

Presbytery of Boston

October E-Connection

Invitation to Church-wide Fast on Global Food Crisis

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Because we are called by Christ to respond to the cry of the poor, we invite you to take action with us by joining in an important new church-wide initiative, which we pray will make a difference in the lives of those who are suffering in the wake of the global food crisis.

Starting this October, Presbyterians will be encouraged on a monthly basis to adopt the ancient spiritual practice of fasting, beginning on Friday evening, and ending with Communion on a Sunday morning, where the Sacrament is regularly observed. The year-long cycle of prayer and fasting – or the partaking of simple meals – will end October 16, 2009, on *World Food Day*. Interpretive materials for each month will be available through www.pcusa.org/foodcrisis.

Won't you join us as we stand in solidarity with the poor and the hungry, discerning with God's help faithful responses and meaningful coordinated actions to lift up our worldwide community through this global crisis?

Faithfully yours,

The Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow, Moderator of the 218th General Assembly

Elder Linda Bryant Valentine, Executive Director, General Assembly Council

The Rev. Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

Mark Your Calendars - Presbytery Day will be on Saturday, October 25! See the Attachment that Accompanied This Newsletter for Further Information.

The Institute for Christian Leadership

The Institute for Christian Leadership is offering a *Lay Pastoral Ministry Program in Spanish* starting October 25th. ICL's Executive Director, Dr. Mario da Silva, asks that churches please share this information by including it in their bulletins. If you have any questions, please contact Mario by email at: mariofrombrazil@hotmail.com and lrc@newtonpres.org.

“Year of the Organ” Concert at the Presbyterian Church in Burlington

The public is invited to a special organ concert on Sunday, October 19 celebrating “The King of Instruments” in this International Year of the Organ. Featured will be Nancy Timmerman, the organist and choir director of The Presbyterian Church in Burlington, the host of the event. The church recently installed a Rodgers Windsor 840 organ, and the evening will include a free-will offering for the organ fund. Music will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the church at 335 Cambridge Street in Burlington. Selections are expected to include “Wachet Auf” by J.S. Bach, “Pastoral Song” and “Pasticcio” by Jean Langlais, “Largo from ‘New World Symphony’ by Antonin Dvorak, “Voluntary in G” by John Stanley, “Psalm XIX” by Marcello, and “Menuet from ‘Samson’” by G. F. Handel.

For more information, contact the church at 781-272-9190 or burlpres@aol.com. or check the church’s website: www.burlingtonpres.org.

Ballot Question No. 1

The Massachusetts Council of Churches Board of Directors voted unanimously on September 25, 2008 to urge Massachusetts citizens to **vote No on ballot Question # 1** which would eliminate the state income tax. Board members expressed deep concern that such a measure would slash state services to the most vulnerable and at-risk citizens. Board members received cards from the Coalition for Our communities affirming their commitment to vote no and were encouraged to share with their congregations why a no vote on the income tax proposal will in fact lead to drastic cuts in services. For further information, contact MCC Executive Director Rev. Jack Johnson at 617-523-2771.

“The Five Dysfunctions of a Team”

CCS&D has purchased the video, which comes with a guide and workbook. You may borrow this from the POB office for use with your session, at a retreat, etc. Just give us enough time to work out the schedule, and get it back to the office promptly so others can use these resources. A Summary of the Five Dysfunctions is below:

Dysfunction 1: Absence of Trust

Dysfunction 2: Fear of Conflict

Dysfunction 3: Lack of Commitment

Dysfunction 4: Avoidance of Accountability

Dysfunction 5: Inattention to Results

How might pastors and session leaders develop the trust to truly share effective leadership?

Ed White shared this challenge when he showed the DVD (now available for you to borrow) at our 2008 workshop. Members of Ft. Square Presbyterian Church in sought to apply what they learned at that workshop and have agreed to lead the Friday evening session next year, reporting on how this has changed the dynamics of trust for their leadership team. Ed White will guide Saturday's discussion of **management vs. leadership**

Mark your calendars now for our follow-up **Empowering Leadership Workshop III Feb. 6-7, 2009**. Details and registration will be available at the November Presbytery Meeting.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Issues Appeal

“...you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.” Isaiah 58:12

Dear Colleagues,

The devastation caused by Hurricane Ike in mid-September was massive – nearly on the scale of Katrina, but with a much broader path of destruction. Nearly 100,000 homes were destroyed and lives uprooted in the United States alone. Caribbean nations like Haiti and Cuba not only lost homes, but saw crops wiped out and infrastructure obliterated. The immediate and long-term recovery needs are immense.

As with every disaster, Presbyterians are on the ground in Texas, Louisiana, Haiti, and other places impacted by Ike – distributing food, clearing debris, providing shelter, meeting human needs wherever they are found. Throughout the United States, Presbyterians are eager to help. Our hearts respond to the scenes of lives uprooted, and we long to lend a hand – either volunteering with hands-on work, or providing financial support to speed the recovery efforts.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance serves as a conduit for this response – quickly assessing the damage and channeling aid to the places where it is needed most. Four PDA response teams are already at work in Galveston, Beaumont, Orange, Port Natchez, Lake Charles, Houston, San Antonio and elsewhere. Our mission personnel in Haiti are coordinating response there as well, as are our partners in

Cuba. PDA is your way to respond. We don't respond on behalf of Presbyterians – we respond as and with Presbyterians.

A week after the storm, damage assessments are still coming in. Floodwaters are still receding, and power is still being restored. For many, the extent of the devastation will not be fully known for some time to come. Church structures have seen moderate damage – their communities are devastated.

PDA and the GAC will be sending out waves of communication about the response to these disasters over the coming weeks. We are launching a **national appeal** to support the response. An **email** will be sent to all pastors by the end of this week, alerting them to the appeal and to resources available on the **PDA website** to help congregations respond. These include prayers, bulletin inserts, and other tools.

An appeal **postcard** will be sent to all churches next week. A **video** minute for mission is in the works, which should also be available next week. The **Presbyterian News Service** will continue to report on the many ways Presbyterians are offering a visible witness of Christ's love and compassion as they step into the breach and help restore the lives of those hit hardest.

This has been an extraordinary year for disasters. In the first nine months of 2008, PDA has responded to 35 disasters in 40 presbyteries here at home, and with our partners to another 12 disasters worldwide. In the wake of all this, the need is greater than ever – and we are pulling out all the stops in our efforts to respond. We are grateful for your role in helping congregations respond, and ask for whatever help you can provide in lifting up this appeal within your presbytery.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, concerns, or ideas of additional ways we can get the word out.

Blessings,

Sara Pottschmidt Lisherness

Director, Compassion, Peace and Justice
General Assembly Council
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Bailout Bill Helps Charitable Organizations

Colleagues, here is a quick outline of the social welfare provisions of the bailout bill, including some that might help churches and charities in their work:

1. Congress restored the charitable IRA rollover for 2008 and 2009. This allows donors 70 ½ and older to rollover up to 100,000 each year from their IRA or Roth IRA to a public charity (that's us) without having to count this as a distribution - so no tax to the donor
2. Food Inventory Giving Incentive allows producers, shippers, stores to give food products to relief organizations with enhanced deductions.
3. Midwestern Disaster Tax Relief lifts the limits on charitable donations to help flood and other disaster victims in the Midwest.
4. Alternative Minimum Tax Relief 22 million middle-income Americans will be exempt from this additional tax because inflation moved the brackets up.
5. Congress will prohibit discrimination against mental health benefits in health insurance.
6. Congress raised the FDIC insurance on bank accounts from 100,000 to 250,000.
7. And, of course, the Troubled Assets Relief Program which authorizes the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase \$700 billion in troubled mortgage-related assets; requires Congressional oversight; restricts excessive executive compensation; and helps homeowners by excluding from taxable income any of their debts that are canceled as part of refinancing or foreclosures.

Kurt R. Kaboth, Director of Development, National Council of Churches

Note: *The above text is an excerpt from the [Independent Sector](#)*

Mission Yearbooks

Orders must be prepaid and then picked up at the November Presbytery meeting to avoid shipping charges. See information at <http://www.pcusa.org/missionyearbook/>. Please fill out the form below and send to the Presbytery of Boston office in hard copy (210 Herrick Road, Newton Centre, MA 02459) or by e-mail (presbyteryofboston@verizon.net).

**ORDER FORM FOR 2009 MISSION YEARBOOK
FOR PRAYER & STUDY**

Church: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Person Placing Order: _____

Mission Yearbook **Quantity** _____ **@ \$7.50 each** **Total \$** _____

Children's Mission Yearbook **Quantity** _____ **@ \$7.50 each** **Total \$** _____

Grand Total \$ _____

(Note: Prices include shipping)

Are you paying for your order in advance? _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

If so, please make checks payable to: The Presbytery of Boston.

Mission Yearbooks and Children's Mission Yearbooks will be distributed at the November 17 presbytery meeting.

Prayer Concerns & Celebrations

Congratulations to Kevin Hershey and Rob Mark for their October weddings!

Prayers for Diane Cusumano, whose aunt passed away on October 8.

Peg Ferguson and Diane Cusumano are both scheduled to have surgery in late October.

Wren Collé asks for prayers for her mother, who will soon begin receiving hospice care, for her father who is ill with cancer and taking chemo, and for their family and friends during this very painful time.

Rob and Alison John are in Africa this month with a small group of pastors through The Outreach Foundation (a PCUSA mission organization).

Presbytery of Boston Classifieds

Coordinator of Education/Family Ministry

Part-time Position (10-12 hrs/week)

The Presbyterian Church in Burlington, MA

A vibrant, small congregation blessed with many young families is seeking a committed, creative person to help coordinate educational activities and nurture new, family-based ministry. Our goal is the growth of faithful, loving, service-oriented families able to meet the challenges of the surrounding culture and minister to others in their communities. The coordinator will help achieve this goal by supporting the work of our fine C.E. volunteers/teachers, and by developing innovative resources for family ministry: face-to-face activities, internet possibilities (such as family prayers, blogs, and interactive educational content), and outreach events.

Applicants must be able to work collaboratively with C.E. leaders and pastor. Being a self-starter and having good time-managing skills are important. Solid church experience is a must (theological education not required, but a plus).

Contact Elder Paula Sutton (pemerys@yahoo.com) or the church (burlpres@aol.com) for more information. Complete job description at church website: www.burlingtonpres.org. Applicants should submit a letter of interest and resume.

Presbytery of Boston Meeting Calendar

October

15 – Trustees, 12:00, Sudbury

16 – CEM, 6:30, NPC

21 – Nom Com, 11:30, NPC

23 – Council, 7:00, NPC

November

3 – Reports Deadline

4 – CPM, 5:00, Presbytery office

6 – Personnel, 12:30, Needham

COM, 7:00, NPC

11 – ICL, 2:30, NPC

13 – CS&D, 7:30, Presbytery office

17 – Presbytery meeting, Burlington

20 – CEM, 6:30, NPC

26 – POB office closes at noon for Thanksgiving holiday

Upcoming Events

October 16 . Music Festival of Psalm 23, 7-9 p.m. at St. John’s Chapel, Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, MA. Call 617-682-1506 for information.

October 19, “Year of the Organ” concert, Presbyterian Church in Burlington, 6:00 p.m. See article on page 5.

October 19-21, Reverend Professor Peter Gomes to deliver the Massachusetts Bible Society Beck Evening Lectures. See www.massbible.org.

October 20-23 – “Steering Your Way through the Storm: Leadership in Times of Congregational Conflict.” Brookfield, MA. See: www.brookfieldinstitute.org.

October 24 - Take Back Your Time Day, Resources available through MCC (www.masscouncilofchurches.org) and www.timeday.org.

October 25 – Presbytery Day “Multi-cultural Opportunities & Challenges in Our Churches Today.” From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Needham Presbyterian Church.

October 28 – Building a Culture of Peace, Ken Sande, attorney, author, and President of Peacemaker Ministries, at the Ockenga Institute, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA.

November 18 – N.T. Wright at the Ockenga Institute, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA.

November 20 – Religious Leaders’ Summit on Climate & Energy, 11:00 – 2:30, Plymouth Congregational Church, Framingham. Bill McKibben will be the speaker. Requested donation is \$40. Contact Tina Clarke at 413-863-5253 or tclarke@cleanwater.org.

Remember that October is Clergy Appreciation Month!

Ordination Anniversaries for October & November

Stan Johnson	10/5/86	22 years
John Chung	10/8/00	8 years
Horatio Valdez-Romero	10/9/59	49 years
Martha Spear	10/11/87	21 years
Aida Spencer	10/14/73	35 years
William Spencer	10/14/73	35 years
Allen Fairfax	10/24/04	4 years
John Buchanan	10/31/56	52 years
Sen-Yuan Su	11/6/83	25 years
Bart Kelso	11/21/82	26 years

Congratulations and thank you!