

# CONNECTIONS

Growing congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples.

## Creating a Culture of Generosity in your Church

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THIS SPECIAL WORKSHOP!

A workshop entitled, "Creating a Culture of Generosity" will be presented Tuesday, June 14, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



Kevin Garvey

at St. Philip Presbyterian, Houston. The seminar's basic foundation is that generosity springs from the conviction

that God owns everything and that we are temporary managers of God's treasures. This one-day seminar will move from presentation to implementation.

Gather your church stewardship team now for this interactive workshop; you will walk away with materials and ideas on how to foster and increase the spiritual life of your church and members, as it relates to generosity/stewardship. Working in a small group, and later sharing ideas with the other groups, you will develop a generosity/

stewardship annual calendar and discuss the implementation steps for your church.

Come prepared to learn how to create a culture of generosity, share your ideas, write a generosity plan and calendar of activities, explore the biblical texts of generosity/stewardship, and celebrate the success of your efforts.

Leader Kevin J. Garvey, is the Chief Development Officer of the Board of Pensions. He brings nearly 30 years of fundraising/marketing experience to the Presbyterian

Church. He has worked with many churches on their annual and capital campaigns. He serves as an Elder of Zionsville Presbyterian Church where he leads the Generosity Team.

This workshop is brought to you by the Board of Pensions PC(USA) and the Stewardship Team of the Presbytery of New Covenant. Cost: \$15 per person - includes lunch, snacks, and printed materials. Registration details to come.

## Plans announced for 2011 FOCUS

Using the presbytery's vision statement as a framework, the FOCUS event, to be held Saturday, October 1, at St. Philip Presbyterian (4807 San Felipe at Loop 610), will be organized around three aspects of the vision: passionately, engaging community, and making disciples.

Here is a taste of the workshops and their leaders for the Passionate Track, "Why Does It Matter?"

- ♦ **Theology** - Rev. Brent Hampton, Brenham Presbyterian, Brenham

- ♦ **Prayer** - Rev. Pat Clark, St. Stephen's Presbyterian, Houston
- ♦ **Old Testament Lectionary Readings, Year B** - Rev. Dr. Andy Dearman, Dean of Fuller Seminary, Houston
- ♦ **New Testament Lectionary Readings, Year B** - Rev. Dr. Jim Davis, First Presbyterian, Kingwood
- ♦ **Confessions** - Rev. Greg Han, Member-at-Large and teacher at St. John's School

The day will begin at 10:00 a.m. with worship and keynote speaker, Ed Kilbourne, a talented singer/songwriter and storyteller from Rock Hill, SC.

Workshops about the other tracks shall be revealed in the next issues of *Connections*. Mark your calendar now to participate in this exciting day in the life of our presbytery!

Focus 2011 is chaired by the Rev. Lynn Hargrove, St. Giles Presbyterian, Houston.



Ed Kilbourne

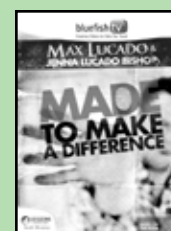
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## NEW COVENANT CONNECTIONS

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# FROM THE COLE MINE

By Rev. Mike Cole, General Presbyterian, Presbytery of New Covenant

## “Some Things Are Seldom What They Seem”

In February, I took full advantage of an opportunity for creative writing when I penned my State of the Presbytery address as if it were a look back from February 2016 at the previous five years in the life of the presbytery. I was rolling right along and had good momentum when I decided to get a little playful (frequently a dangerous thing in a serious presentation) and interject that I was about a year away from retiring. If I had said that I was about a year away from retiring in 2017, it might have registered that I was still speaking from the vantage point of 2016. But people heard what I said and not what I should have said (don't you just hate it when they do that?) and drew the conclusion that I'm planning an early retirement – at least I hope they thought I was going to retire early, otherwise they thought I was a lot older than I am/was/will be.

At any rate, it is a misunderstanding that I created with my little “throwaway line” that I am still trying to correct today. Only two weeks ago, someone stopped me to ask when I was planning on retiring. Thus, this is my official announcement that I AM NOT RETIRING *anytime soon* (although if this keeps up I may start to think seriously about it). In the midst of my chagrin at having to explain to folks that I'm too young to retire, I learned a valuable lesson – some things are seldom what they seem.

We will need to draw on that lesson repeatedly over the next several months as we Presbyterians live into some new realities. It appears very likely that Amendment 10-A will pass after this issue has gone to print. The headlines ought to read: “Presbyterians Affirm Local Authority Over Ordinations,” or “Presbyterians Remove Prohibition Against Gay Ordination.” However, the headlines will likely shout, “Presbyterians Vote to Ordain Homosexuals.” In the midst of the battle of inflammatory headlines, we need to remember that some things are never what they seem. To help with our understanding of this change, we've published in this issue of *Connections* an FAQ so that we will understand what this change means and what it doesn't mean. Don't be surprised if it doesn't mean what you think it means.

Another area where we should not be too quick to assume we know something we don't is in reference to the letter from a number of large church pastors that has circulated in the denomination. This letter diagnosed our denomination as “deathly ill” and prescribed a gathering in August to formulate some “cures.” While the letter drew a lot of initial criticism, it has also spawned many serious conversations about how the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can be inclusive enough to allow for diversity within our unity. The call to gather

in Minneapolis August 25-27 was originally intended to be for those of “like mind,” but now is gaining momentum among those who care enough about the church to explore new ways of being the PC(USA) and doing the mission God has in mind for us. It just goes to show that some things are seldom what they seem.

It's clear that we have a lot of work ahead of us – bringing differing perspectives together – empowering those who have felt disenfranchised – speaking prophetically to those who are tied to the status quo – releasing those who are held captive to old ways – ushering in a new era of love, grace and mercy. I'm not referring to our internal strife but to our external obligation to the world for which Christ died. The church belongs to God and God will see to it that the church thrives, sometimes even in spite of us. However, we have an opportunity to make a powerful witness to our culture and society in affirming that no matter our differences inside the church, our mission is to those outside the church, with whom we are required to “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.” (Micah 6:8)

In Christ's service,

### Classifieds

#### Position available

Atascocita Presbyterian Church is seeking a part-time Youth Director (approximately 20 hours per week). If interested contact the church office at 281-852-8990. The church is located just north of FM 1960, off of West Lake Houston Parkway at 19426 Atasca Oaks Drive, Atascocita, Tx. 77346.

#### Available: organ and music library

Because circumstances have changed for Church of the Covenant, Port Arthur, (now Providence Church, Nederland), it no longer has a choir or the need for an organ. If interested in an organ, a Rembrandt 2900 built by Johannes Organ Builders of Ede, The Netherlands. (Pipes built by Otto Hoffman) and/or a 900+ song/anthem library, contact Alan Sturm at [alan.d.sturm@juno.com](mailto:alan.d.sturm@juno.com) or call him at 409-626-0822 or cell 409-626-0822. Cost and delivery arrangement are negotiable.



# A Gathering Place for the Wandering People of God

## Reflections on Serving as a Steward for the World Council of Churches 2011 Central Committee Meeting

By Rev. Whitney Wilkerson  
Member-at-Large

What do you get when you throw together fifteen young adults from diverse contexts and denominational backgrounds? The answer: deep, authentic community through the Spirit. We were gathered together to serve as part of the Stewards Programme, where we assisted in putting on the meeting of the Central Committee, the highest governing body of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Geneva, Switzerland. We were there to build ecumenical community, to learn about the work and ministry of the WCC, and to make sure that the central committee meeting ran smoothly. I went expecting to be refreshed by encounters with different cultures and traditions, to be reminded of how much God is at work in this world, and of how we all belong to one another no matter where we're from.

God has a way of shattering even our greatest expectations. I didn't just discover people of all cultures and languages being one in Christ. I didn't just discover how much I have to learn from the majority of the church that is the non-Western world. I didn't just discover how much my Western, privileged experience has shaped my understanding of God. (Though I did discover these things.) I discovered the real presence of God.

I saw God everywhere around me: in impromptu conversations about peace with the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, in the ability of people to communicate profoundly without words, and in the prophetic and courageous witness of the WCC



Rev. Whitney Wilkerson with WCC staff person, Faautu Talapusi, from Samoa

that refuses to segregate faith from practice.

- And I watched God speak ...
- ♦ through the stories of Christians in the Middle East whose persecution is profound, and even sometimes increased by Western intervention in their land,
  - ♦ through the stories of my friend Rose-Mika in Haiti who struggles to find hope for her people who say that God has abandoned them, when in reality the rest of the world has abandoned that small post-colonial country to environmental destruction, economic oppression, and total isolation in a wealthy world,
  - ♦ through crafting worship for a community where all are included and prayers are prayed or sung in Mandarin, Russian, Zulu, and French,
  - ♦ through watching the Central Committee make important decisions not by majority but by consensus, where all are given the chance to speak and a decision is only reached when all are heard and agree with one voice,
  - ♦ through letting go of my white American need to speak in order to let my sisters and brothers who have been long silenced be heard,
  - ♦ through shedding my over educated theological ideas about God to embrace a God who, beyond my understanding, is God of all people with particular concern for those who are kept on the margins.

At WCC I learned what reconciliation put into ecumenical practice looks like: a place where women and men create healthy supportive relationships, where brave actions are taken to support Christians and Muslims in the Middle East, where commitment is made together to sustain our shared planet, where theological and cultural differences are valued and not feared, and where we suffer with those who suffer and rejoice with those who

## clerk's corner

By Rev. Diane Prevary, HR  
Stated Clerk of the Presbytery  
of New Covenant



Among the actions taken by the 219th General Assembly last summer was approval of three significant matters: a new Form of Government (nFOG), Amendment 10-A, and the Belhar Confession. Each of these actions, along with other proposed amendments to the *Book of Order*, was sent out for consideration by our 173 presbyteries. At the time of this writing, the voting trends seem to indicate that nFOG and 10-A will be approved by the requisite number of presbyteries (87); it is not yet clear whether the same will be true for Belhar. Amendments to the *Book of Order* require approval by a simple majority of presbyteries, but amendments or additions to the *Book of Confessions* require a super-majority (116) and a concurring vote by the next General Assembly. The Presbytery of New Covenant will vote on Belhar at the June 11 meeting (see related articles in this edition of *Connections*). Our presbytery's reported votes on both nFOG and 10-A were "No."

So now what? Presuming that the trends continue toward adoption, on July 11, 2011, one-third of our *Book of Order* will be replaced. As soon as the majority vote to approve is definite, which I expect to be sooner than the June 11 deadline, I will order as many copies of the "new" *Book of Order* as our budget will allow, which we will then offer at cost to our churches. Larger membership churches are encouraged to place their own orders separately. I expect that bulk orders will be slightly discounted over the per copy price. If our orders are waiting to be filled by the first printing, we can expect delivery this summer.

Additionally, if the new Form of Government is adopted, I will offer a workshop at FOCUS on October 1, 2011, at St. Philip Presbyterian, to assist clerks and moderators of session to get on board with this new portion of our Constitution.

As for Amendment 10-A, if it is adopted by the majority of our presbyteries, it will be incorporated into the Form of Government – whether current or proposed – replacing the current language of G-6.0106b. The polity implications of its adoption for sessions will also be addressed in the workshop at FOCUS.

Finally, if the Belhar Confession is approved by the required super majority of the presbyteries, it will then go to the 220th General Assembly (2012) for final approval and enactment and a new edition of the *Book of Confessions* will be available following that meeting of the General Assembly.

Please be aware that both parts of our Constitution – *Book of Confessions* and *Book of Order* – are available online and can be downloaded from the denomination's website: <http://oga.pcusa.org/constitution.htm>. They may also be accessed through the presbytery website, [www.pbyofnewcovenant.org](http://www.pbyofnewcovenant.org) >Links.

rejoice.

I am grateful for the scholarship through New Covenant's Peacemaking Grants that helped me get to Geneva. I welcome the opportunity to share more about my time with the WCC with you or your congregation, so feel free to contact me at [wlw04@hotmail.com](mailto:wlw04@hotmail.com) or 361-389-1916. You can also learn more about WCC work at [www.oikoumene.org](http://www.oikoumene.org).

The worship space at the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Centre is designed to feel like a tent, and described as a "gathering place for the wandering people of God." It is a safe place where tables of prosperity and power are overturned to include the least of these first, where people pray together with one voice in many languages and confess that Jesus is our peace.



## Mary's Musings

By Mary Marcotte, Associate General Presbyter,  
Presbytery of New Covenant

### Three turns of a kaleidoscope

I am driving into the parking lot at Atascocita Presbyterian on a beautiful morning, excited about the opportunity to share in their joy as they formally break ground for a new sanctuary. The first thing that catches my eye is a sailboat on the front lawn, its sail fluttering in the breeze. "What's with the sailboat?" I thought. But I found myself quickly caught up into the all-purpose worship space/fellowship hall where a crowd was beginning to gather. Many wearing T-shirts that proclaimed "God is building something here!"

As we moved outdoors after worship to bless the digging of those first ceremonial spades of dirt, I heard the explanation of the boat. No, it was not a raffle prize to help raise funds, or just an eye-catching gimmick. Instead it was a visible testimony to a commitment made by the Session and Deaconate that transformed their lives together. These bodies had read and discussed Joan Gray's *Spiritual Leadership for Church Officers*. Inspired by the call to be leaders rather than managers and looking consistently for God's will, they had made their own image of the church as a sailboat, adjusting its sails to catch the winds of the Spirit already at work in the world rather than furiously rowing to get where they wanted to go. When leaders began to second guess and micromanage other people's work, the agreed upon code phrase to get the process back on track became "I think you are rowing."

#### The kaleidoscope turns ...

I am at home watching old episodes of "The Vicar of Dibley" on DVD. They tell stories of the sweet foibles of a small village in England, centered on its village church. As the series begins, the church is mostly empty, the worship dull and lackluster, and in a note of British black humor, the aged rector dies in the pulpit. The bishop sends a lively young woman, and new life comes to worship and the community. Character-driven wackiness prevails, sweetly funny, but I confess that much of the humor rings so true for me because I recognize the truth of the many characters and their struggles – not the least of which is grounded in the dynamics of change in a small faith community. The parish council is present in every episode and their bumbling ineffectiveness is always being drawn to the ridiculous rather than the sublime. Anything remotely spiritual in nature is never under discussion. Part of what makes me laugh at these episodes also makes me cry because the observations reflect too many meetings that folks endure as they try to serve the Lord.

#### The kaleidoscope turns ...

I am sitting in a classroom at Austin Seminary, learning about young adult ministry from Bruce Reyes Chow. At 42, Bruce is the oldest member of his congregation of 20 and 30 somethings. He ministers to a highly committed, professional, but transient community. He describes joyful session meetings that feed the soul. Business is done mostly online and makes use of timesaving technologies. Face to face time is spent in prayer and Bible study, talking about ministry and the big picture. Their ability to do this is based on a commitment to read and comment on emails within three days, and huge areas of trust and honesty. Meetings are purposeful, settings creative – they last no longer than two hours.

If we want people to be passionate about their service, if we yearn for meetings that are soul-building rather than mind-numbing what changes should we be making in the way we do our work?

# Community News

## Team Butterfly runs for new life

Initially formed in 2005 as a group of five women from Southminster Presbyterian, Missouri City, Team Butterfly runs/walks to raise funds that offer new life to children. It has continued to grow into a group of 19 women and men, which now also includes members of Heritage Presbyterian. "Team B" enjoys the challenges of preparing to run/walk the Chevron Houston Marathon or Aramco Houston Half

Marathon, offering one another support along the way.

The butterfly, a symbol of new life, captures their feelings about marathon running/walking - the beginning of a new phase of life for each of them. While supporting one another, they also raise funds for Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services as their way of caring for children and families.



Teammates of Team Butterfly enjoy a light moment together before their 2011 successful Run for a Reason fundraising effort on behalf of PCH&S.

## Are you one of God's Athletes?

An initiative called "Athletes of God," envisioned by an elder at Waverly Presbyterian and now supported by the Session, is seeking athletes, strong in their faith, who would like to share their story with young athletes.

This summer, the Athletes of God Initiative will be working with Montgomery County Elite Gold, an organization that sponsors competitive girls' fast-pitch softball teams. These teams provide talented young girls an opportunity to develop and showcase their ability and skills by competition with other highly talented teams across the state and the nation. This experience enhances the girls' opportunities to obtain college scholarships.

Because training and tournaments take place Sunday morning, the young ladies and their parents have become concerned

about priorities. Church attendance is impossible during the season. One of the Initiative's objectives is to provide the young ladies who have a personal relationship with God an opportunity to strengthen and integrate their walk with God and help them in making sound and balanced decisions. It offers common sense strategies that credible athletes have found valuable in coping with demands and pressures.

Here's what you as an Athlete for God would do: At the tournaments on Sunday morning, take 15 minutes to share with the young athletes your story about how God has impacted your life. It is hoped that later in the day you would give the young ladies an opportunity to follow-up with you. For more information, contact the Rev, Dan Alexander, Waverly Presbyterian, at 936-668-6674 or [danalexander01@msn.com](mailto:danalexander01@msn.com).



# E Highlights

## Examples of ecumenical activities in Presbytery of New Covenant

By Rev. Steven Spidell, Presbytery  
Ecumenical Liaison

### St. Philip class introduced to “civil society movement” begun by Turkish Muslims.

Dr. Alp Aslandogan, president of the Institute of Interfaith Dialog, recently presented classes on the history of democracy in Turkey and the Gulen Movement to St. Philip's Church and Society Class. Aslandogan, a Muslim from Turkey recently discussed how Turkey's process into democracy has included frequent military coups, westernization, and religious challenges. Though ninety-nine per cent of the Turkish population is Muslim, the society is more secular than religious. The practice of Islam has been limited at times, for example, even printing the Qu'ran in modern western fonts.

In the 1950s a Turkish licensed Islamic preacher of the Sufi tradition, Felullah Gulen, began teaching about creating a “civil society,” with mutual respect between faith traditions, showing compassion and doing good for others. The followers of Dr. Gulen have grown into an international movement. Here in Houston, the Institute of Interfaith Dialog provides resources for interfaith events and education as well as opportunities for persons from different faith traditions to meet and get to know each other. The Houston



Chronicle [2/27/2011] published an article on another outcome of the Gulen movement in education, the “Harmony Academy” charter public schools which has 33 campuses in Texas. For more information, visit [www.interfaithdialog.org](http://www.interfaithdialog.org).

### Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston and the Asian Pacific American Heritage Association host Faith and Culture Bus Tour

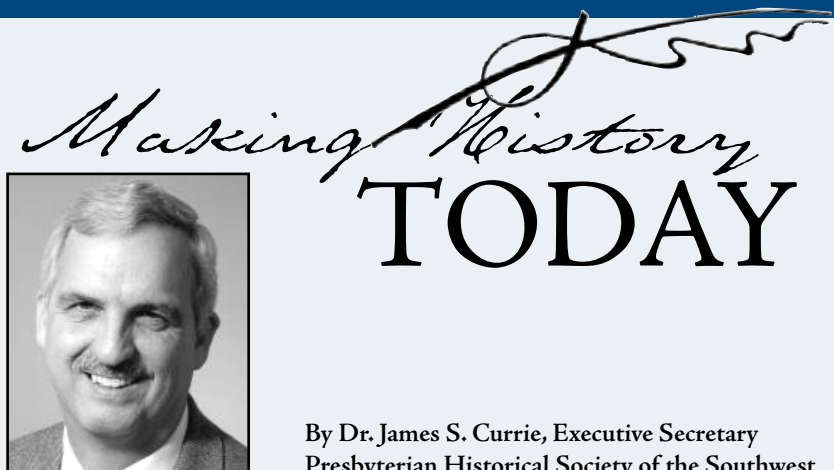
A quarterly bus tour introduces visitors to Asian Baptist, Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic religious sites. Religious leaders speak on the various religious traditions and give tours of their facilities. Southwest Houston has been formally recognized as an international cultural center. For those interested in learning about these faith traditions and practices, this day-long tour is a “must do-must see.” See IMGH website for more information, <https://www.imgh.org>.

### International ecumenical news: Reformed and Disciples churches plan for joint action

The Disciples of Christ's Ecumenical Consultative Council (DECC) and the Communion of Reformed Church (WCRC) have decided to work together in areas of mutual concern regionally and internationally. Leaders stated that agencies cooperating on programs would enhance communication and benefit program development.

## 2011 SESSION RECORD REVIEWS

May 21	First PC, Huntsville, <i>plus</i> Treasurer's Workshop
June 11	Spring Branch PC, Houston
July 30	First PC, Livingston, <i>plus</i> Treasurer's Workshop
October 22	Clear Lake PC, Houston
November 12	Grand Lakes PC, Katy, <i>plus</i> Treasurer's Workshop



By Dr. James S. Currie, Executive Secretary  
Presbyterian Historical Society of the Southwest

## Our Singing Faith

One of the wonderful witnesses to the gospel that transcends generations is that of music. Many of the hymns that Isaac Watts wrote in the early 1700s continue to be sung today (for example, “Joy to the World,” “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” and “Our God, Our Help in Ages Past”). Fanny Crosby is another hymn writer whose words have stood the test of time (“Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine!” and “To God Be the Glory”).

Our hymnbook covers well over 1,000 years, at least in terms of the authors of the hymns that are in it – from John of Damascus (675-749; “The Day of Resurrection”) to Jane Parker Huber (born in 1926; “Live Into Hope” and “Called as Partners in Christ's Service”). Furthermore, a wide variety of traditions are also represented – from the Jewish tradition (“The God of Abraham Praise” by Daniel ben Judah) to the Protestant Reformation (Martin Luther's “A Mighty Fortress” and John Calvin's “I Greet Thee Who My Sure Redeemer Art”) to Methodists (Charles Wesley's “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing” and many others and Georgia Harkness' “Hope of the World”) to American Congregationalists (Washington Gladden's “O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”).

In addition, in our blue Presbyterian Hymnal we also have hymns and translations of hymns that reflect Presbyterians from a wide variety of national and ethnic backgrounds: Native American, Ghanaian, Korean, Argentinian, among others. What a remarkable collection of the world-wide and historical witness to the gospel in this one volume!

Many of us have favorite hymns. For some of us, hymns from the 16th and 17th centuries that express classic Protestant theology speak to our needs. For others, the American evangelistic fervor of the 19th century evokes stirrings of God's love for us. Still others appreciate the international character of many hymns that have made it into our hymnal. And there are others who prefer a more contemporary style of music and theology that is not even in the hymnal.

There may not be another single volume that contains so many different perspectives (musically, historically, theologically, ethnically) and from which we all, at one time or another, sing than the hymnal. We may not agree with some of the theology, but we sing the hymns because they are part of who we are. As part of the body of Christ, we belong to each other and, like it or not, when we sing, we best express our unity as part of that body.

As we make history today, and as new hymns are being composed and offered to the church, may we grow in our appreciation for this part of the Christian church. We best express the unity of the church when we sing the faith. As we sing, may we grow in strength, life, and hope (see #418 in the Hymnal).



## Wendy's Bailey-wick

By the Rev. Wendy Bailey, Associate General Presbyter,  
Presbytery of New Covenant

I have been “living” on the Internet for decades. I opened my Facebook page the day Facebook went public in the fall of 2006. I confess, I had even been visiting before it went public, logging on with Dwayne’s “corporate” account in order to keep abreast of our daughter’s transition to college life. Before that, I had a presence on MySpace and Xanga, I wrote and visited many blogs, and I participated in list-serves. Currently, I use Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Foursquare, and GetGlue to stay connected. Ok, ok... so, I’m not just married to a geek, I am a geek – a social media geek.

Social Networking is nothing new; we have been forming networks of friends, family and work relationships since Adam and Eve. What’s new is that our technology speeds up and creates more opportunities for immediate connections – and communication – in large numbers. You might describe it as “word of mouth advertising on steroids.” On social media, natural relationships with people I would normally only see sporadically become daily routines. It encourages my relationships to be both deep and wide... broad and personal... and, at least in places like Facebook and LinkedIn, it actually helps our “personalities” remain real and authentic.

For pastors and church leaders this is an opportunity to model discipleship and faithful living in ways that are much more visible than in the past. A pastor-blogger asked a cadre of more “seasoned” pastors, if it was good for her to be on Facebook. While it’s not appropriate to post every private thought to the online community, knowing that a pastor’s politics, parenting challenges, devotional life, inspiration and work challenges are all real and somehow coherent with her faith is valuable in building trust and credibility in ministry.

We need to be aware that especially our younger generations live in a hyper-connected world. As the church moves into the future and includes more men and women of the millennial generation, our presence and interaction on social media will be extremely important. It can also be an outreach tool to help connect to people who are not currently in the church.

And while it’s true that many older adults in the church will never step into the world of Twitter or Facebook, they will continue to be influenced by it. Where we find our news is shifting away from newspapers and television to Facebook, RSS feeds, and Twitter. Print and broadcast media can’t compete with the immediacy of these newer technologies. Our expectations of privacy and the transparency we expect of our leaders are also shifting. The transparency of social media demands integrity and authenticity, and keeps us accountable to whom we claim to be.

If the Church is going to continue to engage its community and build disciples, it’s going to have to use social media in the process, because that’s where the people are connecting. Congregations can use Facebook groups to share prayers and Bible study. Sermons and worship videos can “go viral” and have a kingdom impact far greater than the members of the congregation. Pastors and other caregivers can respond quickly to the spiritual and emotional and, even, physical needs of the congregation by noticing status updates or Twitter posts of members. Presbyteries can also stay connected and informed, engage in conversation, and effect policies and strategies by using social media.

If your congregation wants help in identifying ways to use social media, give me a call. Friend me on Facebook ([facebook.com/baileyws](https://www.facebook.com/baileyws)) or follow me on Twitter (@baileyws), and let’s explore this media together.

## “YES” on the proposed addition of the Belhar Confession to our Book of Order

By Rev. Dr. Kyle Walker, Campus Minister at Texas A&M University

The South African experience enriches the Christian Church in ways that deserve our attention. It is one of the few times an oppressed people had the opportunity upon liberation and gaining power to oppress their former oppressors yet chose not to do so. In the case of South Africa, some would credit the classical indigenous African concept of ‘ubuntu’ (one’s self-interest being tied into the common welfare of all humanity). Others



Kyle Walker

would credit the pressure exerted when the World Alliance of Reformed Churches issued a *status confessionis* upon the

Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, effectively removing them from fellowship. Still others will credit the economic sanctions of the United Nations. The truth will be debated by scholars for centuries to come. However, one document, the Belhar Confession, emerged from oppressed South Africans themselves, proclaiming that this reconciliation came from the power of the Lord Jesus Christ and the churches’ willingness to repent from rebelling against his continuing call for reconciliation.

Belhar in a nutshell turns us back to Jesus’ ministry of reconciliation as central to the Church’s identity. Much of Jesus’ ministry was devoted to reminding us, as John’s first epistle amplifies, “those who say, I love God, and hate

their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen.” In like manner, Belhar reminds the church that it cannot passively or actively ignore our brothers and sisters inside and/or outside our walls and still claim to love God.

Reformed Christians divide and reunite more than any other worldwide theological tradition. Often our divisions center around a struggle of what it means to be “church” in conversation with the larger world. One common Presbyterian approach to this, the Spirituality of the church, draws away from corporately addressing society’s ills. Other Presbyterian approaches have been more likely to see the church as a transformational agent of change speaking corporately to the larger society. These approaches both have merit and, at their best, push us to keep a balance between speaking truth to power and making disciples who are quiet agents of change. However, neither has historically remembered to follow the way of Jesus’ ministry of reconciliation by addressing the underlying human alienation.

It is true that the Confession of 1967 and the Declaration of Barmen already address racial and social ills, but Belhar reminds us in a focused way what Karl Barth has taught us about Jesus not only being our personal reconciler but also our societal reconciler. Belhar reminds us, like Barth, that this is not some far off reconciliation but one that is possible and real right now and at all times. And, unlike C-67 and Barmen,

Please see YES on page 7



ould vote ...

# “NO” on the proposed addition of the Belhar Confession to our *Book of Order*

By Rev. John Singleton, First Presbyterian, Conroe

During my freshmen year in college, the campus of Kansas University was filled with peace-loving students who were protesting apartheid. In South Africa, the white minority ruled, oppressed, abused, and murdered the black African majority. State-sponsored racism, exclusion, resettlement, and persecution were alive and well and officially extended into the church. In the midst of such societal turmoil, the Belhar Confession was written. The Church in South Africa found its voice and spoke with clarity and conviction bringing the truth of God to bear in a broken society. One would hope that Presbyterians across the globe could shout “amen” for the general principles found in Belhar: that apartheid was horrendous, that racism is wrong, and that church unity is wonderful.

Twenty-five years later, the context of the PC(USA) is in equal turmoil over different issues. We have disagreement about the ordination of self-avowed practicing homosexuals; we have divergent views about the authority of scripture; competing views about the person and work of Jesus Christ; pitched battles in presbyteries, blogs, and websites about nFOG. We have congregations who have departed, who are in the midst of departing, and who are considering departing. We have a “progressive” movement afoot titled

Next, and we have a “conservative” movement afoot titled Fellowship PC(USA). Most recently we have lost 160,000 members; our congregations are shrinking and closing; funding for mission personnel decreases. Some words that come to mind might be bleak, sinking, dying, dead, aimless, hopeless.

Perhaps the day for a new Confession has come - a unifying Confession. A Confession that states who we are and what we affirm together. Perhaps the time has come for a Confession that clearly speaks the truth of God in the midst of the ecclesial and theological challenges unique to the PC(USA). Perhaps the time has come for a Confession that is broad enough and deep enough to be embraced by every presbytery and every congregation that chooses to remain. Perhaps the time has come for a Confession that is prayed out, thought out, fought out, studied out, and worked out. If it is time for such a Confession, Belhar is not that Confession.

Belhar does nothing to heal and facilitate unity except mandating it. It does not speak a new word of God about the debates that divide us. Belhar does not state who we are together and does not affirm the collective foundation of what we believe today. It does speak with beauty and conviction about important issues and takes important positions, but as a foundational statement, it is far too narrow in its focus. Belhar speaks the word of God in the midst of tremendous challenges facing the church in 1985 but says little about the challenges that are central to us today. One would hope

## YES: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

in Belhar we hear from the oppressed community itself.

Much has been said about our denomination needing to become a church that hears the voices of Christians in other parts of the world, especially parts of the world where Christianity is growing and poverty is most real. This would be our first Confession from the global south and from a part of the Christian world that is currently experiencing robust growth.

Belhar raises the bar to Jesus' standard. No more, no less. Perhaps some are suspicious that the level of reconciliation with all people called for by Belhar may scandalize or water down the Church's witness. Reconciliation is a deep commitment to each other that begins with forgiveness. As Desmond Tutu has said, “there is no future without forgiveness.” and when Peter asked Jesus if he should be prepared to forgive someone in the church seven times, Jesus replied, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.”

In a church and society that is increasingly polarized, we should instead be asking ourselves why reconciliation isn't a more central part of our ecclesiological character in the PC(USA), among all followers of Christ, and in our world. Perhaps God has brought Belhar to us at this time for exactly that reason.

South Africa holds a history quite unique in our world. The brutal oppression of people in the form of apartheid was codified by church doctrine. In most situations such as this, retributive and punitive justice takes hold for generations after liberation. In South Africa, restorative justice emerged from truth telling and reconciliation based in large part on this Confession of faithful Christians writing by faith in the town of Belhar. In that moment, the church began to repent and follow our forgiving and redeeming Lord into a hopeful future. No message could be more important to our church at this time.

I urge you to vote “yes” to add the Belhar Confession to our *Book of Confession* at the June presbytery meeting.

## NO: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

we could all affirm the central ideas in Belhar as a great position paper, but it is not the Confession that is broad enough and deep enough to be embraced by our every congregation and presbytery. Belhar spoke a profound Word in its original context, in its time and place, and Belhar offers an encouraging Word of God in our context, but is it not the kind of theological rallying cry that will propel us forward into a new season of unity, peace, health, and vitality.

At some point in June, the

last vote in the last Presbytery will be cast and the victors will claim that the voice of God was heard, that a new day has dawned, and a new time has begun in our denomination – and yet, the dream of unity mandated in Belhar will grow dimmer.

I urge you to vote “no” at our June Presbytery meeting as a way of stating that you believe we can do better, that we can come closer to fashioning a statement that is ours, that breeds unity, that speaks our convictions, and that leads us forward.

## A Neighborhood Evangelist



Do you know your neighbors – the family who lives next door or in the apartment down the hall? One of the ways we cultivate a lifestyle of evangelism is by knowing and showing hospitality to our neighbors. Invite them for a meal, help with their yard work, take time before the weather is unbearably hot to spend time talking over fences or by the pool. Just by being a blessing to others, we communicate God's love and care for all.

Please see NO on page 7

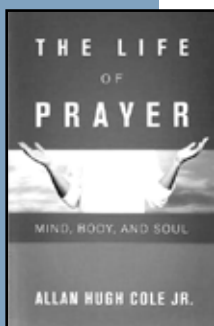
# In the Resource Center

## NEW May Resources



### Clean Water for All of God's Children: Living Waters of the World. DVD

This 21-minute presentation on the work of Living Waters for the World provides an excellent overview of the work done by this program to bring clean drinking water to communities in developing nations. Told in chapters, the video includes an overview as well as features about training programs and an installation on the Yucatan peninsula. Extras include a two-minute public service announcement and a thirteen-minute abridged version of the presentation.



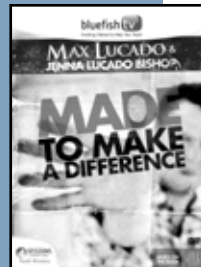
### The Life of Prayer: Mind, Body and Soul By Allan Cole, Jr.

This is far more than a "how to book on prayer." Chapter topics include what is prayer, why do we pray, what are the benefits, with whom do we pray, how do we pray, and how do we keep praying. Author Cole demonstrates different types of prayer, offers suggestions for using scripture as prayer as well as concrete, practical suggestions for grounding one's prayer life. This would be an excellent study piece for prayer groups and others serious about deepening practices of personal and corporate prayer life.



### Reflections on Psalm 23 for People Living With Cancer DVD

Ken Curtis explores coping with advanced cancer from personal experience based on the inspiration of the 23rd Psalm. He explores this best-known and loved passage line-by-line in thirteen presentations, each eight minutes long. The Psalm's words of comfort and encouragement have been a support to many in difficult times, not just those battling cancer. The clear and powerful sense of God's protective love comes forth so beautifully in this psalm. At times of great fear and uncertainty, and cancer is one of the greatest, the simple yet powerful words of Psalm 23 sustain us like few others can. God's grace is greater than any possible obstacle or concern. Shot on location in Israel, this would be a helpful ministry tool for Deacon and Stephen Ministry study groups. Additional bonus materials on David could be helpful for any study of the Psalm.



### Made to Make a Difference 4-session, DVD-based curriculum for youth created by BluefishTV

This four-session study for youth addresses the desire to make a difference. Hosts Max Lucado and his daughter Jenna Bishop take students through a fast-paced look at real life stories of students who are using their God-given passions, talents, and interests to make a difference in the world. Includes leaders guide and printable group handouts as well as separate DVDs, each lasting 17–24 minutes. Titles include: Our Generation, Poverty is a Priority, Blast the Walls, and Do Good Quietly.



### Courage: Developing Character to Stand Strong 4-session DVD curriculum created by BluefishTV

Francis Chan, pastor and bestselling author of *Crazy Love* and *Forgotten God*, opens scripture and shows students how their faith in Christ can give them the ability to live lives defined by courage. Students on the segments share from their experiences, struggles, and successes in facing adversity. Segments are Stand Alone, Stand Firm, Stand Out and Stand Tall. Kit includes DVDs of 18– four minute segments, printable handouts and leaders guides.



### KJV: The Making of the King James Bible DVD 46 minutes plus extras

The year 2011 marks the 400th anniversary of the creation of the King James Bible, arguably the greatest piece of English Literature ever produced. King James had an uncanny love of beautiful things, including language to stir the soul. With several inferior English translations in use across the Kingdom, the Puritan leader John Rainolds took his opportunity to suggest that a new, more accurate translation was needed for the people. With the new king's blessing, a committee of 47 professors began the daunting task of creating a translation that was accurate, acceptable to all, and beautiful enough for the king! While Shakespeare's rich language lit up the stage, this committee penned a beautiful translation that would eventually bring new life to the churches. The DVD brings to life the fascinating history of this great work, along with its impact for us today. It brings the viewer right into the heart of the translation process through specific passage examples.

facebook



### Check out the new POP page on Facebook

Presbyterian Outreach to Patients (POP) is now on Facebook! Go to Facebook and search on Presbyterian Outreach to Patients. Be sure to "like" POP so you can keep in touch!



### Remaining Connections deadlines in 2011

Wed., June 8	July/Aug issue
Wed., August 10	September/October issue
Wed., October 12	November/December issue



# MISSION & Ministry

## The Change in Ordination Standards of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Frequently Asked Questions

### How is the change in ordination standards happening?

*It appears likely that a majority of the 173 presbyteries will approve a change in language for ordination standards recommended by The General Assembly in 2010. In all, since the General Assembly meeting, 55% of the total number of commissioners voting in presbyteries is approving the amendment.*

### What does the change in ordination standards mean?

*The ordination standards have changed from “living in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness” to “joyfully submitting to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.” This removes a national standard categorically prohibiting the ordination of persons in sexual relationships outside of marriage between a man and a woman.*

### What does the change in ordination standards represent?

*The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has shifted the authority for applying its ordination standards from the national level to the local presbytery and session level. This represents a de-centralization of the church and puts more discernment in the hands of people at the local level.*

### May congregations now ordain people who are openly gay?

*The previous standards were never based on a person’s orientation, but on their behavior. The new standards do not list specific behaviors that automatically exclude someone for consideration for ordination. Each examining body is responsible to look at all possible factors to determine if someone is being called into ordained ministry.*

### Specifically, what was changed?

*The primary change is the removal of language requiring those ordained “to live either in fidelity in the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness.” It also adds language referring to obedience to Christ, and indicates that fidelity to church standards is judged case by case by the examining body.*

### What practical changes will we see?

*If pastors, elders, and deacons who are ordained in one area move to another location, they shall be examined by that ordaining body before being able to take up their office. That body may choose to apply ordination standards differently from the officer’s previous body.*

### Is the ordination of sexually active gays and lesbians mandated?

*No, it is not required, but it is no longer prohibited by specific Constitutional language.*

### Will a congregation be required to change anything?

*A congregation cannot be forced to ordain or receive pastors or elders or deacons*

*of whom they do not approve. The congregation retains the right to determine who will serve as officers.*

### May a congregation continue to consider sexual activity outside marriage between a man and a woman as impermissible for its officers?

*Yes, as long as the application is on a case by case basis. The authority for ordaining elders and deacons is fully vested in the local congregation. The new language calls the ordaining body to be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying ordination standards to individual candidates.*

### May a congregation or presbytery now ordain or install a sexually active homosexual?

*Yes, if after a thorough examination, the congregation or presbytery believes the person to be called by God to serve as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament, elder or deacon and not to be living in violation of the church’s ordination standard, its Confessions, or Scripture.*

### Does the new language give candidates who are sexually active outside the covenant of marriage between a woman and a man the “right” to be ordained?

*Nobody has a “right” to be ordained. Ordination is based on a sense of God’s call as confirmed by the ordaining body.*

### May a presbytery continue to function with the standard of “fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness” when examining candidates for ordination?

*Yes, as long as the application is on a case by case basis. The new language calls the ordaining body to be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying ordination standards to each candidate.*

### Is a presbytery required to receive, by transfer of membership, an ordained sexually active gay or lesbian minister?

*No, each presbytery determines which ministers to receive into its membership.*

### May questions about a candidate’s sexuality be asked or are such questions forbidden?

*All questions are allowed during an examination. The acknowledgment of being sexually active outside the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman does not automatically disqualify a person from being ordained.*

### Is a congregation required to call a pastor who is openly gay or lesbian?

*No.*

For further discussion of these or any other questions, call Mike Cole, Wendy Bailey, Mary Marcotte, Mary Lee Going, Pat Clark, or Diane Prevary, who will be glad to visit with you.

## IKE Recovery “Rebuilding Homes/ Restoring Lives”

In the early days of the Ike Recovery Committee, a group from across the Presbytery met to develop a mission statement, which is in essence “Rebuilding Homes / Restoring Lives.” So what happens in the lives of our new friends after the volunteers finish rebuilding? What about the “Restoring Lives” part?

Here’s one example: The IRT Steering Committee, wanted

to find a way for the families to have opportunity to engage in the type of Christian fellowship that will provide the discipleship they need.

Rev. Tom Sharon, (First Presbyterian, Freeport) and Rev. Viet Ho (Thien-An Presbyterian, Houston), along with two members from Viet Ho’s congregation visited recently with two families over a lunch provided by John and Seng Naht

in their home. Fed, body and spirit, by the visit, everyone got to know each other better in true Christian fellowship, breaking bread together (egg rolls with all the fixins!).

In subsequent conversation at the Mahn’s home, the visitors gained much knowledge about Mahn’s faith journey because of the fluent and spirit-filled conversations that Rev. Viet Ho and the other visitors from

his congregation were able to have with him. Mahn, a baptized Christian, plans to attend the prayer services at Thien-An Presbyterian when he is in the area to market his crops. (They are greenhouse lettuce farmers.)

Would you like to help rebuilding homes/restoring lives? Contact Kendall Boyd at [kboyd@pbyofnewcovenant.org](mailto:kboyd@pbyofnewcovenant.org) or Marilyn Marble at [txcity1@pcusa.org](mailto:txcity1@pcusa.org) or call 409-370-7124.

### May 3-5

Church Professional Retreat  
Cho-Yeh Camp and  
Conference Center  
Livingston

### May 30

Presbytery Office closed  
Memorial Day

### June 11

Stated Meeting of the  
Presbytery  
Session Records Review  
Spring Branch Presbyterian,  
Houston

### June 18-25

CEDEPCA Partnership Trip  
Guatemala

### June 30-July 2

Big Tent Event

### July 4

Presbytery Office closed

### July 30

Session Records Review and  
Treasurers Workshop  
First PC, Livingston

### August 2-4

Weekday Ministries  
Conference  
MDPC, Houston

### August 20

Presbyterian Night at the  
Astros  
Minute Maid Park, 6:05 p.m.  
Astros vs. San Francisco  
Giants.

### September 5

Presbytery Office closed  
Labor Day

### October 1

2011 FOCUS  
St. Philip Presbyterian  
Houston

### October 22

Stated Meeting of the  
Presbytery  
Session Records Review

MAY 12



## You are Invited!

The Covenant Network of Presbyterians needs your support as it continues its work and witness toward a church as generous and just as God's grace. You are invited to the home of Dan and Jeanie Flowers, 3001 Inwood Dr, 77019, Thursday, May 12, 7:00-8:30 p.m. with guests, the Rev. Dan Anderson-Little (Trinity Presbyterian, University City, MO, and Covenant Network Board Member) and Rev. Alice Geils Nord and Rev. Bernie Nord (St. Philip Presbyterian Interim Co-Pastors).

Dan will report on progress toward making our ordination standards more faithful and inclusive and on hopes and plans to help the church live together with diversity. The Nords will reflect on developments and prospects in our presbytery. Contributions to the Covenant Network will help support the continuing journey toward ordaining and welcoming all who are called and gifted for ministry.

Please RSVP by Saturday, May 7, to Jeanie Flowers, [jeanief3431@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jeanief3431@sbcglobal.net) or 713-527-8696. If you cannot attend, please consider making a donation online at [www.covnetpres.org](http://www.covnetpres.org) or via postal mail to 2515 Fillmore Street, San Francisco, CA 94115-1318. Make checks payable to Covenant Network.

MAY 14

## Family Fun and Praise Day!



Calabash

Saint Paul Presbyterian in Sharpstown will host praise bands from around Houston, headlined by singer/songwriter Darrell Evans, on Family Fun and Praise Day, Saturday, May 14, from noon to 8:00 p.m. This kickoff to summer will feature praise music from Saint Paul, Grace Presbyterian, Peace Presbyterian in Pearland, and Timber Ridge in The Woodlands. Calabash, the African singers from Saint Paul, will also participate. Great entertainment for both kids and their families!

Admission is two non-perishable food items. An offering will help feed the hungry in Houston and support Sudan missionaries Jacob and Aliamma George, as well as churches in Cameroon.

Saint Paul Presbyterian is located at 7200 Bellaire Blvd. at the Southwest Freeway (U.S. 59).

AUGUST 20

## Presbyterian Night



The Houston Astros offer discounted tickets for Presbyterian Night at the Astros, Saturday, August 20, for the 6:05 p.m. game with the San Francisco Giants. Visit [www.astros.com/presbyterian](http://www.astros.com/presbyterian) and use the password **PRESBYTERIAN** to receive your discount! You can view the seating chart, select the level of the tickets, or indicate "best available." Field Boxes \$24; Bullpen Boxes \$17; Mezzanine \$ 14; Terrace Deck \$16; View Deck I \$11; View Deck II \$9

Those wanting to go as a group (20 or more people) should contact Cody Arnold at [carold@astros.com](mailto:carold@astros.com) or 713-259-8315.

Internet order deadline is two hours prior to game time. This offer is not valid at Minute Maid Park Box Office and cannot be combined with any other ticket offer. All sales are final, no refunds or exchanges.



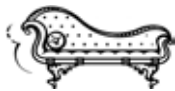
# more events and gatherings to enjoy!

MAY 4

## St. Andrew's School of Fine Arts (SOFA)

Will hold its 6th Annual SOFA Fundraiser Gala Wednesday, May 4, at St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Houston. The Gala's purpose is to replenish the school's scholarship fund so that it can continue to provide quality arts education to students who would not otherwise be able to afford it.

The auction will start at 6:15 p.m. with dinner to begin at 7:00 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by the University of Houston's a capella chorus, *Men of Moores*, and select SOFA students and faculty. Tickets, \$30 per person, can be purchased online at [www.sasofa.org](http://www.sasofa.org) through Sun., May 1. To reserve childcare, please register at [www.sasofa.org](http://www.sasofa.org).



MAY 15-16

## Issues and challenges of the church in the 21st century

Austin Seminary President, Ted Wardlaw, will preach at Pines Presbyterian May 15, 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. At 4:00 p.m. that afternoon, Professor Allan H. Cole, Jr., Academic Dean, will present a lecture entitled "Religious or Spiritual? Faith Practices for Living in Anxious Times."

On Monday, May 16, Allan Cole will gather at Pines with Austin Presbyterian Seminary alumni/ae and their colleagues for a second short presentation and the opportunity to dig a little deeper into the topic, to share best practices, and to enjoy fellowship with one another. Registration is required only for the lunch event on Monday. Register at [www.austinseminary.edu/TOTBH](http://www.austinseminary.edu/TOTBH) or call Laura Harris at Austin Seminary, 512-404-4886.

JUNE 30 - JULY 2

Plan now to attend the 2011 Big Tent event June 30-July 2, scheduled to be held in Indianapolis! Thousands of Presbyterians will gather from across the country to celebrate the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

You may choose to attend just one of the nine partner conferences or design your own Big Tent experience by registering for workshops that interest you.

### But will the Big Tent move?

Immigration legislation under consideration in Indiana's state government may necessitate a change of location for the Big Tent event to another location. The 219th General Assembly instructed its agencies to "refrain from holding national meetings at hotels in those states where travel by immigrant Presbyterians or Presbyterians of color or Hispanic ancestry might subject them to harassment due to legislation similar to Arizona Law SB 1070/HB2162."

It is hoped that Indiana legislators will reject this legislation quickly, so that plans can continue. Big Tent meeting planners will make a final decision regarding location by **May 2, 2011**. Until this time, participants are encouraged to register for the conference, but to **delay making travel arrangements** until the meeting location has been finally determined. For updated information, visit <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/4/8/big-tent-location-air/>.

<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/big-tent/will-big-tent-move/>

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆  
**SEE YOU  
AT THE  
BIG TENT  
EVENT**

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆



AUGUST 13-23

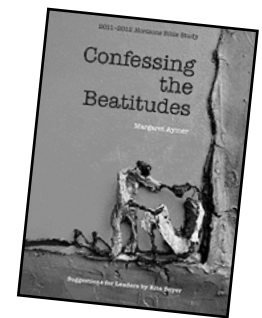
## Introduction and teaching tips for 2011-2012 HORIZONS BIBLE STUDY

The training events outlined below are primarily for anyone who will be leading Bible studies on The Beatitudes in Presbyterian Women's circles, but it is open to anyone. Choose one of the following five locations and dates.

- **Saturday, August 13**, 9:30 a.m.- noon at First Presbyterian, Livingston, 910 N. Washington. Register with Sue Hyde at 936-967-2531 or [suehyde617@msn.com](mailto:suehyde617@msn.com).
- **Friday, August 19**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Grace Presbyterian, Houston, 10221 Ella Lee Lane. Register with Carol Davis at 281-778-9654 or [caroldavis@entouch.net](mailto:caroldavis@entouch.net).
- **Saturday, August 20**, 9:00- 11:00 a.m. at St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Beaumont, 1350 North 23rd. St. Register with Billie Smith in church office, Mon-Fri, 409-892-8611 or [billies@saintandy.org](mailto:billies@saintandy.org).
- **Saturday, August 20**, 10 a.m.- noon at First Presbyterian, Conroe, 2727 North Loop 336 West, Conroe 77304. Register with Marty Taylor at 936-539-2306 or [martytay@yahoo.com](mailto:martytay@yahoo.com).
- **Tuesday, August 23**, 10 a.m.-noon at St. Stephen Presbyterian, Houston, 2217 Theta. Register with Laurie Kluth at 281-979-3385 or [L423K@hotmail.com](mailto:L423K@hotmail.com).

All training sessions are free, but registration is requested by 5 days prior to the date of the training. Early registration appreciated.

Suggested but not required: bring your copy of *Confessing the Beatitudes* by Margaret Aymer, the 2011-2012 Horizons Bible Study book, if available. Individual copies or group orders from your church may be made by calling the Presbyterian Distribution Service at 800-524-2612.



*Training at Grace Presbyterian/Houston, First Presbyterian/Conroe, St. Stephen Presbyterian/Houston, and First Presbyterian/Livingston will be led by Mary Marcotte, Associate General Presbyter for Discipleship and Leadership Development in the Presbytery of New Covenant.*

*Training at St. Andrew's Presbyterian in Beaumont will be led by Linda Purves, who currently serves as Congregational Ministries Coordinator at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Beaumont.*

# In Our Prayers

*Rev. Bruce Williams (HR) and family – Bruce's wife Virginia died March 5, 2011, in West Columbia.*

*Rev. Ed Triem (HR) and Barbara – Barbara's mother, Merlie Collins, died in late March.*

*Rev. Alan Trafford (First Presbyterian, Lake Jackson) and family – Alan's mother, Hazel, died March 26, 2011.*

*Rev. Jack Boelens (HR) – dealing with a cancer diagnosis. Jack formerly served as General Presbyter in New Covenant Presbytery.*

*The homeowner families and Ike Recovery volunteers who are working in Galveston and Texas City.*

*Elder Helen Wolf, editor and member of Memorial Drive Presbyterian – granddaughter, Heidi Wolf Berhow, was born March 17, 2011.*

*Rev. Kyle Walker, United Campus Ministries, Aggieland – Kyle will be granted the degree of Doctor of Ministry from Columbia Theological Seminary May 14, 2011.*

*Elder Patty Tremble, vice-chair of Committee on Care of Congregations and member of Grace Presbyterian, Houston. – health concerns*

*Elder Bob Patterson, vice-chair of Committee on Ministry (COM) – his father, Joe, is recovering from brain surgery in April. Both are members of St. Luke's Presbyterian, Houston*

*Rev. Dr. George Klett (HR) – health concerns*

*Elder Rupert Turner, former Moderator of Presbytery and member of MDPC, Houston – undergoing another round of chemo*

*Rev. Pat Ryan, Windwood Presbyterian, Houston, and family – Pat's dad died Mar. 15, 2011*

*Rev. Charles (HR) and Randee Teykl have moved. Their new address is 1212 Woodland Park Dr., Hurst, Texas 76053-3882. Phone: 281-794-0795. [cteykl@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cteykl@sbcglobal.net)*

*Elder Dave Johnson, Chair of Ike Recovery Team and Clear Lake Presbyterian, Houston – recovering from surgery on April 25.*

*Candidate Shane Webb (First Presbyterian, Pasadena) and Sarah Webb (University Presbyterian, Austin) serving in mission with the PC (U.S.A.) Young Adult Volunteer Program in Peru.*

*\*HR = Honorably Retired*



## PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

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