

Presbytery of Boston
E-Connection
November 23, 2011

In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful

GRADYE PARSONS, STATED CLERK, GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful,
In the Lord I will rejoice!
Look to God, do not be afraid;
Lift up your voices: the Lord is near,
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This song by Jacques Berthier (Sing the Faith #2195) is one of my favorites of all the Taizé music. It combines the ingredients of gratitude, joy, fear, and the desire for the Lord to be near.

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November is the season when we celebrate the harvest of the year and gather with family and friends to give thanks to God. That joy is diminished by the reality of so many folks out of work, so many neighbors who have lost their homes because of finances or natural disasters, and the many people who have lost all hope.

In the early 1930s, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “[Jesus] is the Lord of fear; it knows him as its Lord and yields to him alone. Therefore, look to him in your fear. Think about him, place him before your eyes and call him. . . .The fear will yield and fade, and you will become free through faith in the strong and living Savior Jesus Christ” (I Want to Live These Days with You, p. 134).

This was a strong affirmation to make in the midst of Depression-era Germany. I especially like the image of Jesus as Lord of fear – a Lordship based on our resurrection hope in the face of our greatest fear, death, and estrangement from God. Bonhoeffer also acknowledges the enslavement that fear can exert on our lives and faith; yet, in Christ we are freed up to live as God’s children in this world.

It may be tough to pray thankfully at your house this year. So pray the prayer that is honest and allows God in Jesus Christ to hear your fears. And may the peace that passes all understanding enter your heart and the hearts of those you love.

Presbytery Meetings

NOVEMBER

24 – Thanksgiving, Presbytery office closed

DECEMBER

1 – Special Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m., NPC

6 – Nominating Committee, 11:30 a.m., NPC

7 – CPM, 6:00 p.m., NPC

8 – Committee on Ministry, 7:00 p.m., NPC

Stewardship & Budget, 7:00 p.m., NPC

Join Good Shepherd in Celebrating

All are invited to join with Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church of the Cameroon and the Christian Women's Fellowship of the PCC as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Christian Women's Fellowship. The celebration, which is occurring on the same day in Cameroon and around the world (wherever there are CWF circles), is being held on November 27th as the service of worship for the day at Good Shepherd, 701 Foundry St. Easton. The celebration will include singing, praise, fellowship and proclamation of the Word. We hope that many will be able to join us as we celebrate and mark this wonderful day in the life of our community, our Cameroonian brothers and sisters and the Church of Jesus Christ. All are welcome to attend and stay after the service for a celebratory meal. Contact Chris Stapleton, Pastor at Good Shepherd: 508.238.0994.

Advent Resources

Presbyterians Today “Unfolding Journey,” 2011 Advent Calendar. This popular devotional resource, produced by *Presbyterians Today* magazine, contains Scripture readings, meditations and prayers for each day of the Advent season. This year’s engaging foldout format is like a roadmap through Advent. Take it along with you in your purse or coat pocket for prayerful reflection at free moments during your day. To order: Call (800) 524-2612 and request PDS 12116-11-011 or order online: store.pcusa.org.

Christmas Joy Offering video. This inspiring new video explores how the gifts of Presbyterians through the Christmas Joy Offering reflect Christ’s glory. Through our generous giving in this season of light, we honor God by extending Christ’s love to members of the whole family of God. Download it today from the Christmas Joy website: <http://gmc.pcusa.org/ministries/specialofferings/christmas-joy-offering/> and post it to your congregation’s website, and/or order it by calling (800) 524-2612, referencing item #PDS 12136-11-315.

Attention All Worship Planners

The Presbyterian Outlook commissioned noted Presbyterian hymn writer Carolyn Winfrey Gillette to prepare four Advent hymn texts to be sung to familiar beloved Christmas carol tunes everyone enjoys singing. The lyrics are based upon one of the lectionary texts of each Sunday.

So, this Advent, you can lead your congregation in singing, for example,

- On the 2nd Sunday: "O God, We Hear Your Word of Grace" to the tune of "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," and
- On the 3rd Sunday: "John Came Preaching, Bearing Witness" to the tune of "Angels from the Realms of Glory."

You can download the lyrics of each of these hymn-carols free of charge on the Presbyterian Outlook Web site or you can purchase a print master with full musical manuscript (like appears in a hymnal) in two sizes (regular and large print) for just \$9.95 per Sunday. Or, purchase the complete set -- including Christmas (8* hymn-carols in all) -- for just \$35.00.

Go to: <http://www.pres-outlook.com/component/content/article/51-special-offers/11948-new-hymn-to-enhance-your-advent-worship.html>. After you download the master you can print as many copies as needed for your worship services.

**Most Sundays include a second bonus hymn-carol from a previous year that also fits the Scripture text(s) for that day.*

Download the hymn-carols that will have your congregation engaging the Advent message in the Christmas spirit all season long!

NOTE: Contact Wayne Parrish if you are interested: wayneparrish@comcast.net

Prayer Concerns & Celebrations

Please pray for Arthur Koh, and for his family and friends, during these final days of Arthur's terminal illness.

Please pray for 6-year-old Zachariah (Fourth Church), who has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

Continued prayers for Susan Currie, Bob Ferguson, and Mark Wells.

****Note:** If you would like to share your prayer requests with the Presbytery of Boston, please contact us at presbyteryofboston@verizon.net. **We continue to pray for the ongoing needs of those whose concerns are not listed.**

Events

***Note: If you know of an event that would be of interest to the Presbytery of Boston members, please send your information to: presbyteryofboston@verizon.net.**

November 27 - All are invited to join with Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church of the Cameroon and the Christian Women's Fellowship of the PCC as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Christian Women's Fellowship, as the service of worship for the day at Good Shepherd, 701 Foundry St. **Easton**. The celebration will include singing, praise, fellowship and proclamation of the Word. We hope that many will be able to join us as we celebrate and mark this wonderful day in the life of our community, our Cameroonian brothers and sisters and the Church of Jesus Christ. All are welcome to attend and stay after the service for a celebratory meal.

December 4 – *International Dinner with Refugee Immigration Ministry*. Celebrate 25 years of sharing the journey. Beginning at 5:00 p.m. at Anthony's of Malden, 105 Canal Street, **Malden**, MA. Enjoy international food, silent auction, awards ceremony, and music. Tickets: adults \$40, children \$17, children ages 1-6 free. Purchase tickets online at: www.r-i-m.net. Parking is available and the site is two blocks from the Malden Center T-station on the Orange Line.

December 6 – “*Wrestling with the Text.*” The Massachusetts Bible Society December Luncheon with MBS Executive Director Anne Robertson, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Paulist Center Library, 5 Park Street, **Boston**. To Register call (617) 969-9404. A \$15 donation is suggested to help cover the cost of food.

Are you disappointed that you may have missed out on the MBS's 2011 Beck Lecture Series, featuring Adam Nicolson? Did you attend the lecture, but think you've forgotten some key facts? Have no fear, we've got the video edition of his excellent lecture, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible*. The link to the video is on the MassBible website: <http://massbible.org/adam-nicolson-gods-secretaries-video>

December 8 – *Just Giving at Christmas.* A reflection on Christian generosity and creative gift ideas, sponsored by the Boston faith & Justice Network. 7:30 p.m. at the Park Street Church library, **Boston**. This event is free but requires your registration: www.justgivingatchristmas.eventbrite.com

December 11 – *A Celtic Christmas – Boston String Quartet*, 3:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church in Needham, 1458 Great Plain Avenue, **Needham**, MA. \$20.00/adults; \$5.00/children under 13. Tickets are limited, so rsvp today: 781-444-3728 or office@needhampresbyterian.org

Mark Your Calendars and Don't Miss These Special Events in 2012

February 16-18, 2012 Disaster Response Training for Presbytery Teams - - Stony Point Center, Stony Point, NY. The training is designed to prepare and energize **presbytery teams of 4-6 persons** each from all the presbyteries in the region. The cost of **\$190 per person** covers room and board at Stony Point for 2 nights, double occupancy, and 7 meals. To receive a team registration form, please write to: saraburke@elizabethpresbytery.org or phone 908-755-3776, ext. 6.

April 28, 2012 – Presbytery Day, at **Needham** Presbyterian Church. Presbytery Day will feature Eric H. F. Law and trainers from the Kaleidoscope Institute. There will be a program for youth, which will include the preparation of a media presentation for use later in the day. Please encourage youth (Middle School and High School) and young adults to attend. The adult courses will be of interest to everyone involved in the life of their local church or the Presbytery. Don't miss this special opportunity!

June 27-July 8 – Summer Youth Institute, sponsored by the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, to meet at GA. A brochure is available in the Presbytery office. See: www.pts.edu/syi

Warm Coats for Boston's Children and Youth

Join City Mission Society of Boston in our effort to provide thousands of coats to at-risk children and youth

Coat Boston Distribution Event -- November 19, 2011

Russell Elementary School, 750 Columbia Road, Dorchester

9:00 AM to Noon

November 12 - 20, 2011 is National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. If you want to get involved, it is not too late for you to **help City Mission Society of Boston distribute thousands of coats** to inner city children and teens. The weather may be balmy now, but we know it is going to get colder. Many school age children miss days of school when they don't have a warm coat. A new coat also means that families have more money available for other expenses such as heat and food.

Citizens Bank Foundation has once again given us a generous grant which will help purchase many coats, but we still need more. There seem to be more requests this year for new coats. On Saturday, **November 19 from 9:00 - noon**, City Mission Society and Citizens Bank Foundation will be presenting over 400 coats to the families of students at the **Russell Elementary School at 750 Columbia Rd in Dorchester**. Join us for this festive event. **Diane Patrick, Mayor Menino, and others will be assisting with the distribution.** Bring a coat and encourage friends and family to donate as well.

Following this event, we will then pack and distribute hundreds of more coats for distribution to the students of the **Boston Public Schools Homeless Resource Center, Roxbury YouthWorks, Children's Services of Roxbury and Mothers for Justice and Equality, as well as our Youth Peace and Empowerment Leadership Program.** These coats will be distributed on Monday,

Dec. 5.

In the past two years, City Mission Society of Boston in partnership with Citizens Bank Foundation has distributed **over 5,000 warm winter coats**. In the winter of 2011, we hope to be able to distribute over 2,000 coats.

You can help make this possible!

- Donate money to purchase **new winter** coats.
- Tell your friends, family and others about **Coat Boston**.
- Host an event and ask people to bring new winter coats.
- Encourage your church, school, office or other organization to participate.
- Set up a collection box for new coats at a location.
- Volunteer to sort and pack coats for distribution.
- To get involved emails us at cmcdonald@cmsboston.org or call (617) 742-6830



City Mission Society of Boston