

CONNECTIONS

Growing congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples.

PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH CONNECTION COUNCIL



Conclaves 2010: Finger Labyrinth

2011 Youth Conclaves: For Such a Time as This

Does your Youth Group need an opportunity to grow together? Do they need opportunities to find their own ways to give and serve? What about the perfect opportunity to invite a friend? If so, they will want to take part in the 2011 Conclave season at Camp Cho-Yeh. These retreat weekends are planned and led by the Presbytery of New Covenant's Presbyterian Youth Connection Council. All Junior High/Middle

School and Senior High youth of the Presbytery are invited to take part in these faith-filled and faith-forming weekends.

The registration fee of \$110 per person includes lodging, breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday; breakfast on Sunday, a Christian concert, and a t-shirt. The new Camp Meeting Hall which overlooks Lake Evelyn will be used for large group

Please see PYCC on page 3

2011 Church Officer Enrichment event

On Saturday, January 22, 9:00 a.m. to noon, St. Luke's Presbyterian (8915 Timberside in Houston) will host Presbytery of New Covenant's morning of officer enrichment and basic instruction for Elders and Deacons from across the presbytery. This free event is designed to equip, enrich, and encourage all Church Officers – newly ordained or with years of experience - for the calling of spiritual leadership

A special feature of the 2011 event will be workshops which will explore the proposed new Form of Government which will be voted on at the February 5th presbytery meeting and the Belhar Confession which will be voted on at the June 11th meeting. Those who will serve as commissioners to these meetings are especially encouraged to attend.

Workshops:

- Digging into nFOG
- Belhar: to add or not to add
- Session Records Review and Clerk's Forum
- I am a treasurer, now what?
- What do Presbyterians believe

about the Sacraments?

- Spiritual Leadership for Church Officers – is your church rowing or sailing?
- We built it, but they didn't come: renewing our relationship between young adults and the Presbyterian Church
- Deacon Training
- Five Movements of Congregational Transformation
- What are the Essentials?

Participants other than Clerks and Treasurers will be able to select two 70-minute workshops to attend. Details on all the workshops and how to register are available on the home page of the presbytery website, www.pbymofnewcovenant.org, and in a brochure mailed to all Clerks of Session. Register by January 17. Free child care is available by early registration.

Load up your car, bring your leadership team, and enjoy a morning of learning and fellowship that will bear dividends in the coming year.

PRESBYTERY MEETING DATES IN 2011

Saturday, February 5 - First Presbyterian, Kingwood

Saturday, June 11 - Spring Branch Presbyterian, Houston

Saturday, October 22 - Clear Lake Presbyterian, Houston

INSIDE

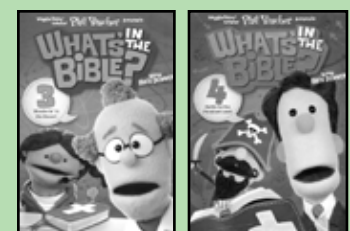
| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Clerk's Corner | 3 |
| Community News | 4-5 |
| Why You Should Vote | 6-7 |
| Resource Center | 8 |
| Transitions | 9 |
| Events | 10-11 |



PAGE 2
From Mike Cole
'New Year's Revolutions'



PAGE 5
Community Highlights
'Greetings from Sudan'



PAGE 8
In the Resource Center
'What's in the Bible?'



FROM THE COLE MINE

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



NEW COVENANT CONNECTIONS

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2011
VOLUME 17, EDITION 1
#500784

HELEN WOLF
Editor

CARRIE WALKER
Layout

PATRICIA BRANTLEY
Circulation Manager

New Covenant Connections is a freely provided, non-profit newsletter, published in its entirety for the Glory of God by:
The Presbytery of New Covenant
1110 Lovett Boulevard
Houston, TX 77006
713-526-2585

Bulk-mail rate paid at Dallas, TX.

Circulation 5,600

Deadline for article submission is the second Wednesday of the month with distribution by the end of the month.
Email: hwolf@pbyofnewcovenant.org

Send changes of address to:
Patricia Brantley
pbrantley@pbyofnewcovenant.org

The Presbytery of New Covenant
www.pbyofnewcovenant.org

“New Year’s Revolutions”

Last December 31, Ellie and I had the privilege of hosting an intimate New Year’s Eve dinner for our wonderful granddaughters, Jacquelynn and Katelynn. We set an ornate table with decorations and the best china and silverware. We made a lovely dinner of prime rib and served it with baked potatoes, vegetables, and sparkling cider. Then we all got dressed in our nicest clothes and dined fashionably late. We had a great time together enjoying a festive occasion that made all of us feel special as we ushered out one year and greeted a new one.



As we rang in the New Year, Katelynn asked me, “So, grandpa, what’s your New Year’s Revolution?” I started to correct her pronunciation but then hesitated while I internally considered her innocent question:

What kind of revolution do I expect for the new year?

As with all effective revolutions, the first one begins with me. In 2011 I need a revolution of heart and mind. I’ve allowed my heart and mind to revolve around myself too much and God too little. I’ve become a bit stuck in doing things the way I’ve always done them. At least I no longer expect significantly different results, but I’m not satisfied any longer with things simply staying the same. I’m ready for things to be different.

On the personal front, I need to give more not less of myself to my wife and family. The revolution in which I’ve been engaged is a selfish one with me at its center. I’m ready to recenter my life so that the people around me who are important and loved will know that they are important and loved.

On the professional front, I need my ministry to revolve around

God and whatever God is up to in our presbytery and beyond. I’ve allowed my ministry to focus more on what I know than what I don’t know; more on what I can do than on what I haven’t done; more on what I think than on what faith leads me to believe; more on what isn’t right than on what brings joy; more on what frightens me than on what excites me; and more on how to do less with more than on how to do more with more. I’m ready to revolve my ministry around the future rather than the past.

What about you? What revolutions will you make this new year?

In Christ’s service,

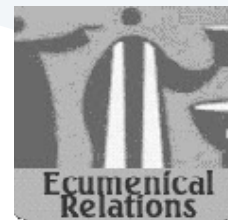
Reformed churches and Catholic bishops reach agreement

By Steven Spidell, Ecumenical Liaison

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops have reached agreement on mutual recognition of each other’s baptisms. It comes after seven rounds of Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogue that also includes the Reformed Church in America, the Christian Reformed Church in North America, and the United Church of Christ.

“This is a significant moment in ecumenical history,” said Rev. Robina Winbush, director of the Department of Ecumenical and Agency Relations in the Office of the General Assembly. “In the context of so much that divides us

and upon which our churches may not agree, we remind ourselves that our fundamental unity begins and is rooted in our baptism.” Catholic and Reformed studies on this subject will be published as *These Living Waters; This Bread of Life.*



For centuries different faith groups have withheld recognition of other Christian expressions as truly “Christian,” based on the rejection of other’s baptism. This has led historically to prejudice, schism, and war between European Catholic and Reformed Christians.

Report: New Covenant vote on proposed Amendments

Commissioners to the November 13 presbytery meeting approved 14 proposed amendments to the PC(USA) *Book of Order*. The 15th amendment dealt with “Gifts and Requirements,” also known as “Ordination Standards.” The discussion covered a wide range of differing points of view and was conducted in a respectful manner. The final vote was 144 in favor, 156 opposed, 3 abstentions. The motion was not approved by the presbytery. In order to be enacted, each amendment must be approved by 87 (of the 173) presbyteries. The deadline for all presbyteries to vote is June 13, 2011.

PYCC:

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

gatherings.

Each of the three weekends is open to youth of all ages. Small groups will be assigned by age. Registration each weekend is limited to 170 participants per conclave. Register early to guarantee the dates you desire. Bring youth the weekend that works best for you – either with middle and high school youth attending separate weekends or the same weekend. Groups of more than 15 are encouraged to come over two weekends to avoid multiple members

from your church in the same small group.

All registrations are handled through Camp Cho-Yeh. The weekends are:

February 18-20

February 25-27

March 4-6

Pre-registration deadline is Friday, January 21, 2011! Pre-register at www.cho-yeh.org. Click on Conclaves box at bottom left of the homepage. It may take a minute for the graphic for this box to fully load.

Standard Mileage Rates for 2011

The Internal Revenue Service has issued the 2011 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. Beginning January 1, 2011, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 51 cents per mile for business miles driven
- 19 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes

- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations

Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates.

Revenue Procedure 2010-51 contains additional details regarding the standard mileage rates.



New Life Fund Grants: \$10,000-\$50,000: an outreach strategy

Have you ever sensed God leading your congregation away from internally focused projects to being more community oriented? Do you have an idea or dream that can significantly impact your community, spread the Good News, and help your congregation grow in the process?

The Presbytery of New Covenant received a gift of \$50,000 to award to congregations intent on turning around their decline in membership. General Council has authorized the Evangelism & Renewal committee to develop an outreach strategy for disbursement of the funds. The committee will be guided by the missional shifts described in Reggie McNeal's book, *Missional Renaissance*, and upon application evaluation will distribute one to five grants of no less than \$10,000 and no more than

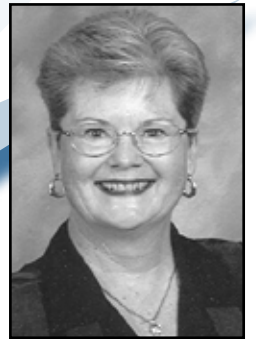
\$50,000.

Grant applications must be submitted before April 18. The Evangelism & Renewal committee will review all applications and announce grant recipients on or before the stated presbytery meeting on June 11, 2011. An evaluation of the proposed project including timelines, anticipated results, and expected learnings will be required. Consultation and ongoing support from the Evangelism and Renewal committee will be available to all grant recipients.

A link to the application and general requirements can be found on the home page of the presbytery's website, www.pbyofnewcovenant.org. If you have questions, contact Wendy Bailey at 713-526-2585, ext. 231 or wbailey@pbyofnewcovenant.org.

clerk's corner

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



As we enter a new year after a stressful year economically for many of us and for our churches, I want to share the following thoughts of the Stated Clerk of the PC(U.S.A.), Gradye Parsons, and encourage you to study the report he cites.

"I write at the direction of the 219th General Assembly and with great concern for the economic situation we all continue to face. This past summer's Assembly requested me to send the attached social involvement report to each congregation in the denomination. The title aptly describes its content: *Living Through Economic Crisis: The Church's Witness in Troubled Times*.

"While many of us are blessed to have stable and good positions, our Christian empathy reaches out to those experiencing foreclosure and job loss, and our Christian consciences may ask how this suffering can be ended. As a social involvement report, these several pages are not a study but an initial statement of the values of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in economic life: 'human rights, covenant community, public responsibility, vocation-affirming work, and sustainability.' In the words from the Executive Summary: In a time of continuing, deep economic recession, our faith gives us strength to face unemployment, poverty, and anxiety—not simply as individuals, but as a community with an ethical memory rooted in the Gospel.

"The Assembly authorized a more in-depth study of our current economic trends and practices, including their impact on the church itself, as well as on other participants in our economy. A short prospectus describing the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy's approach is available online (www.ganc.pcusa.org/acswp), as is a summary nomination form for those interested in volunteering to serve on the study team. Congregations are specifically encouraged not only to study and discuss this report, but to create direct responses to the economic crisis (some are suggested). Members, congregations, and councils of the church are also requested to advocate for public services and public goods jeopardized financially.

"As is usual with even short social witness reports, I knew there would be a section in this one explicitly lifting up our Reformed heritage. Sure enough, here's a great Calvin quote from Section D: 'We are the stewards of everything God has conferred on us by which we are able to help our neighbor, and are required to render account of our stewardship... the only right stewardship is that which is tested by the rule of love' (see text for citation)."

"*Living Through Economic Crisis: The Church's Witness in Troubled Times*" can be found on our presbytery website, www.pbyofnewcovenant.org > Office of the Stated Clerk. As a New Year begins, may we all be blessed with that which we need, and a sprinkling of that which we want; and, may what we do with those gifts be a reflection of God's love in our Savior Jesus Christ.

Study Aid available

Since the 219th General Assembly of the PC(USA) approved a proposal for a New Form of Government (nFOG), church committees have been discussing the proposal, learning just what it means. In addition to the two articles in this newsletter written by members of New Covenant with different

viewpoints, a two-session summary, written by two of the GA committee members, is available to aid churches in their study of this proposal. Each session contains a four-page document with discussion questions. Churches may download the study for free as part of their subscription to the Presbyterian Leader. Non-subscribing churches must register an account and pay \$10 for the study.



Mary's Musings

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

So what does your future hold? That seems a fairly common question as the old year wanes and the New Year begins.

There is much "wisdom" that circles the internet, and I confess a good bit of it goes straight to my delete box. But I kept a list that recently came my way of predictions for 2011. Each was grounded in the reminder and affirmation that God is in control and that "the Word of the Lord endures forever." (1 Peter 1:25) The list included such eternal truths as prayer will still be the most powerful thing on Earth, the Holy Spirit will still move, God will still honor the praises of His people, God will still pour out blessings upon His people, and Jesus will still love you.

In times when the newspaper headlines and the TV broadcasts are filled with bad news, this is something to hang onto. When there are those who express their worries about both the Presbyterian Church and all mainline churches, this is good news to hang onto. In times of great societal change, it can be scary – but it is also a good reminder that God can and does do more than we small-minded humans can imagine - our task is to stay in tune with the heartbeat of God's new song for today.

I'm excited to be a partner in developing a new service to our congregations that will be offered through the Committee on Ministry. Wendy Bailey and I have been dreaming, praying, and planning the process for some months now, and in the last few weeks have each had the opportunity to "test drive" our baby with the help of others and the cooperation of two sessions. This is the Future Story Project.

The process involves a commitment from Sessions to invest prayerfully in a three-hour conversation, facilitated by a team of two visitors. These visitors come to the meeting well prepared – having studied the congregation's most recent annual report as well as their ten-year trends and some demographic analysis. Session members are asked to prepare answers to four questions and are given the opportunity to share their answers with the whole group. These questions highlight the specific blessings of the congregation, the perception of the congregation by the community, the challenges they are facing, and the hopes and dreams that God might have for them. Further questions help gauge the energy level of the congregation and its leaders. Facilitators then share insights gleaned from the statistical and demographic analysis with the group, as well as the reports themselves. During the course of the three hours session members speak their hearts and minds, and we hope a deeper relationship with the presbytery develops.

But the really exciting part of the process is in the follow-up. Facilitators take all the stories shared, as well as the learnings from their research, and use them to weave up to three fictional "future stories." These are all stories of resurrection, of new life that occurs when some things are let go and allowed to die so that the new thing that God intends can flourish. Session members are invited to write their own future stories for the congregation as well, and all the narratives are shared at a second Session meeting. From these narratives – or from others that grow out of them – the session *may* begin to discern new paths and directions in their pursuit of faithfulness.

To learn more about the Future Story Project or to schedule a consultation in the coming year, please contact either Wendy or me.

Community News

Uniting in the Body across Cultures

By Elder Jane Henson, New Church Development Committee

In John 13:34, Christ instructs us to love one another. But how can we love one another if we don't even understand each other?

New Covenant Presbytery has a number of churches with a wide variety of national cultures represented. Our new church developments are especially rich in non-western European cultures. The Rev. Tim Phillips recently helped our NCD Committee expand its vision by discussing several interesting ways of thinking about cultures. For instance, do we assume that:

- Other cultures think as we do?
- Other people make decisions in the same manner we do?
- Other people want to be like us?
- Our worship services provide meaningful worship for Christians from other cultures?

Characterizations of cultures, while acknowledging the limitations that go with any such generalizations, give us insight into the thinking and viewpoint of others. Tim identified several cultural differences for us to consider.

Many African, Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern cultures pay attention to the concrete world around them. In a meeting, for example, they tune in to the overall atmosphere, sounds, smells, facial expressions and body language. All of these subtleties communicate important information to them that can convey a different message from

the words spoken.

By contrast, America, Canada, and some European cultures are immersed in concepts, principles, and ideas. Communication is to be found in the precise meaning of words and ideas. Context is relatively unimportant.

Another useful characterization of cultural differences concerns power in a society. Some cultures assume a large status gap between those with power and those without power, and all in the society see this as natural and good. Formal authority is centralized, and everything flows from the top down. There is a tendency for these societies to experience more corruption, have less economic prosperity, a lower life expectancy, lower social health, and less gender equality. The King is law.

Other cultures seek to minimize status symbols and inequalities between people. Authority is vested in democratic processes, and people are invited to be involved in the process. Power is delegated to teams or committees. These cultures foster innovation and provide a broader participation in education. The Law is king.

Tim brought a message of hope that, as we see and understand our differences and make adjustments to one another in love, we promote that unity of the body for which Jesus prayed fervently (John 17:11, 20-23). Unity in the church across cultures becomes a light of witness to Christ in the world. Let's let it shine!



Mike Cole receives a cross from Carl Schaeffer as a gift from Webster Presbyterian. Carl used Koa wood from Hawaii to make the cross. It will be displayed as part of the Cross Wall at the Presbytery Center. At this time, more than fifty crosses have been given to the presbytery from New Covenant congregations.

E Highlights

Greetings from Sudan!

The Rev. Jacob and Aliamma George, PC(USA) Mission Workers from New Covenant - have arrived in Sudan

where they will serve in ministry with the Presbyterian Church of Sudan.



Jacob and Aliamma George

Jacob will teach at The Giffen Bible School, which trains individuals to serve as pastors and evangelists and in other church-related vocations in the Presbyterian Church of Sudan. Aliamma will teach a course on Community Health Education.

The Georges have seen the gospel transform lives both in their native India and in Houston where they lived before becoming PC(USA) Mission Workers. Jacob was pastor of the Emmanuel Church of South

India in Houston for 32 years, a congregation affiliated with both the Church of South India and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). At the same time, he taught science in the public schools. His dual career experiences will no doubt help him tackle his diverse assignment in Sudan.

Aliamma brings to mission service a faith journey that began in childhood. "When I was in second grade in India, my parents left home for a small village to do mission work," she says. "My parents dedicated me for the Lord's work, and I have tried to tell others about him in my school, college, and work places."

Aliamma has worked for many years as a registered nurse, a professional background that will prove helpful as she and Jacob work with Sudanese.

Jacob and Aliamma ask to be in our prayers.

Grants for Peacemaking

Presbytery's Outreach Ministries Committee has created a program to share grants to encourage churches and their ministry groups to be peacemakers. The grants are in amounts up to \$2,000 and proposals need to align with the "Believers Calling," the mission statement of our denominational peacemaking program.

Here are some ideas that may inspire you: a program on bullying for younger children, a program on racism, a program exploring issues

related to immigration, a seminar on Parenting for Peace and Justice, an awareness program about land mines, and use of Fair Trade Coffee at the church.

To apply for a grant, contact Janice Schessler at jschessler@pbyofnewcovenant.org or 713-526-2585. For more information and ideas, visit <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/peacemaking/> or contact the Rev. Mark Downs at Mark@RevDowns.com.

Lifestyle Evangelism

Lifestyle evangelism is living in such a way that what we are speaks as loudly as what we say. It is show-and-tell evangelism, witnessing in such a way that a person's life endeavors become a living example of the intention God has for humanity. Lifestyle evangelism is meeting the potential Christian at his or her point of need and interest. The life of the witness becomes transparent and spiritual in lifestyle evangelism.



Making History TODAY



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

Discovering a New/Old Book

Recently someone gave me a book, entitled *Presbyterianism: The Truly Primitive and Apostolical Constitution of the Church of Christ*, written by Samuel Miller. It was published in 1836. Indeed, on the inside of the cover of the book is an autograph which, if read correctly, may be that of Miller himself, meaning that the book may have been a part of his library.

Its contents deal with the history, government, and worship of the Presbyterian Church, and the issue of infant baptism in the Presbyterian Church. The last of those matters deals, specifically, with two aspects having to do with baptism: "Infant Baptism Scriptural and Reasonable: and Baptism by Sprinkling or Affusion, the Most Suitable and Edifying Mode."

Miller was the second professor to come to Princeton Theological Seminary in 1813, joining Archibald Alexander who was the first and only professor there in the Seminary's first year. Miller is identified as "Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey."

In a time of Kindles and Nooks on which hundreds of books can be stored on a pocket-size, easy-to-carry device, some may wonder about the value of old, fragile, decaying books whose binding is falling apart, whose pages are colored around the edges, and whose print is not user-friendly. And yet, I look at this book with wonder. It has been around for 174 years and has now fallen into my lap! Who has owned this book over the years? How many sets of eyes have read its contents? Through how many hands has this book passed? If this little book could speak, imagine what it might say about who has "owned" it and the places it has been?

As I peruse the contents of this book, it is easy to recognize the scholarship of Miller, someone, I suspect, whose writings are not read much anymore – in seminaries or elsewhere. Is this little volume anything more than a relic, a museum piece, something many would just as soon throw away as keep? Do you have some old books that are not only worth keeping, but worth reading?

As we make history today, we need to be reminded that we read what those who have gone before us wrote not only out of respect, but because we believe we can learn from them. This is an original. I think I'll keep it... until someone else comes along who will have to decide what to do with it.



**Next Connections
deadline:
Wednesday, February 9,
for the Mar/Apr issue**



Wendy's Bailey-wick

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

Last fall I attended a workshop on Spirituality at the Congregational Transformation Conference in Fort Worth. Picturing the group sitting in a circle on jewel-colored tassel pillows and meditating all week, I was reluctant to sign up for that workshop. Yet, when Suzanne, the workshop leader, gave her preliminary talk to the conference as a “teaser” of what was to come, I felt that nudge of the Spirit – take that one.

I've known for a long time that transformation of a congregation begins with and is primarily focused on the spiritual growth of each member, not focused on attendance, or budgets, or refurbishing the building. In this workshop, though, my eyes were opened to the depth of spiritual potency of the state of the Church today.

Suzanne began by talking about the state of “liminality.” Some of you may remember that we heard Stan Ott talk about these being “liminal” times during the Acts 16:5 workshops. Liminality is, literally, the “threshold” or the “edge.” I like to call it the space between places or the time between times. Years ago, the timing belt of my Ford Escort broke along Interstate 71 as Dwayne and I were moving from seminary in Louisville, KY, to my internship in Canton, OH. When the tow truck driver asked me for my home address and phone number, I could tell him where I had come from and where I was going, but I had no place that was “home” at that moment. That was liminality. It's an uncomfortable place to be. It's often full of emotions... being excited about what's happening, fearful and/or curious of what's to come, and, at the same time, grieving what is past.

As a church and as a culture, this is where we are. The traditional ways of being church as well as the previous assumptions about truth, news, and social contexts are giving way to new ways of living, thinking, and understanding. Most social scientists would agree we've been in this state of liminality for quite a few decades already. But it will take a few more decades before we're fully “moved” to the new “home.” This is a time full of angst, of grieving the past, of wondering about the future. And, unlike my voluntary move to Ohio, many church members didn't agree to this cultural and ecclesiastical shift; instead, it's been thrust upon us.

Liminality, Suzanne explained, is something we intentionally seek out in spiritual disciplines. It's the “outside of our comfort zone” state that we seek when we participate in silent retreats, fasting, meditation, etc. In those practices, we give up the chatter, the busy-ness, the satiation we find comfort in and seek the liminal state, because “*that's when God can do the most with us.*”

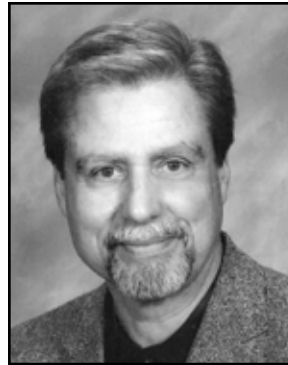
For me, who usually feels charged up by change, it was a comforting thought to think of the turmoil and transition our nation, world, and Church is going through as a spiritual discipline ... a time to allow God to “do the most with us.”

Suzanne said one more thing that made me “suck air” that week in Fort Worth. She said that when it comes to God working in us, despite how much we want to know what God's up to, it's really none of our business. It's enough to know that God is doing something. God is in charge of the future of the church, and of our nation, and of our world. This time of liminality is a time when God is working miracles and revelations in and through us. Praise be to God!

“YES” on the proposed new Form of Government (nFOG)

By Elder Gary Johnson, New Covenant
Commissioner to 219th General Assembly

It is my pleasure to express here why I am in favor of the Revision to the Form of Government as proposed to the presbyteries. I'd like to explain how I came to that position through the General Assembly process and



Gary Johnson as a member of the committee that considered the associated overtures and forwarded the proposal to the Assembly for presentation to the whole church.

After much reading, including information sent me from many sources, I traveled to Minneapolis for this year's meeting of GA with skepticism, wary that the changes were just another way to maneuver the Church concerning some of the “hot button” issues that have been challenging us for many years.

Our committee met earlier than the others beginning on Friday to give time to hear representatives of the Task Force that had been working on the new Form of Government (nFOG) for two years. We also heard from the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Committee (GAPJC) concerning any technicalities that might be encountered and opinions on how prior rulings might be affected by the change. Beginning Sunday, we heard from a large number of Overture Advocates, both for and against the proposal – many with passionate concerns and opinions.

It was in the committee work itself that I really began to

why you sho

get some insight on the issues. Our approach was to take the proposal literally line-by-line and attempt to perfect it as much as possible before considering it in an up or down vote. A large number of modifications were made, all of which were considered by the Task Force and the GAPJC representatives and deemed to be consistent and appropriate.

The proposal has been distributed so each Church may dissect it, so I won't detail it here but have some observations that were important in my decision process.

First, the current *Book of Order* has been amended over 300 times since 1983. This means that it has taken on more of a function of rule-making, (imposing much detail that has to apply to all congregations and presbyteries,) rather than a Constitution that only sets out the fundamentals that unite us as a denomination and that should be considered foundational, not legislative.

Second, many of the rules, for example the requirements of standing committees, are very burdensome to small and rural presbyteries. This means that they are often not followed anyway. I sat among quite a number of small church pastors and heard much about the struggles they face in light of a *Book of Order* that requires each unit to function exactly alike when some non-foundational issues were better governed at a more local level. I found it very important that the only standing committee which was retained as foundational was the Committee on Representation, affirming its high calling and our commitment made at Unification.

Third and most important,

Please see YES on page 7

ould vote ...

“NO” on the proposed new Form of Government (nFOG)

By Rev. Alan Trafford,
First Presbyterian, Lake Jackson

What would you think if the U.S. Department of Transportation suddenly decided to rip up its Code of Federal Regulations? Would you be okay with that, knowing that the proposed

new Code contained very different regulatory standards? What if the new Code removed existing precedents and



Alan Trafford

protections? What if it was riddled with inconsistencies and omissions? Would the fact that the new Code would fit in a shirt pocket be enough to commend it to you?

Maybe the new Code would tinker with standard definitions, removing the distinction between the driver who sits in the front and one who whines in the back. The proposed new Form of Government (nFOG) in the PC(USA), designed to replace the *Book of Order* (BOO), does exactly that. For example, by stating that the church will welcome people regardless of “theological conviction,” it moves away from requiring “convictions consistent with the Reformed tradition” (nFOG F-1.0403 v. BOO G-4.0403). So, how will we define what it means to be Presbyterian?

Maybe the new Code would remove the requirement that drivers need to understand the rules of the road. nFOG does exactly that. For example, it removes the requirement that candidates for ministry be examined in five specific areas, currently found in G-14.0431a.

Maybe our ministers don’t need to be competent in Bible content or exegesis? Worse still, nFOG removes specifications about how examinations are graded (nFOG G-2.0607d). What’s fair about that?

Maybe the new Code would do away with every legal precedent, opening the way for costly litigation over every fender bender. nFOG does exactly that. It gives no guarantee that any precedents or Authoritative Interpretations, enacted by General Assemblies over the years, will remain in effect. It will be like starting over. Every loop-hole will be opened. Every judicial commission will be overwhelmed. It’s a prescription for anarchy.

Maybe the new code would allow for significant regional variations. New England could decide to drive on the left! nFOG does exactly that. It allows every governing body to develop its own manual of policies and procedures, adopting new rules to replace those that are currently found in the *Book of Order*. This can only harm national unity. Will different protocols be enforced in different places? In the event of a conflict, and legal challenge, who will decide which takes precedence?

Maybe the new Code will be internally inconsistent, being deliberately ambiguous in an attempt to offend no one. nFOG does exactly that. For example, in the matter of inclusivity in leadership, nFOG guarantees “full participation and representation in... governance... to all persons or groups” (nFOG F-1.0403). This would allow persons currently ineligible for ordination to claim the right to hold office. Yet, as it stands, this clearly contradicts

YES: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

the proposed new form of government is not to be feared. I found no case where (as I had conjectured) there was a hidden agenda. The much discussed issues of ordination standards, definition of marriage, etc., were not changed at all and are enhanced with more straightforward language. The committee was very careful to clarify the wording in these areas. I believe the finished document reaches the goal of setting out what is most important to us as Presbyterians while allowing the flexibility that allow local churches and presbyteries to function efficiently.

My one reservation is that future Assemblies remain free to make changes with a simple 51%

majority which could potentially result in another 300 changes if operational rules are again introduced in the *Book of Order* rather than in local operations manuals. Only time can tell if that happens, but I remain convinced that this is a good and timely step.

My hope is that as we consider the New Form of Government, we come to trust each other more as brothers and sisters in Christ, and that we set out to show the world what brings us together, what means the most to us, and that we can proudly say this is what the Presbyterian Church is about in the most positive way. I believe that this is what the proposal does and encourage you to accept it as a new beginning.

NO: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

ordination standards (BOO G-6.0106b) or at least renders them ineffective. nFOG is even unclear about how we would resolve such inconsistencies. It allows alternative means of decision-making in addition to Robert’s Rules (nFOG F-3.0205). At what point does subjective, manipulative discernment take precedence over the rule of the majority? What happens when these methods are in conflict? This raises another internal inconsistency. nFOG is divided into two sections – “Foundations of Presbyterian Polity” and “The Form of Government.” Nowhere is the relationship between the two defined. Some are suggesting that the “Foundations” should be understood as a “super constitution” and that it will take precedence. Is this a matter that the church courts will have to decide?

No one would accept a new U.S. DOT Code of Regulations with so many problems. Why should we accept a new Form of Government that can lead only to confusion and conflict? The real problem is that nFOG is vague and incomplete. It seeks to reduce the *Book of Order* by devolving authority from the General Assembly to lower governing bodies, but it does so at the expense of church-wide standards. It does nothing to promote trust, which is already in such short supply.

The new proposed Form of Government is a poorly crafted revision of a document that has served the church well. It replaces clarity with confusion, national standards with local chaos. It threatens our unity. We can do better than this. I urge you to reject it.

Classifieds

“...The Lord bids each one of us in all life’s actions to look to his calling...It is enough if we know that the Lord’s calling is in everything the beginning and foundation of well-doing.”
(Calvin. Institutes. 3.10.6)

Position available

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley seeks a minister or elder to lead the presbytery in fulfilling Christ’s vision for its present and future. The Executive Presbyter will empower and encourage the ministers, educators, elders, and lay members in 87 churches spread across central Alabama. The presbytery’s CIF may be accessed on the Church Leadership Connection at <http://www.pcusa.org/>.

Submit PIF or resume by February 14 to Candi Vernon, Chair EPSC, candiv2002@yahoo.com or 529 Fielder Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36106.

Please see NO on page 7

In the Resource Center

New Resources - DVDs



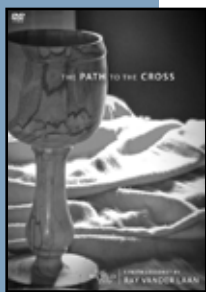
The True Christmas Story: Herod the Great, Jesus the King DVD

A single session lecture with Ray Vander Laan contrasts the power and opulence of Herod's palace which towered over Bethlehem and the rugged squalor of the caves such as might have sheltered the infant Jesus and his family. It is filled with all the production values we associate with the "That the World May Know" studies. Also contains additional bonus material.



The Me I Want to Be DVD, supported 5-week adult study

What does it mean to become God's best version of YOU? Popular and effective teacher Rev. John Ortberg presents 15-minute segments that introduce materials explored more deeply in Bible study and discussion laid out in accompanying participant's guide. Topics addressed include Discovering the Spirit, Renewing My Mind, Redeeming My Time, Deepening my Relationships, and Transforming my Experiences. The curriculum pack also includes Ortberg's full-length book of the same title.



The Path of the Cross DVD, 5 sessions

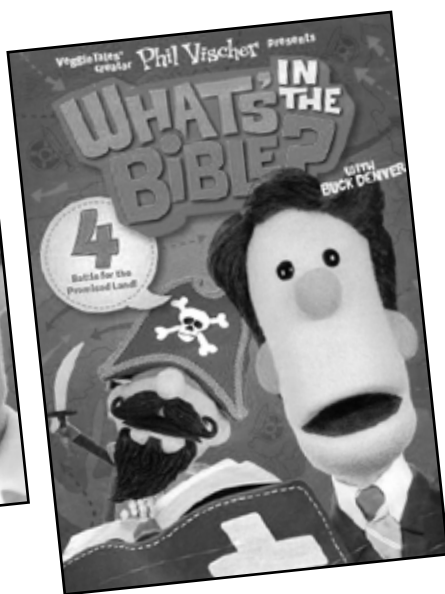
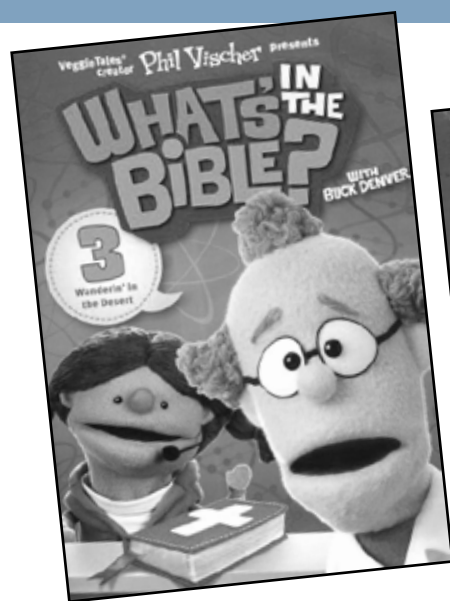
The eleventh volume of the in Ray Vander Laan Faith Lessons studies focus on the intense devotion of God's people in the first century. Shot on location in Qumran, Machaerus, En Gedi, Jerusalem, and Gethsemane, this study offers fresh insight into The Way of the Essenes, John the Baptist, the Desert temptation, Jesus' Last Passover and Our Way of Hope. Total running time is 152 minutes.



The Power of a Whisper: Hearing God. Having the Guts to Respond DVD, 4-week study

The video clips feature Bill Hybels addressing questions relating to what it means for Christ's followers to train their ears to be able to hear God's directing input for their lives. Segments include first hand testimony of individuals about the Whisper-Led Life; Divine Input for the Day to Day; Practice, Practice, Practice, and Wide Open to God. Each video segment is about 20-25 minutes and is designed for best use in a 90-minute session. The curriculum pack also includes Hybels' full length book of the same title.

From the creator of Veggie Tales



What's in the Bible?

DVD, two 25 minute episodes in each volume

Presents children and youth with lots of solid information conveyed with puppet skits, simple animation, clever songs, and interviews with children.

Volume 3 – Wandering in the Desert

Highlights Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, offering good insights to better understanding the sometimes strange rules of the Old Testament and the powerful rules for today. Also addresses the 40 year "time out" in the desert and what it means to be a set-apart people living in covenant with God.

Volume 4 – Battle for the Promised Land

Highlights Joshua, Judges and Ruth. Deals fairly well with the difficult violence of the Conquest by focusing on God's ultimate ownership of the Land. Takes on the issue of "is the Bible real" that is important to elementary-aged children.

Resource Center is open again!

Books, DVDs, equipment, and curriculum - it's all available once again for churches to borrow! See the Resource Center database on the presbytery website or contact Patricia Brantley at pbrantley@pbyofnewcovenant.org.

TRANSITIONS

Welcome, to New Covenant Presbytery!



Joe MacDonald

Rev. Joe MacDonald is serving as Pastor of First Presbyterian, Livingston. Joe transferred to New Covenant Presbytery from Shenango Presbytery in western PA. He received a BA degree in Bible and Psychology from Gordon College and an MA degree in Clinical Psychology from Edinboro University in PA. His MDiv is from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. No surprise that his special interest in ministry is counseling! Joe is a native of northern Maine and comes to New Covenant from Sandy Lake PA. Alert: Joe likes golf, archery, and hunting. He and his wife have two adult children.



Brent Hampton

Rev. Brent Hampton is serving as pastor of Brenham PC. Brent transferred from Mission Presbytery. He received an AB degree in History of Religions from SMU, an MA in International Business Management from UT Dallas, and his MDiv from Austin Theological Seminary. He is finishing his DMin at Austin Seminary. Brent has a special passion for collecting science fiction and fantasy books and ancient Greek and Roman coins. He is married to Rev. Kristin Galle, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ Church. Together they have three daughters in a blended family. Brent and Kristin enjoy ministry, critiquing each other's sermons, cooking together, reading, travel and most of all – life.



Leigh Wisner

Rev. Leigh Wisner is serving as Stated Supply pastor of First Presbyterian in Texas City. Leigh transferred to New Covenant from Indian Nations Presbytery in OK where she was serving a small inner city, racial ethnic congregation in Oklahoma City. Leigh received a BA degree in Religion and Philosophy from Austin College and her MDiv from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. "I studied abroad in Athens and tried to learn Modern Greek, reports Leigh. It did not go very well!" Her husband Mitch is a resident in neurology at the Medical Center.



Bernie and Alice Nord

Rev. Alice Geils Nord is returning to New Covenant Presbytery after fifteen years to serve as Co-Interim Pastor at St. Philip Presbyterian, Houston. Alice transferred from National Capital Presbytery. Her MDiv is from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. Her interests in ministry lie in creative worship and resourcing and enabling laity for ministry. She has especially fond memories of her study leave opportunities at Ghost Ranch and Zephyr Point Conference Center. To Alice, "getting to Texas" means getting nearer to her grandchildren who live in Austin.

Rev. Bernard "Bernie" Nord is serving, along with his wife Alice, as Co-Interim Pastor at St. Philip Presbyterian, Houston. Bernie transferred to New Covenant from National Capitol Presbytery. His BA in journalism was granted by Penn State University, his MA in Mass Communication from the University of Wisconsin, and his MDiv from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Bernie has served churches in Arizona, Illinois, Ohio, and Virginia, and also was a stewardship consultant for the PC(USA) and vice-president for seminary relations and development at McCormick Seminary.



Bob Bullock

Rev. Bob Bullock is serving as Designated Pastor of West Isle Presbyterian, Galveston. Bob received his BA degree from Baylor University, his MDiv from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and his DMin from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Bob's special interest in ministry is spiritual formation, spiritual renewal, and transformation of churches into missional churches. He is in process of writing two books, *Developing a Christian Mind* and *A Survival Manual for Churches in Crisis*. He and his Beth have five adult children and three granddaughters.

Honorably Retired



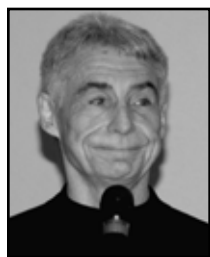
Rick Elliott

Rev. Rick Elliott – A Texan from infancy, this All-State piccolo player ventured out of Texas to attend U. of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. After graduation, Rick returned to Texas to attend Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and later worked in the DMin program at Perkins School of Theology at SMU. Ordained in 1973, he has served pastorates in Hurst, Dallas, Claremore (OK), and Texas City. He continues to fill in for congregations when their minister is absent. Rick enjoys traveling and has journeyed throughout the world. In February 2010, his first book was published, *Faith Journeys of the Heart*. This collection of short stories explores emotional passages of the Bible.



Marcia Miscall

Rev. Marcia Miscall – After graduation from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Marcia was ordained in 1973, the first woman ordained in Washington Presbytery. Her years of ministry have taken her to numerous presbyteries: Washington, Grand Canyon, Twin Cities, Maumee Valley, Donegal, Mission, Grace, and New Covenant (New Hope in Katy and Westminster in Houston, and First Presbyterian in Livingston). Marcia has worked with pregnant teenagers, lived on a Navajo reservation, and served in small and large churches. She has ministered on mission work trips from Appalachia to Alaska and volunteered service in New York, Northern Ireland, and Russia. "Wherever I've been, I have tried to serve faithfully, remembering that God makes a home with us where ever we are and that eventually we will have a heavenly home."



Bill Wade

Rev. Bill Wade – Bill attended the University of Oklahoma, which is where he discovered the thinking and writings of Tillich, Bonhoeffer, Niebuhr, and other theologians. He graduated from Union Seminary in New York, moved to Houston and the Institute of Religion where he did an internship in pastoral counseling, and later received a call to Webster Presbyterian as an associate pastor. He continued his relationship with the Institute of Religion and began studying Family Therapy. He served as a staff therapist at The Center for Counseling in Houston, and over the following years received multiple licenses in psychology, social work, counseling, and family therapy. He has written a book with his wife Carol, the working title is *Brain Change Therapy: Clinical Interventions for Self-Transformation*, expected to be published in 2011. Bill is Parish Associate at St. Luke's PC, Houston, and continues to preach where needed.

January 11-12

Leadership Retreat
Cho-Yeh, Livingston

January 22

Officers Enrichment
St. Luke's PC
Houston
AND
Sessions Records review
Treasurers Workshop

February 5

Stated Meeting of the
Presbytery
First PC, Kingwood

February 18-20

Youth Conclave
Camp Cho-Yeh

February 26-27

Spiritual Weekend Renewal
with Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow
Southminster PC, Houston

February 25-27

Youth Conclave
Camp Cho-Yeh

March 4-6

Youth Conclave
Camp Cho-Yeh

March 14

Post Retirement Seminar
Presbytery Center

March 15-16

Growing Into Tomorrow
Seminar... Today
Presbytery Center

March 17

Render Unto Caesar Seminar
Presbytery Center

April 9

PW Spring Gathering
St. John's Presbyterian,
Houston

June 11

Stated Meeting of the
Presbytery
Spring Branch Presbyterian,
Houston

June 18-25

CEDEPCA Partnership Trip
Guatemala

JANUARY 11-12

Presbyterian Leadership retreat

An important opportunity for our presbytery leadership is planned for January 11-12 at Cho-Yeh Camp and Conference Center. Participants will spend time together getting to know one another, learning how our various committees work together, and exploring "The Future Story" of the Presbytery of New Covenant, as we live into the vision of "growing churches that passionately engage their community to make disciples." This retreat is vital for new committee chairs and returning chair persons alike.



Who's coming? General Council members, Chairs of all committee and steering committee chairs, Vice Chairs of ADSC and MDSC, and all Sub-Committee Chairs of the

Committee on Ministry. Questions? Contact Rev. Mike Cole at the Presbytery Center, 713-526-2585, ext. 208.

FEBRUARY 10-13

Cursillo YES!

Presbyterian Cursillo is a 3-day spiritual retreat designed to renew the faith of individuals and, through those renewed individuals, the environments in which they live and work. The weekend centers on informal talks, some given by lay people and some by Presbyterian clergy. Worship, communion, small group interactions, lots of music, and a number of fun events enhance the weekend experience. The next Cursillo weekend will be February 10-13 at Camp Allen (Navasota, TX). More details and registration information is available at <http://www.houstoncursillo.org/>

FEBRUARY 13

Houston Brass Band plays the Pops

The Houston Brass Band returns to Memorial Drive, Houston, Sunday, February 13, at 5:00 p.m. with a first for its concert series: a Pops Concert. The British-style brass band is well known for playing majestic marches, operatic reductions, symphonic transcriptions, and British Band competition pieces. For this concert, the Houston Brass Band will perform themes from major motion pictures such as *Goldfinger*, *Live and Let Die*, and *Braveheart* as well as classic tunes from British rock bands such as the *Bohemian Rhapsody* of Queen.



Brass Band at MDPC

A highlight of the concert will be a medley of tunes by the brass-dominated rock band, Chicago. With Kathryn Sparks White on the Sanctuary grand piano, the medley will include popular Chicago songs such as *Feelin' Stronger Every Day*, *Old Days*, and *Make Me Smile*. All are invited to this concert.

JANUARY 18-20

A CONFERENCE FOR PREACHERS



Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie
and Fuller Theological Seminary
will host a

PREACHING WITH PASSION CONFERENCE

January 18-20
at Pines Presbyterian
12751 Kimberley Lane, Houston.

In the three-day conference, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Tuesday and ending at noon on Thursday, Dr. Lloyd Ogilvie will work with a small group as he draws on fifty years of preaching experience to speak about the biblical meaning of preaching with passion.

For more information, visit <http://www.brehmcenter.com/institutes/ljo-institute-of-preaching/conference-information/>.

To register, contact Sarah Kennedy at sarahmarie@fuller.edu.

MARCH 21-28

Seminar in SWITZERLAND

The Unity & Reformed Heritage Seminar, sponsored by the Office of the General Assembly, will be held March 21-28 at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. This educational trip is designed to broaden our understanding on theological, social and global economic issues. Early registration is encouraged as space is limited.

For additional information and application, visit: <http://www.pcusa.org/dear/unity-seminar.htm>

more events and gatherings to enjoy!

FEBRUARY 17

DON'T MISS THIS
HOUSTON TRADITION!



Together
We Simplify



“Together We Simplify” is the theme of the 2011 Texas Ministry Conference, formerly known as the Church Staff conference, which will be held

Thursday, February 17
at Champion Forest Baptist,
Houston.

For the last several years this interdenominational conference has been produced by the Church Supplies & Services CO-OP. Native to Houston, the conference holds great appeal for church professionals, pastors, educators, church staff, and facilities managers, indeed anyone interested in ministry.

Choose from 70 workshops in eight categories with 47 nationally recognized speakers from ministries all over the country.

Make plans now to attend this day of fellowship, learning, great food, networking, and door prizes.

Early Bird Registration (which ends January 14) and brochure with details is online now at <http://www.churchco-op.org/>.

NOVEMBER 4

Consider it Your Life's Work: Becoming an Apprentice for Jesus

This year's annual Weekend in the Word at Clear Lake Presbyterian will help you become a genuine student of the master teacher of life, Jesus Christ. In *Becoming an Apprentice of Jesus* conference, James Bryan Smith, C.J. Fox, and Matt Johnson untangle false life-scripts about God we tend to live by. You'll learn practical things we can do that allow the Holy Spirit to train our souls.



James Bryan Smith

There will be time for worship, conversation, and meal sharing. This conference is open to everyone. It is for the longtime church attendee and for the person just beginning a journey of faith. Many of us spend years and thousands of dollars training for careers that last only a few decades. Why not spend one weekend training for a life's work that will last forever?

The conference will be held Friday, February 18, 6:30-9:30 p.m., and Saturday, February 19, 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Childcare (infants through second grade) will be provided. Cost is \$20 for one person or \$30 for two - so bring a guest! Online registration is now available at www.clpc.org.

FEBRUARY 18-19

DUERR LECTURE SERIES 2011

“Is God Necessary? A Case for Christian Faith”

The speaker for the 14th annual Duerr Lecture Series at St. Philip Presbyterian, February 20-22 will be the Rev. Dr. Fairfax F. Fair, pastor of Highland Presbyterian Church in Louisville. Her lecture series, “Is God Necessary? A Case for Christian Faith,” will address questions such as whether, with our increasingly technological society, belief in an unseen heavenly deity has become an archaic idea, an example of obsolete thinking.



Fairfax Fair

A lifelong Presbyterian, Dr. Fair currently serves on the Board of the Presbyterian Outlook, the Pastor Advisory Board of the Board of Pensions, PC(USA), the Reforming Ministry Advisory Board, PCUSA, and the Kentucky Refugee Ministries Board, amongst others. She also served as the Office of the General Assembly staff for the committee to study the addition of the Belhar Confession to the *Book of Confessions*. Previously she served as Moderator of New Covenant Presbytery and as a Board member of the Texas Presbyterian Foundation.

Mark your calendar to hear this engaging speaker help us understand the challenges to belief in God in our egocentric, secular world. Fairfax will preach Sunday, February 20 (8:30 and 11:00) and present lectures each evening at 7:00 p.m. Child care is available for all ages for each lecture by calling the church office, 713 622-4807. St. Philip is located at 4807 San Felipe at Loop 610.

FEBRUARY 26-27



Bruce Reyes-Chow

former moderator of the PC(USA), is coming to the Presbytery of New Covenant, Saturday and Sunday
February 26-27
at Southminster PC
Missouri City.

Schedule for Saturday, Feb. 26:

8:15 -9:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

9:00-11:30 a.m.

Address by Bruce on
“The Church of the 21st Century”

1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

NCD conversation with NCD committee, NCD pastors, and others interested in NCDs.

On Sunday, February 27,

Bruce will be preaching at 10:00 a.m. at Southminster Presbyterian, located at 4200 Cartwright Rd., Missouri City 77459.

Bruce Reyes-Chow was the youngest PC(USA) moderator, as well as the first to use social media to its fullest during his time as moderator. He is also the organizing pastor of Mission Bay Community Church in San Francisco. His passion is reaching unchurched young adults with the gospel of Christ. He is technologically savvy and very knowledgeable of both the PC(USA) and the emerging church. He can also address issues of immigrant ministries and multicultural church.



In Our Prayers

Revs. Casey and Vicky Jones - grandson, Tobin Jones, was born October 17, 2010. Casey is pastor at First Presbyterian, Pearland, and Vicky is associate pastor at MDPC, Houston.

Indian Presbyterian, Livingston - Chartered October 27, 1884, the church commemorated its 126th birthday in 2010.

Chaplain Ben Stewart (Seafarers) and family - Ben's mother died October 26, 2010.

Rev. Daniel Intsiful (Pinecrest Presbyterian) and family - Daniel's brother died recently in Ghana.

Rev. Andrew Stepp (Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian, Houston) and Carleen - daughter, Channing Margaret Stepp, was born October 26, 2010.

Rev. Dave Steane (Executive Pastor, MDPC) and family - Dave's mother, Kathleen Steane, died November 10, 2010.

Family and friends Gerry Baker, wife of the late Pastor Emeritus Rev. Dan Baker of Grace Presbyterian, Houston - Gerry died November 19, 2010. Gerry helped her husband establish Grace Church in 1969. She is remembered as an accomplished artist, writer for *These Days* magazine, and a leader and moderator for Presbyterian Women.

Rev. Eugene Edwards, HR - Gene's uncle died November 27, 2010.

Elder Jody Harrington, former Moderator of New Covenant - her nephew, Patrick Nicosia, died December 1, 2010, from injuries sustained in an auto accident in October.

Revs. Tom and Linda Sharon - Tom's stepmother died December 5, 2010. Tom is pastor at First PC, Freeport and Linda is a Chaplain.

The Revs. Caressa and Jonathan Murray - son, Caleb Alexander Murray, was born December 7, 2010. Caressa is associate pastor at Webster Presbyterian and Jonathan is pastor at St. Paul's Presbyterian in Needville.

Friends and family of the Rev. Charles King (HR) - Charles died December 8, 2010.

Continued prayers for those in recovery and those facing ongoing health concerns and their families - **John Burgeson** (husband of Rev. Carol Burgeson, Member-at-Large serving on Committee on Ministry), **Ellie Cole** (wife of General Presbyter Mike Cole), **Elder George Dobbins** (Seafarers), **Elder Mary Herlitz** (General Council), **Rev. Ken Jack** (HR), **Elder Dave Johnson** (Chair of Ike Recovery Committee), **CLP Debra Battise-Kleinman** (Indian Presbyterian, Livingston), **Rev. Cecil Lang** (HR), **Rev. Carroll Pickett** (HR), and **Elder Rupert Turner** (former Presbytery Moderator).

*HR = Honorably Retired



PRESBYTERY OF
NEW COVENANT

1110 Lovett Boulevard
Houston, TX 77006-3824

January - February 2011 | Volume 17, Edition 1 | #500784

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

DALLAS, TEXAS
PERMIT NO 1625

A publication for the Presbytery of New Covenant

www.pbyofnewcovenant.org www.pbyofnewcovenant.org www.pbyofnewcovenant.org www.pbyofnewcovenant.org