

Presbytery of Boston

E-Connection

January 28, 2010

Our January 25 Presbytery Meeting began with the installation of Elliott Hipp as Moderator, and Arnold Rots as Vice Moderator. Former Moderator Maria Chung preached on Christ our King during worship. An offering of \$1,200 will support PDA's work in Haiti. Presbytery agreed to celebrate Holy Communion during worship at each Presbytery Meeting. Without objection, officers, commissioners to General Assembly, and committee members were elected, and thanks to the diligent hard work of the Nominating Committee, only a few vacancies remain unfilled.

In a civil, respectful, and peaceful atmosphere the presbytery adopted the proposed overture "on amending the Directory for Worship and the Rules of Discipline to support equal protection" and did not adopt the proposed overture "to approve an authoritative interpretation of section W-4.9001 of the Directory for Worship" or the proposed overture concerning the report of the Form of Government Task Force. Prayer surrounded our conversations, sharing of pertinent information, debate, and disagreement, as we demonstrated that we can disagree and live together in the unity of Christ.

While the final vote was being counted, General Presbyter Wayne Parrish shared some observations to supplement his annual report which was included in the packet.

1 Corinthians 2 (*The Message*):

"We, of course, have plenty of wisdom to pass on to you once you get your feet on firm spiritual ground, but it's not popular wisdom, the fashionable wisdom of high-priced experts that will be out-of-date in a year or so. God's wisdom is something mysterious that goes deep into the interior of God's purposes for us. You don't find it lying around on the surface. It's not the latest message, but more like the oldest – what God determined as the way to bring out God's very best in us. The experts of our day haven't a clue about what this eternal plan is."

As I look back over the past 6 years, there is much to give thanks for; but with the rapid changes in society, there are few certain answers about what the future of our presbytery will look like, and we need to remain nimble and agile, flexible, and ready to improvise as we respond to where the Spirit leads.

As we are empowered by our passion for participating in the work Jesus has called us to as faithful disciples, we may have to cross borders; engage people who are "foreigners"; negotiate with people who think differently; and, even sometimes, do a little demolition to the existing structures so that our healing may lead us also to take up our mats and walk – maybe even dance.

But if we are to join in this dance, we must shift the culture of our presbytery and our churches to an external, missional perspective. We are failing to offer the world the message of a Gospel that is life-saving and a Gospel community that is "soul-safe." Our message to the world often focuses on the opportunities the church can provide rather than on the power of the Gospel to transform lives. The quality of the community that we

offer to the world is often spiritually and emotionally unsafe, and tends to focus on keeping the church alive. Institutional survival is of little interest to this generation of seekers.

The deeper message is not that we must change or our churches will close; it is that we are failing one another, failing the world, failing our God, and betraying the beauty and wonder of the Gospel by the way we are living.

We begin this process, then, with repentance in both the Hebrew perspective (change your behavior) and the Greek perspective (change your mind).

Presbyteries are in a time of flux, and my sense is that as we seek to focus externally—not just keeping the structure and our committees working effectively—but partnering with our congregations for health and transformation, my focus in the coming months will be on *listening* to our pastors and Sessions. I hope to visit each session to hear your response to a couple of questions:

- How does Presbytery currently strengthen and support the health and vitality of this congregation, its leaders, and its pastor?
- If there was no PoB, how would it affect the life and health of your congregation and your pastor?
- What are the top three things Presbytery can provide to strengthen and encourage your church in its mission?

As I ponder the role of a G P in the medical sense, I envision meeting with churches for an “annual check up” to insure health and well-being for the future. We hope to continue leadership development, assisting pastors and leaders in the movement from management to leadership – a process Ed White described in his workshops with us.

Our mission statement begins with a challenge to strengthen healthy, growing, viable congregations. That will require trust within the congregation, as well as with presbytery. Building trust will require respect for our different gifts, callings, and divergent viewpoints. We will need excellent resources to equip our pastors, and provide support and encouragement through Sabbath days, regional gatherings for study and discussion, coaching, and ongoing workshops, theological conversations, and connecting with programs proven to be effective in growing disciples and empowering every church member to reach out and share the faith naturally and comfortably.

In the process we will develop relationships that can be relied on even when we encounter differences. That’s what our connectional system can provide: Respect; Resources; Relationships; Trust.

The character and culture of our Presbytery will evolve and change, not through a new structure and new mission statement. Together we will work through the new realities of shared partnerships with SNE and NNE, as we anticipate that the structure of synods will disappear, and at a national level as our GAMC becomes clearer in its focus on congregations transformed, redeveloped, equipped, and ready to take the Good News to the world; not just maintain the status quo.

I am excited by this journey, and its potential to bring hope and healing to our presbytery; energy and focus to our mission; and a joyful celebration of the thriving and exciting congregations that emerge from tradition and history ready to meet the challenges of our time. Are you ready to embrace God's deeper wisdom that always seeks the best for us, and our world? I am grateful for this opportunity to continue our partnership together.

Rev. Wayne Parrish, General Presbyter



The Presbytery of Boston
and The Congregation of
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church
joyfully invite you to a
Service of Worship for the Installation of

Rev. Charles “Chip” Stapleton, III

as Pastor of
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Sunday, January 31, 2010
at 3 o'clock in the afternoon

Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church
701 Foundry Street
Easton, MA

A reception will follow.

Presbytery of Boston Meetings

FEBRUARY

- 3 – CPM, 5:00, CHPC, Somerville
- 4 – COM, 7:00, NPC, Newton
- 15 – *President's Day, Presbytery office closed*
- 18 – S&B, 7:00, NPC
CS&D, 7:30, NPC
- 22 – CEM, 1:30, NPC
- 25 – Council, 7:00, NPC

MARCH

- 8 – Reports Deadline
- 22 – Presbytery Meeting, Clinton

Prayer Concerns & Celebrations

For the people of Haiti, suffering the catastrophic effects of the recent earthquake, and for a continued outpouring of help from the rest of the world.

Please pray for Sharon Wright, who recently fell and broke her ankle.

Prayers for Lisa and her children, Vickie and Kendra.

Continued prayers for Alice Hageman and Mario DaSilva, as each recuperates from surgery.

Please pray for Jennifer Dewar, who is recovering from pneumonia.

Rev. Young Ghil Lee will be away Feb. 1-18 in New Zealand, where he will be presenting the keynote speech for the meeting of the Korean Oversea denominations. The representatives of seven denominations are attending.

Rev. Rick Spalding has been in Nicaragua with a group of students, and when he returns, Rick will be taking a leave in California in February to continue work on his D.Min. He would appreciate your prayers.

Anne Crane, our PoB PCUSA Mission Advocate, just returned from a productive visit to the Congo. Let the PoB office know, and she can share with your congregation DVD's, photos, and information on the Presbyterian schools and medical work

FPC of Worcester received a \$1,000 reward for its Multicultural Church story, one of five churches awarded this amount for the 2009 Multicultural Church essay contest. Worcester's story was prepared by Deacon Lesa McWalters, who attended the 2008

Multicultural Church Conference in San Antonio, TX. Lesa is now spearheading FPC Worcester's mission outreach to the Burmese Refugee Project in Worcester.

Haiti Relief Fundraiser **Saturday, January 30, 2010**

Join City Mission Society for this special opportunity to support relief efforts for families in Boston affected by the massive earthquake in Haiti this Saturday, 12:00 - 5:00 p.m., at True Vine Church
40 Norfolk Street
Dorchester, MA 02124

African Authentics
will sell their products to help
Haitian Relief efforts:
Stone Sculptures - Jewelry - Scarves and more!
&
Haitian musician Gifrantz will perform at 4:00 p.m.

All sale proceeds will benefit
Mayor Menino's City of Boston's
Haitian Family Relief Fund
For more information-
contact the church at (617) 287-1600
or the event organizer at (617) 969-6378

“Become Comfortable with Conflict”

The January issue of the *Parish Paper* is entitled, "Become Comfortable with Conflict" and is available on the Presbytery of Boston website, along with a great selection of back issues. Go to www.presbyteryofboston.org and put your cursor over the “Newsletters” tab. A link will become available through the word “Newsletters.” Click on it and then scroll down the page (below the *E-Connection* list) to the link for the “*Parish Paper*.” Please note that you will need your web account username and password to access the *Parish Paper*.

Ordination Anniversaries

Kevin Ford	1/6/91	19 years
Judson Dolphin	1/14/73	37 years
Ara Heghinian	1/16/94	16 years
David Currie	2/3/85	25 years
Sidney Maxwell	2/5/56	54 years
Abigail Henrich	2/10/02	8 years
Wayne Parrish	2/16/86	24 years
Hee An Choi	2/23/03	7 years
Justus Fennel	2/25/57	53 years
Dennis Friedrich	2/25/79	31 years
Leslie McKinney	2/25/01	9 years

Congratulations and thank you!

Presbyterian Outlook Webinars

“Preaching through Lent: Preparing Sermons on the Lectionary Passages”

Join New Testament scholar, preacher, and author David Bartlett for a one-hour Webinar in the comfort of your own home or office on Tuesday, February 2 at 2:00 PM Eastern time. David Bartlett is Professor of New Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga., and author of many commentaries, books on preaching, and most notably, co-author with Barbara Brown Taylor of the three volume series, *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary*. Price is \$29.95 for this timely and valuable lecture and discussion.

Mark your calendar for our next Webinar: *“Fresh Ideas for Holy Week Worship Services,”* featuring David Gambrell on Tuesday, March 2 at 2 PM ET, 11 AM PT.

For more information: gkunkel@pres-outlook.org

Upcoming Programs at Rolling Ridge

“Join Retreat Leader, (and executive Director of Rolling Ridge), Larry Peacock on **Tuesday, February 2, 2010** for “LEADING FROM THE HEART.”. In this day-apart retreat, we will look at four keys to being heart-centered people who bring light into leadership situations.”

“**Wednesday, February 10, 2010**, join retreat leader Herb Pearce for “THE ENNEAGRAM” from 9:30am-3:30pm.

For more information about these programs and registration, contact Rolling Ridge in North Andover, MA at: the staff@rollingridge.org

Presbytery of Boston Theology Book Group

“Our next date is February 9, 10-11:30 at the Needham Church. We're finishing "Becoming Divine." When we meet in March, we will begin looking at our next book, "The Case for God" by Karen Armstrong.”

Prescription for Change

“The next two weeks could decide the fate of our nation's health care reform as Congress returns to Washington for intense negotiations on what goes in a final health care bill. You may want to send an email to your Senators and Representative with a list of critical must-haves in a final reform bill -- insurance coverage that is truly affordable; real reforms that hold insurance companies accountable to customers and taxpayers; a Patient's Bill of Rights that, among other things, makes sure my choice of doctors is protected, even if I change insurance plans; etc. Each of you will have ideas as to what this final bill should include. Please take a minute and send your own email through Consumers Union's website, www.PrescriptionforChange.org. These next few weeks are so important in this historic struggle --help make sure the needs you feel are important are put before the powerful lobbying interests of the insurance industry, etc. <http://www.PrescriptionforChange.org>. Thank you!”

Board of Pensions Mileage Rates for 2010

Beginning Jan. 1 the standard mileage rates are:

- 50 cents per mile for business miles
- 16.5 cents per mile for medical or moving purposes

14 cents per mile in service of charitable organizations.

Events Calendar

February 4 – “*Emerging Leadership for An Emerging World.*” Andover-Newton Theological Seminary invites you to spend an evening with **Brian McLaren**. The talk begins at 7:30 p.m. at the **First Baptist Church in Newton, 848 Beacon St., Newton, MA**. Free and open to the public. For additional information, email: jwalker@ants.edu or call 617-964-1100, ext. 316.

February 10 – “*BU Presidential Lecture on Clean Energy & Sustainability.*” Enabling a Clean Energy Future with Melanie A. Kenderdine, Executive Director, MIT Energy

Initiative, 4 to 5:15 p.m. **Photonics Building, Room 206. 8 Saint Mary's Street, Boston, MA.** Register now at www.bu.edu/energy

March 19-20 – 2010 World Mission Initiative Conference. The theme of the conference this year, to take place March 19-20, 2010 at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, is: *God Says Go!* (Genesis 12:1-3) Keynote Speakers are Australian missiologist and author Michael Frost and a pastor and missionary from Iran. For more information please visit: www.worldmissioninitiative.org.

March 19-22 – “A Place to Call Home: Immigrants, Refugees, and Displaced Peoples” Ecumenical Advocacy Days. Washington D.C. website: www.advocacydays.org ; email: info@advocacydays.org

March 21-23 – Ministering to the Missing Generation. Guest speaker The Rev. Carol Howard Merritt is author of *Tribal Church: Ministering to the Missing Generation*. Join us as she shares her insights and thoughts on evangelism of those who are leaving the church as they are leaving their parents’ home. At Stony Point, NY. See: www.stonypoint.org or call 845-786-5674 ext. 107. ***Note* - Scholarship funding is available through the Presbytery of Boston’s Committee on Congregation Support & Development.**

April 23-25 - “Leaving FOOTPRINTS in the Sand” – The PW Spring Spiritual Retreat will be held at Christ the King Retreat House in Syracuse, NY. The retreat leader is Barbara Johnson from Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery. The cost for two nights lodging (single room), all meals, and the program is \$195.00 prior to April 9, 2010 and \$215.00 after that. The registration deadline is April 15. Scholarships are available. For more information, contact Gail Banks at 105 Whedon Rd., Apt. 20, Syracuse, NY 13219.

April 24-27 – “The Leading Edge -- A multicultural/multiracial future” Guests: Diana Butler Bass, Robert P. Jones, Eric Law, Jacqui Lewis, Traci West, Paul Tough, Michael Livingston. NYC, NY. For more information: www.middleproject.org or (212) 477-0666.

April 30-May 3 - “Celebrating a Decade of Sisterhood” – The 2010 Women’s Healing Retreat will be held at St. Joseph by the Sea in South Mantoloking, NJ. For more information, contact Kim Nodoro at 5 Coolidge Ct., Califon, NJ 07830 or kimno@aol.com.

May 5 – Refugee Immigration Ministry Concert, Old South Church, Boston, 7:00 p.m. RIM contact: Phone: 781-322-1011 Web-site: www.r-i-m.net

May 14-16 - Horizons Bible Study Workshop – “Journeys through Revelation: Apocalyptic Hope for Today,” by Barbara Rossing. The workshop will be held at the Stony Point Conference Center in Stony Point, NY.