

Keynote Address: Developing true partnership in mission

By Rev. Dr. Jim Davis, First Presbyterian, Kingwood—for Postlude

For over a decade now Presbyterians from Kingwood have worked alongside Presbyterians from Lima, Peru, and in the last two years Presbyterians from Clear Lake and the Woodlands have joined the partnership. In the keynote address to the presbytery, the Rev. Pedro Arana-Quiroz talked about some of the lessons he's learned and how the partnership has grown from one between congregations into one between Presbyteries: the Presbytery of Juan Calvino in Peru and the Presbytery of the New Covenant.



Pedro Arana-Quiroz

He spoke honestly about problems facing Presbyterians in Peru. But then he spoke even more passionately about possibilities that God has put in front of them. He challenged us as Presbyterians in Texas to provide more than just monetary resources to help our Peruvian partners address their problems. "Money alone will not solve the problems we face," he said. "What we need most of all is to meet on the same ground of belief and mission as true partners and seek God's will for us."

"Our churches must grow together," he said, "because God's kingdom is growing." Then he challenged those present to be part of that growth by developing a true partnership between our Presbyteries. Such a partnership, he pointed out, will involve shared beliefs in the power of biblical preaching and teaching, love of God and world friendship, fraternity

and community.

"We must meet as friends," he said, "and then talk together about how we can share pastors, musicians, teachers, human resources, and financial resources to bring the message of the gospel to the people of Peru." A first step in that direction, he suggested, would be to form a committee of people to talk about how to develop a true partnership in mission between New Covenant Presbytery and the Presbytery of Juan Calvino.

After Pedro's address, General Presbyter Mike Cole said that he was committing himself to be a part of such a committee and invited those present to consider joining him in finding ways to strengthen the partnership that began between our two Presbyteries in 2009. What will that partnership look like in ten years? Only God knows. But if the last ten years are any guide, it will be exciting!

Day of refreshment, fellowship, learning and business

A beautiful Saturday framed the meeting of New Covenant Presbytery at Clear Lake Presbyterian Church. Friendly greeters, helpful hosts, a beautiful campus, and tables laden with favorite foods welcomed commissioners who came from all corners of the presbytery. Morning worship was led by Revs. Aurelio Rodriguez, (Iglesia Latina Presbiteriana NCD), Paul Hoang (Young Nak PC), Daniel Nguyen (Bellaire Vietnamese Presbyterian NCD), and Patricia Clark (St. Stephen PC). Diane Prevary (HR) preached the sermon at this her last meeting as Stated Clerk of New Covenant Presbytery.

The Alive Praise Team from Young Nak PC, Houston, led the assembly in heartfelt songs of praise. The group began in the spring of last year with mostly middle-school students who were interested in praising the Lord. Having no experience but passion to serve, they began learning how to play the instruments by looking at videos and receiving helpful tips from others. After the presbytery meeting, one on the team said that leading praise before the presbytery was one of the greatest things he has done.

In her sermon "Building Bridges," Diane Prevary spoke about how our discipleship is shaped by the way Jesus built bridges between the old way of doing things and the new thing God was doing. God's new creation always emerges in the gap between the past and the future into which God is calling us, she said. On Reformation Sunday (Oct. 30) we celebrate our heritage and history and reflect on God's ongoing reformation.



Alive Praise Team

First Reading of Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure

By Ruling Elder Susan Wittjen, LaMarque PC—for Postlude

Ruling Elder Mary Lee Going presented the proposed Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure as a first reading from the General Council. She provided a brief overview of the document, which can be found in its entirety on the presbytery website. The procedure provides two possibilities for churches considering withdrawing from the presbytery.

Plan A is described as one of graciousness that involves a two year period of discernment that provides a procedure involving a discernment team, which includes members of the

presbytery and the congregation. At the end of the period of discernment, the church would decide to recommit to the presbytery or to be dismissed. If they complete the procedure, the church would be allowed to leave with its property while making designated contributions to the presbytery for a period of five years.

The alternative procedure applies when congregations decide not to participate in the period of discernment and intend to withdraw from the presbytery. In this case, the withdrawing congregation would

leave without its property. The proposed procedure is much more detailed and requires a complete reading to fully understand it.

Since this was the first reading of the proposal, only comments or questions for clarification were allowed during the presbytery meeting. A question was raised regarding the determination of the quorum of the congregation. The procedure requires a 2/3 vote of 30% of the active members to vote to reconcile or be dismissed. Other questions were asked and members of General Council were able to respond. Most of the speakers prefaced their remarks with comments about the document being well-written and thoughtful. A request was made for more explicit references for prayer to be included; members of the General Council agreed with this request.

Read the entire procedure and send written comments to the Stated Clerk. **A Called Presbytery meeting will be held Dec. 10, 2011 (10:00 a.m.-noon) at St. John's PC, Houston, to vote on the procedure. Amendments will be allowed at that time.**



Installed for service in 2012 to New Covenant Presbytery by Moderator Pat Clark (left): RE Janice Schessler (ChristChurch, Bellaire) Recording Clerk, RE Mary Lee Going (MDPC) Moderator, TE Casey Jones (First, Pearland) Moderator-Elect, TE Lynn Hargrove (St. Giles PC, Houston) Stated Clerk, and RE Pete Koester (Webster) Treasurer.

Commissioners defeat proposed overture to General Assembly

By Ruling Elder Jeanie Flowers, St. Philip PC— for Postlude

A proposed overture which would have added a question to the ordination questions for all ordered ministries was defeated by a vote of 90 for; 98 against.

The overture, proposed by the sessions of First Presbyterian, Bryan, and First Presbyterian, Pasadena, would have added the question, “Do you promise that, if at any time you can no longer accept the lordship of Jesus Christ, the authority of the Scripture, or the foundations of Presbyterian polity, you will, on your own initiative, make known to _____ (for teaching elders, commissioned ruling elders, and

certified Christian educators—the Presbytery; for ruling elders and deacons—the Session) the change which has taken place in your convictions since the declaration of this ordination/commissioning vow?”

Prior to the vote on the proposed overture, an amendment to change the words “the foundation of Presbyterian polity” to “the Constitution of the PC(USA),” making it consistent with the *Book of Order*, passed by a voice vote.

After brief discussion, the motion was defeated in a standing vote.

Pastor Honorably Retired

The Rev. Carol Burgeson was granted Honorably Retired status by the presbytery.

Accepting a call from God as a teenager, Carol followed that call as a lay leader in the church and community.

Feeling a renewed sense of call during the



Carol Burgeson

time she was an active Stephen Minister, Carol became a candidate for ordination. She graduated from Iliff School of Theology and was ordained in 2004. Since coming to New Covenant, Carol has served as a member of the COM sub-committee on Care of Congregations.

Carol and her husband John have moved to Logo Vista where they plan to enjoy time with family in Austin.

Candidate completes ordination exams

After preaching a sermon, based on Matthew 20: 1-16, Isabel Rivera-Velez answered questions from the Committee on Examinations and the floor, thus completing her ordination



Isabel Rivera-Velez

exams. A motion to sustain her examinations in full passed, and Isabel was approved for ordination in the PC(USA).

Isabel has been serving Juan Marcos

Presbyterian,

Houston, since last September as Stated Supply. She received her MDiv in 2010 from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She attended General Assembly as a Commissioner in 1973.

Small church makes big impact

Rev. Sharon Gazaway, Outreach Committee, introduced three women from First PC, Vidor, who are making a difference in their community. They created a ministry to their community with the Seed Money Grant from the presbytery. With the grant, they prepare and serve homemade soup to those who come to a local soup kitchen, offering conversation and fellowship in addition to the food - their ministry to loneliness. New Covenant commissioners applauded these members of a small congregation for the difference they are making to the people of their community!

Next presbytery meeting

Sat., Feb. 11, 2012

Memorial Drive
Presbyterian, Houston

Welcome to New Covenant!



Craig S. King

Rev. Craig S. King, Sr.—Craig has been called to serve as pastor at First Presbyterian, Alvin. No stranger to the area, Craig grew up in Galveston and attended Galveston College. He spent 15 years as a police officer in Galveston Co. and received a BS from the U. of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston School of Allied Health Sciences. Craig received his MDiv from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He served congregations in Arkansas and Missouri. Craig enjoys golf, and fishing. Married to his childhood sweetheart for 36 years, he and his wife Catherine have a married daughter and a son in college.



Brian Wiggins

Rev. Dr. Brian Wiggins—First Presbyterian, Lufkin, has called Brian to serve as pastor. Brian was raised in Dallas and received a degree in Business from the U. of Texas at Austin. He spent 5 years working in the corporate world before discerning a call to ministry. He received his MDiv from Princeton Theological Seminary and served a church in Florida. The call 'to get back to Texas as soon as he could' led him to serve a church in Brady, Texas, in Mission Presbytery, where he served as Moderator. Brian received a DMin from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He and Virginia Gartman were married Aug. 20, 2011.



Kristin Galle

Rev. Kristin Galle—Kristin has been called to serve as Interim Pastor at Covenant Presbyterian in College Station. She received her MDiv from Austin Presbyterian Seminary in 2001 and was ordained in the UCC-South Central Conference. Kristin has served as an associate pastor, a hospice chaplain, and interim pastor. She is married to Dr. Brent Hampton, pastor of Brenham Presbyterian. They have three daughters and two cats. Kristin enjoys wildflowers, cooking, reading, games, travel, and movies.



Tracy Williams

Rev. Tracy Williams—Tracy, received as Member-at-Large, came to Houston last July after marrying minister-member of New Covenant Presbytery, the Rev. Bruce Williams, HR. They live in West Columbia. Previously, Tracy served a church in Harmony, Arkansas. She received her MDiv from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and attended General Assembly in 2006 as a theological student (TSAD) from Austin Seminary. Gardening is one of Tracy's great joys - as is her dog Sophie!



John Dearman

Rev. John Dearman—John completed his ordination examinations at the last presbytery meeting in June and is now serving as associate pastor at First Presbyterian, Conroe. John received a BA in History from the U. of Texas at Dallas and his MDiv from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Having a passion for mission, John went to La Paz, Bolivia, for two years after college, where he worked on discipleship and leadership development. While there he met his wife, Vanessa. He and Vanessa have twin boys, age 3. John enjoys playing soccer and racquetball and spending time with his family.

Presbytery welcomes congregation to New Covenant!

Rev. Seunghun Yeou and Ruling Elder Jongbum Vincent Kim (Love Presbyterian Church, Houston,) were welcomed into New Covenant Presbytery. Love Presbyterian (formerly United Korean Church of Houston) has been transferred from Midwest Hanmi Presbytery (Synod of Lincoln Trail, PCUSA) to the Presbytery of New Covenant.



Seunghun Yeou & Vincent Kim

Note: The post General Assembly meeting of New Covenant Presbytery in July 2012 will be held at Love Presbyterian Church, which is located in Jersey Village.

Ike Recovery update

New Covenant is in the last 3 months of Ike Recovery work. And we Presbyterians are the last denomination doing work, reported Dave Johnson, Chair of Ike Recovery Committee. He thanked the presbytery for its support of the work. Because of its knowledge and experience, the IRT is now working on receiving grants so that New Covenant could offer to help the area of Bastrop in the rebuilding of homes lost in the recent wildfires there.



Daryl Ready, Construction Manager for Lutheran Disaster Services, and Jim and Marilyn Marble, Village Managers, presented a cross to Mike Cole, which was designed and built in recognition of the presbytery's contribution to "rebuilding homes and restoring lives."

Postlude is published after each Stated Meeting.
Editor: Elder Helen Wolf
Reporters: Teaching Elder Jim Davis (First PC, Kingwood), Ruling Elder Jeanie Flowers (St. Philip PC, Houston), Ruling Elder Susan Wittjen (LaMarque PC)
Photographer: Valerie Hainley, Clear Lake PC, Houston
Circulation: Patricia Brantley and Sandra Lopez

CODA

Elder and minister commissioners received the following announcements and conducted the following additional business:

- Elected to the Nominating Committee: Class of 2014: TE Noelle Day (Oaks, Houston), RE Beverly Houston (Pinecrest, Houston), RE Gayle Smith (First, Houston), and RE Tony Billingsley (Clear Lake).
- Granted permission for the presbytery to ordain teaching elders to temporary pastoral positions.
- Granted Honorably Retired status to Revs. Gerald Hurst, effective July 1, 2011; Carol Burgeson, effective Oct. 1, 2011; and Mark Vernon, effective Nov. 1, 2011.
- Adopted the Proposed Minimum Terms of Call for 2012. The full report can be found in The Packet, p. 17, which is posted at www.pbyofnewcovenant.org.
- Recognized Patricia Brantley, Sandra Lopez, and RE Sharon Darden (presbytery staff members) for their certification by the Southwest Region of the Administrative Personnel Association upon completion of continuing education courses.
- Elected Commissioners to the 220th General Assembly: RE James Allison (Pines, Houston), RE Jason Reed (First, Pasadena), TE Blake Brinegar (Westminster, Houston), TE Bob Murphy (First, Conroe), TE Jeff Smith (St. Andrew's, Houston), RE Jennifer Carr (Webster), TE Mary Currie (First, Navasota), TE Victoria Jones (Memorial Drive, Houston), RE Linda Northern (St. Giles, Houston), RE Nell Schwartz (Southminster, Missouri City).
- Elected Alternate Commissioners to the 220th General Assembly: James Currie (First, Pasadena), TE Jacqueline Hannan (Atascocita), TE Sam Sungsoo Jun (Pines, Houston), RE John Hathaway (The Woodlands Community), RE Forbes Baker (Westminster, Houston), TE Steve Oglesbee (Clear Lake), RE Jody Harrington (Memorial Drive, Houston), RE Ann Hardy (St. John's, Houston), RE Nancy Penney (First, Conroe), TE Leigh Wisner, First, Texas City
- Authorized the sale of the property of Heritage Presbyterian, Houston, to The Arbor School, a day school for special needs children). The buyer has graciously granted the church 6 months of use of space for worship and the administrative office.
- The Finance Committee reported a good last quarter. Revenues were ahead of budget and expenses were less than budget. New Covenant is in the final year of its debt repayment and will make the final payment of excess copier leases in Feb. 2012.
- Rev. Edward Dixon Junkin, HR, has transferred to Mission Presbytery; Rev. Charles Tekyl, HR, has transferred to Grace Presbytery; and Rev. Stewart MacColl, HR, has transferred to Southern New England Presbytery.
- Rev. Becky Downs will be installed as Designated Pastor of John Knox, Houston, Oct. 30, at 4:00 p.m.
- Rev. Bob Murphy is serving as Interim Pastor at First, Conroe.
- New Church Professionals Orientation and Lunch will be held at the Presbytery Center Thurs., Nov. 17.