee introduced Sarah Henken, who spoke about her recent trip to Colombia. Sarah is a candidate under care of SF Presbytery, and she spoke about her work with the Colombia Accompaniment Program. The program arose from a request by our partner denomination, the Presbyterian Church of Colombia, as it attempts to deal with the country's ongoing internal conflicts. The presence of international accompaniers provides a measure of safety for those threatened by violence, as well as expressing support for the Colombian church.

Sarah spoke of the millions of people who have been displaced by the violence in Colombia and of the challenges they face in having access to basic necessities. In addition to visiting refugee communities that are receiving assistance from the Colombian church, she also attended meetings and joined various congregations for worship and Bible study.

During worship Rev. KC Wahe, CPCL Pastor, gave a sermon entitled "Love from the Center" in which he spoke of the need to serve others unselfishly. After the service attendees made their way to the fellowship hall where CPCL women had prepared a delicious buffet.



Children joining in a song of praise at the Presbyterian church in Currulao, Colombia

CRISIS IN PAKISTAN THREATENS HEALTH, SAFETY, RIGHTS

Fighting between the Pakistan Army and Taliban in the northwest of Pakistan has intensified in recent days in an area where as many as 500,000 civilians have been displaced since October, 2008. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's partner Church World Service (CWS) is warning of a worsening humanitarian disaster in northern Pakistan and is calling on the United Nations and governments to increase their assistance to the affected region. Marvin Parvez, Director of the CWS Pakistan/Afghanistan Program, warned that the movement of residents of Pakistan's Swat Valley could quickly become of the one of the world's worst displacement crises and that the international community needs to both respond immediately to humanitarian needs in the affected area.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is responding to the humanitarian crisis that has escalated in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan in cooperation with our long-term ecumenical partner CWS and as a member of the Action by Churches Together (ACT) international network. One Great Hour of Sharing and designated funds will help provide basic humanitarian necessities to families living in IDP camps. There have been 250 food packages and 190 shelter kits distributed to families, with a total of 400 food packages and shelter kits planned for distribution in the coming days. PDA is appealing for funds to buy more family-sized tents and monthly food packages and to provide health and hygiene facilities

Churches have joined human rights groups in expressing anxiety over Pakistan's federal government agreeing to enforce Islamic law in the troubled Malakand Division of the country in order to broker a truce with pro-Taliban groups there. In the region that includes the Swat Valley the Pakistan government agreed on Feb. 17 to introduce the Islamic legal system called Sharia, thereby making constitutional and the juridical law redundant. "We are very much concerned about these developments," Victor Azariah, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Pakistan, told Ecumenical News International. Azariah pointed out that supremacy of the Sharia system would impair "our religious freedom in the area." While there are few Christians in the region covered by the government deal with the Islamic groups, Azariah pointed out that the North West Frontier Province, under which the area falls, has hundreds of thousands Christians who now feel threatened by the developments. Due to ongoing attacks and threats against Christians by Islamic militant groups over the years, most of about 1,000 Christians in the Malakand Division have left the area.

Caring in a Caring Community

Doing the Right Thing in Bad Times

A Roundtable Seminar for Rabbis, Pastors, Students,
Congregational and Community Leaders

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

11:30 am – 2:00 pm

The Jewish Federation
6505 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles

Suggested lunch donation: \$15

***Due to space and security issues an RSVP is essential.
Contact Kim at 323 761-8600***

Featured Speakers:

Rabbi Elliott Dorff, PhD
Rector, Distinguished Professor in Philosophy
American Jewish University

Dr. Kurt Fredrickson
Director, DMin Program;
Asst. Professor of Pastoral Ministry
Fuller School of Theology

**This event is jointly sponsored by the Board of Rabbis of Southern
California and Fuller Theological Seminary.**

ANGEL INTERFAITH NETWORK HONORS PANORAMA PRESBYTERIAN

Panorama Presbyterian Church has been working in partnership with Angel Interfaith Network for over ten years. This year AIN chose to honor the church for its steadfast support. What follows is an excerpt from their press release.

Our mission partnership with Panorama Presbyterian Church in Panorama City goes back to at least 1995 when the first donation of hospital bedside bags and devotional items was given to "Project Angel." "These are just the beginning!" wrote Grace Clancey in a prophetic note accompanying the donations. Evelyn Dreis and Ismay Bullock were other early supporters from that era. AIN Care Coordinator Ann Mills recalls that the church responded enthusiastically to an appeal for gifts for pediatric oncology patients at the holidays soon after that. Rev. Gary Dart serves as pastor to the Panorama City flock and dons a tuxedo to wait tables for the annual Tea and Fashion Show.

This year's individual Volunteer of the Year is a former Moderator of the Presbyterian Women at Panorama Presbyterian. We have long recognized the energy, creativity, leadership and readiness to respond to emergency requests that Kay McNeil has demonstrated. She made a hit at last year's Tea and Fashion show, modeling an outfit in tune with "hard times." No one has ever worn garbage bags with more style and grace! Congratulations to Kay, to PW Moderator Marion Arciaga and all the women of Panorama Presbyterian who made the Tea and Fashion Show last July such a classy event.

THE ACADEMY FOR MISSIONAL PREACHING

**A UNIQUE AND FREE OPPORTUNITY
FOR HOMILETIC CONTINUING EDUCATION**

**You could be one of 25 chosen to study with
homileticians and missional experts in a two-
year, all expenses paid academy that will:**

- Give you a better understanding of what it means to be missional
- Explore what it means to be missional in your context
- Help proclaim God's good news through the Bible
- Open your preaching up to the Spirit's transformation of your church
- Offer feedback designed to improve your preaching
- Provide time and space for renewal in worship, personal contemplation and Christian fellowship

**This is a two-year commitment for five days
each year. We will meet in the summer of
2009, submit sermons to one another for com-
ment over the internet in the intervening year,
and then reconvene in the summer of 2010.**

**The Southwest Academy session will be held at
the Serra Retreat Center in Malibu from July 19
to July 24.**

For more information, go to:

[http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/
events/academy.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/events/academy.htm)

IN MEMORIAM

Darby Dreis, a longtime member of Panorama Presbyterian Church and a longtime newsletter volunteer, died May 27. We will all miss Darby's faithful service and his wicked sense of humor. He is survived by his wife, Evy, a former Presbytery Moderator, four daughters, and several grandchildren.

The Presbytery of San Fernando
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
14225 Roscoe Blvd.
Panorama City, CA 91402

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IN GOOD COMPANY: BECOMING FAITHFUL READERS AND DOERS OF SCRIPTURE

**Presbytery Office, 14225 Roscoe Blvd., Panorama City
June 18, 2009, 11:30 am to 2:00 pm**

The goal for missional churches is not only to read, hear, and study the Bible, but to become a people whose identity, common life, and shared ministry is shaped by the biblical witness to God's "wonderful deeds" (1 Peter 2:9).

This workshop explores essential foundations for the communal practice of Bible study in the congregation. You will be invited to reflect on and share the experience of your church, and consider how to develop and deepen this practice for the missional renewal of your congregation. Exploration will center around four themes: ► God's drama of salvation – keeping the landmark events in sight. ► Making sense of our lives within the Bible's story. ► Communal hearing and reading – a diverse people discerning one mind together. A community that will startle the world!

Lunch will be served. Please RSVP to: cmaddren@sfpresby.org

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. Dr. Gerald O North, Executive Presbyter; Casey Maddren, Editor. Submissions to: cmaddren@sfpresby.com