



Together In Ministry

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina

March 2013



From our General Presbyter

At the last presbytery meeting, I noted that we had voted to ordain a person to be a "Media Evangelist." That made me wonder, how would we do church differently if all elders, ruling and teaching, were ordained as Evangelists? If you were ordained as a Ruling Evangelist or Teaching Evangelist, how would the discussions at the Session be different? How would our job descriptions be changed?

If I were the General Evangelist and came to meet with the Session or congregation, what might I ask? What would you want to tell me? I asked at the last Presbytery meeting that your Session discuss what difference it would make if they considered their ordination was to be an "Evangelist." How would this affect your discussions and priorities? I have not heard back from anyone.

What if instead of members, you were "Apostles?" Apostle means "to send." In John, the Risen Lord tells his disciples, "As the Father sent me, so I send you." Members often expect the organization should serve them. But each one of us is being sent to serve God. If your title was "Apostle" or "Evangelist," how would you view your relationship with God and the church differently? Wonder if God would ask us, "How are you doing? How are you being sent and how is that working out?"

In some of the old songs, Christians were called "soldiers in the Lord's army." We don't use that metaphor much anymore. However, it said some good things. We were serving, not passive ~ but active. We owed allegiance to God and we were to be obedient. We were part of a community of disciples following orders and going out into the world to be witnesses for God. Witnesses and Disciples are other good terms for us.

We are more than just members or elders. We are to be Evangelists and Apostles. We serve an Awesome God. We serve a Risen Savior who sends us out. How are we doing?

Peace! *Bobbi*

Presbyterians Together

At the heart of all of our Presbyterian polity is the affirmation that the church is ONE IN CHRIST. And the Presbyterian Churches in Catawba County took a step to witness to this unity on Sunday, March 10 at New Vision Church in Conover. Five churches: First, Hickory; First, Newton; New Vision; Northminster; and Sweetwater signed a covenant creating "Presbyterians Together".

We agreed to find those ways that we can mutually support each other's ministries. This continues a covenant that has supported the Latino ministry for the last several years. But this new covenant creates a mutual relationship among the congregations. We will be exploring those ways we can work together, such as sharing resources, opening mission opportunities to each other, and finding ways we can celebrate together.

The covenant was celebrated with a worship service that featured New Vision's English worship with a Spanish flavor. And then it was followed with an amazing meal featuring favorite foods from Columbia, Mexico and Venezuela, as well as American standards.



(l-r) Joe Carroll, of Northminster, along with Doug Michael & Wallace Johnson of First Newton sign a covenant creating "Presbyterians Together".



The Future of Our Connectionalism

As the chair of the Stewardship Committee of my presbytery, I am concerned by the practice of congregations withholding of funds from the PCUSA as an act of principled protest. Regardless of the reasons, I've come to see it as a political act that weakens our connectionalism. Here's what I recently spoke during our recent presbytery meeting.

We are the Presbytery of [...]. There is no "they." Regardless of the presbytery you are in, it is essentially a volunteer organization of members from local congregations. Look at your Nominations Committee list of those to serve on committees, councils and mission teams. They are men and women volunteers from churches.

Our Connectedness as a Presbytery isn't just Spiritual, but Financial. My presbytery does not "charge" a per capita fee to churches. We, the presbytery, trust in the spiritual commitment of churches to make financial contributions to the support of the presbytery and the other councils of the church. In effect, what is happening is that small churches are funding the per capita payment of those larger churches who withhold funds. How ironic that in our modern day we see Paul's perspective in 1 Corinthians 12: 22-26 gaining relevance.

On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

Just to be clear, there are small churches who also withhold funds, and large churches who are extraordinarily generous in their giving to support our presbytery's work, including its ministry with small churches. Size is not the primary issue, connectionalism is.

Our Connectedness as a Presbytery isn't just Financial, but also Missional. From my vantage point as Stewardship Chair, it is the shared mission work of our presbytery that is the heart of our connectionalism. It is the only thing that cuts across all the social and institutional boundaries of the church to unite people from large and small churches in the worship and service of Jesus Christ in the world.

Our Financial Future as Congregations and the Presbytery is not our Past. We can no longer count on the tried-and-true stewardship practices of the past to sustain local congregations and presbyteries in the future. Developing a dynamic missional connectionalism provides a way for more members of churches to participate and contribute in the life and ministry of the church. From this position, churches and presbyteries can adapt to the economic realities that we all will be facing in the future.

- Dr. Ed Brenegar

NEWS



PWNC



Above, members of the Columbus Presbyterian Youth Group sing "Open the Eyes of My Heart" as special music during the February 24th worship service. Below, the Joy Builders singing "J-O-Y", their anthem, as part of the same worship service.



Hunger Awareness Meal at Northminster, organized by Claire Neuville.



Youth led, mostly youth run, Stop Hunger Now event held February 23rd. 10,266 meals prepared in 90 minutes at Northminster! Great leadership Claire Neuville, and great common cause together with Waldensian Presbyterian, New Vision Presbyterian, Highland United Methodist, and friends from other churches.



Excellent service from Kyle Belvin in conjunction with the Hunger Awareness Meal held at Northminster.



Reverend Kyle Segars was installed at Etowah Presbyterian Church on the afternoon of February 17, 2013. Welcome to the Presbytery Kyle!



Pictures from Swannanoa First Presbyterian, where Jack Sadler spoke at their Heritage Sunday festivities.



Tot having a great time at the Senior High Mission Retreat in March.



Bringing Harvest Home

For years, our little church of Quaker Meadows, like many other churches, has participated in a food pantry. From that stash of canned goods and dry goods, food is given anonymously to people who are in need throughout the year, but during the Thanksgiving season we use our stored goods for designated families in the communities surrounding Morganton. God has been so good to us and we praise God for being able to help "feed the hungry" in times like these. During past Thanksgivings, we have fed about 12 families, but this year, God really challenged us to do more. So, with faith in God and in partnership with Table Rock Middle School, we asked the members of the school and our congregation to give what they could to this community outreach project. The response was outstanding! We collected enough food to feed over 250 people in 38 families.

As we sorted and packed the food in the various boxes, we were reminded of all of our blessings and our hearts were warmed as we gave the boxes to the families when they arrived in the parking lot the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. We included in each box a New Testament and an invitation to join with us as we worship and serve God at Quaker Meadows. We trust that God is at work scattering the seeds of his kingdom in this community and beyond through our partnerships and small efforts like these to reach out in his name.



The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Montreat College's accrediting body, has reaffirmed Montreat College's accreditation! Montreat College has met all of the standards required by SACS.

I am grateful for the passionate commitment of our faculty and staff members who work diligently to provide a quality, Christ-centered education to our students. Our accrediting body has confirmed this standard of excellence through the reaffirmation of our accreditation.

The next regular accreditation review of Montreat College is scheduled for 2015.

President Dan Struble

GAP has built 7 homes in 7 years

“Habitat for Humanity works in partnership with God and people everywhere, from all walks of life, to develop communities with God’s people in need by building and renovating houses so that there are decent houses in decent communities in which people can live and grow into all that God intended.”



The Strickland Family
407 Pryor Street, Gastonia
Dedicated 11/11/2012

SPOT-
LIGHT
ON...

Swannanoa First

Honoring the Past of First Presbyterian Church of Swannanoa

Back in October, on Sunday, October 21st at 11:00 AM, First Presbyterian Church of Swannanoa at 372 Bee Tree Road, was proud to present Rev. Dr. R. Jackson Sadler as our guest preacher for Heritage Sunday. Heritage Sunday at FPC Swannanoa began with a gift that one son gave in honor of his father and mother. With family roots in the Swannanoa Valley which go back many generations, the idea of a Heritage Sunday seemed a natural way to honor our FPC history. We are also honoring our many members and friends and families of the valley who have served and supported our church and Piney Grove Cemetery for the past 218 years.

We have begun sharing many stories and memories of life in the Swannanoa Valley. We have heard of the great Blizzard of 1936, totally unexpected and the worst to ever hit Western North Carolina. The storm completely destroyed the grove of pine trees between the church and Bee Tree Road, where horses were once tethered. The parking area and Bee Tree Road could not be seen. When the 3:00 PM shift at the Beacon factory started home, the McMurray home was quickly filled with the workers unable to drive through the falling snow, and they all stayed on through the night of March 24th, 1936.



Yet another remembrance recalls the annual church revivals of the 1930's, and one memorable preacher named Dan Graham, of Bristol, TN, who was fearless in his preaching against movies and cards. Another beloved pastor, Jack Davidson, lived in a cabin in the woods which he had built, attended Union Theological Seminary and married the daughter of a Presbyterian missionary. Others have recalled the safe return of our service men in WWII and Tarver Davidson, the only one who was a prisoner of war in Germany.

Many of the members of the founding clans of the Swannanoa Valley are buried in our Piney Grove Cemetery. Veterans going back to the Revolutionary War, and families, including L. Nelson and Virginia Bell, whose daughter Ruth Graham Bell was a member of FPC, and Daniel Iverson, composer of "Spirit of the Living God", are also buried in our cemetery, which dates back to 1794.

Our beloved Music Director, Jay Plumb, was recognized for his many years of faithful service as he begins his retirement. Steven Noll, our new Music Director, featured special music with Nancy Ruppert and Doran Heck. The Youth Handbell Choir opened our worship service under the direction of Mrs. Betty Rand.

Guest preacher, Dr. Sadler, spoke on "Honoring the Past". He is the author of "The Footsteps of the Saints," which is a narrative history of First Presbyterian Church, Richmond VA, where he served as Senior Pastor for 26 years. Dr. Sadler currently serves on the Board of the Presbyterian Heritage Center (Montreat) and the Montreat Development Foundation.

His texts for the service focused both on the importance of the past, and also moving on into the future. From **Deuteronomy**, he selected: "Remember the days long past; consider the years long gone. Ask your father, he will tell you about it; ask your elders, they will give you the details." (CEB). From **Hebrews**, he preached on "So then let's also run the race that is laid out in front of us, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us." A potluck fellowship luncheon followed.

Congregational Care of Clergy

While most congregations and sessions do care about the pastor's family, most do not set aside time to reflect on the impact of the demands of the ministry in their congregation on the pastor's family. It would be healthy for a session to take some time to reflect on some of the following questions.

1 Corinthians 12:26 states that "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it." We begin by considering a check list for assisting a clergy family to maintain healthy family relationships, but in the back of our minds we should keep in mind the health of all families within the congregation. There is no perfect formula for preventing the destructive culture that plagues families, but there are ways to improve our chances for having healthy families. Some, though not all, of the areas that we might look at are:

1. Does the pastor feel the support of the church leadership for his or her attention to the health of the family?
2. Does the congregation understand the pressures on the pastor's family created by the fish-bowl nature of the ministry?
3. Has there been a conversation on appropriate boundaries for protecting family time while maintaining pastoral availability in times of need?
4. When the pastor experiences negative feedback, does someone recognize its effect on family members and offer them support?
5. Because good pastors work long hours which occasionally interfere with family plans, does the leadership express thanks to family members for their sacrifice and support?
6. Is there a fund to support the pastor in receiving family counseling when there is a need?
7. Has there been consideration for occasionally inviting the family to a non-church fun event as a sign of appreciation for their extra efforts?
8. Is the pastor encouraged to occasionally have a conversation with family members about how they are experiencing the effect of being a pastor's family?
9. Does the pastor feel full support for taking their day off and their full vacation?
10. Is there recognition that even single pastors have family members that need attention?

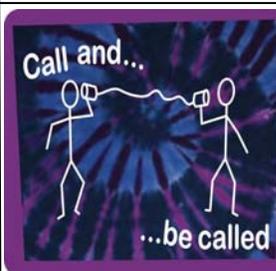
"Clergy Care" . . . Continued on page 7



In January, the Session of Waldensian Presbyterian Church provided sufficient funding to translate the 65 page, 13 session curriculum that I have written entitled, "Men in the Mirror, Identifying and Applying a Christ-centered Relational Ethic to Interpersonal Relationships." This curriculum is being edited and formatted for use by PHEWA/PADVN, Presbyterian Peacemaking and Presbyterian Women of the PCUSA. It will be online in PDF format this spring in English, and with this funding, will be available in Spanish, translated by a team of Argentinean Biblical scholars from ISIDET in Buenos Aires. With this, we will have curriculum that provides men the resources to allow Christ to critique and inform their relational values and behaviors with interpersonal relationships. I am thrilled that it will all be available in both languages this year.—Kevin Frederick



Melia Nagy has been accepted to serve on the Work Crew of the 2013 Presbyterian Youth Triennium! PYT will take place July 16-20 at Purdue University. As part of the Work Crew, Melia will provide some of the most important work at the event, while helping several thousand young Presbyterians take important steps in their walk with Jesus Christ. Congrats on this "servant leader" position, Melia. We are proud of you!



Rally Refreshed Call and Be Called

What: Presbytery Middle School Gathering

When: Sunday, April 28, 2013

Where: Upper Anderson, Montreat, NC

Time: 3 pm - 6 pm

Other: No registration! No cost!

Gather with other Middle School Youth Groups for an afternoon of music, games, keynote and worship!

Questions? Contact Beth Gunn at beth.gunn@gmail.com



Make plans to join us for our 5th Annual
 Helping Hands Work Weekend
 April 5-6, 2013

The weekend begins with check-in at 5 p.m. on Friday evening, dinner at 6 p.m., and we will round out the evening with a time of visiting and fellowship!

Saturday morning breakfast will be served at 8 a.m., with devotions and work beginning at 9 a.m. Lunch will be served at 12 noon with work continuing until mid-afternoon.

Meals and lodging are provided free of charge, but you must register by Monday, April 1, 2013 so we can place our food order with our vendors.

Please decide which project your group would like to tackle, then call Jan at 828-668-7793 and tell her so she can attach your group's name to that project on the website. By doing so, we hope to avoid confusion about who is doing what job! Thanks for your cooperation.

Visit our website to register:

www.campgrier.org (in the right hand column of the home page – under Upcoming Events).

Donations welcome!

In June of last year, young Wayner Gonzalez, former president of the Sur Occidente Presbytery Youth Group, died in the Texas desert after crossing the border from Mexico. The house shown in the photo below was the house he had built for himself and his future wife, Maria. After Wayner's death, his parents turned the property over to the Guatemalan government to be used as a children's daycare center. None had existed in the small village of Morelia, Guatemala. This was a beautiful memorial to the memory of a fine and faithful young man. His memory lives on in the pink house next door to the home of his family. - Barbara Hosbein, member of Wayner's partner church, Banner Elk, in the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, August 17, 2013

First Presbyterian Church, Morganton

Clergy Care . . . Continued from Page 6

11. Is there recognition of the importance for taking time to maintain relationships with extended family members?

12. Has the church leadership, along with the pastor, had a conversation about the faith resources for maintaining healthy families?

This is a beginning. Try to add some other check points for maintaining healthy families. Then begin to strategize about how to implement a plan to support healthy family relationships both for the pastor and other families who are feeling the stress of our culture on their relationships.

Presbyterian World Mission



You are invited!



“Mission 2020”

Sponsored by the Presbyterian Heritage Center, Montreat, NC

MEET the Rev. Dr. Hunter Farrell, Director of World Mission PC(USA)

HEAR about what’s new in World Mission and the focus on three critical global issues: poverty, reconciliation and evangelism

CONNECT with other Presbyterians and the larger church in mission

Please join us at any one or more of these five events:

Saturday, April 27, 2:00PM (reception to follow)

Chapel of the Prodigal, Montreat, NC

“Mission 2020” – to include a response panel of local experts/former missionaries

Tuesday, April 30, 9:00AM

Guest Speaker – Western North Carolina Presbytery Meeting

Anderson Auditorium, Montreat, NC

Sunday, April 28

Preaching – Montreat PC, 9:00AM

Preaching – Black Mtn. PC, 11:00AM

Lunch & Discussion – Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church, Swannanoa, NC

About Hunter: Hunter Farrell serves as the Director of World Mission for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Hunter served as a Presbyterian mission worker in the Congo and Peru for 15 years, teaching New Testament and mission, and working in Christian community organizing. He earned his Master of Divinity at Fuller Theological Seminary and his doctorate in cultural anthropology examining the relationship between culture and violence in a Peruvian Andean community. Among his greatest teachers have been the Congolese and Peruvian Christians with whom he worked. He was ordained by Grace Presbytery. He and his wife, Ruth, have three children. They live in Louisville, KY, where Ruth serves as the coordinator of the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact Ron Vinson, vinson@phcmontreat.org (828-669-6556) or Pam Jensen, Regional Development Manager for Presbyterian World Mission, pam.jensen@pcusa.org (502-526-2411).