



Fall 2009

Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of San Jose

Invite all Women

To the Fall Gathering: Beyond Boundaries. . . Our Mission

This gathering will start with lunch, after which we will hear from Gail Parker-Marshall, Synod of the Pacific Representative for the 2008 Global Exchange.

The PW Global Exchange takes place every three years; women from across the United States travel as a group to another part of the world to listen, and to share with sisters in the faith. In the 2008 Exchange participants traveled to the Czech Republic, Ukraine and Hungary. The group visited a prison, a drug rehabilitation facility, the Roma (Gypsy) camps, churches, schools, and homeless shelters; they met women in the Hungarian Parliament, and enjoyed home stays in each country. This past summer women from that area of the world were present at the Churchwide Gathering.

Says Gail, "I was touched deeply during this trip. Adam, a young man in drug rehab made me both laugh and cry with his stories of how drugs affected his life, and his hope of a better future. Seeing the poor Roma Village upset me with the injustice and prejudice. My home visits filled me with joy and laughter as I learned of different cultures, yet how very similar we really are. We learned how the churches in each of these countries are working hard to make other's lives richer through God's grace and mercy."

A charge of \$3.00 per person will be collected for the soup lunch. Proceeds will be given to Second Harvest Food Bank of San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

In support of the backpack program of our presbytery's Refugee Outreach Partnership with Catholic Charities, you may bring one or more of the following items: standard size toiletries (soap, shampoo, comb, brush, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant), and/or warm socks.

**October 17, 2009 (Saturday)
12 Noon to 3:00 pm
Presbyterian Church of Sunnyvale
728 West Fremont Ave., 408-739-1892**

Please respond so that we may prepare enough soup! RSVP to Linda Hagan at ljhagan@sbcglobal.net or 408-255-5879 by Wednesday, October 14, 2009.

Claudia's Column

“Resources... Resources... Resources”

I'm home from the Churchwide Gathering with resources on my mind. You can't attend such an event without picking up resources and learning about others. It's also time for program planning for local PW's so I'm offering the following as suggestions.

1. **Joshua: A Journey of Faith** is the 2009 – 2010 **Horizons** Bible study. I hope all of you will be using this excellent, and mind-stretching, study this year. Author Mary Mikhael will be presenting the study at San Francisco Theological Seminary on Saturday, September 12 and I know I will see many of you there. Did you know that supplemental resources for this study are available in **Horizons** magazine beginning in the July/August 2009 issue and also from **The Presbyterian Outlook** magazine where you can receive a special subscription rate for the magazine issues in which the commentaries, written by the Rev. Rosalind Banbury, occur? To find out more about **The Presbyterian Outlook** offer, contact Gillian Kunkel at gkunkel@pres-outlook.org or 1-800-446-6008.

2. Are you aware of the great resources that already exist in the Presbytery of San Jose? If not, go to the Presbytery's website at www.sanjosepby.org and click on **Mission Advocates**. I will highlight three of our advocates. **Pat Plant, Hunger Action Advocate**, has boundless energy and enthusiasm for all the programs listed next to her name. Especially note the **STEP UP Silicon Valley** campaign to cut poverty in half by 2020. Read them all and see what might fit for you and your PW program. Contact Pat at pat@sanjosepby.org. **Elsa Amboy and Melissa Kreisa, Refugee Ministry Advocates**, work with Catholic Charities to help meet the needs of refugees arriving in our community. Of special note are supplying *Welcome Backpacks* to arriving refugees at the airport and *Refugee Transitions*, a program that assists refugee and immigrant families in becoming self-sufficient in the U.S. by providing volunteer and staff-directed program services that help them attain the English language, life, job, and academic skills they need to succeed in their new communities. Contact Melissa (408-250-2224) and Elsa (408-838-1331) and at refugee@sanjosepby.org.

Concern for Human trafficking. Presbyterian Women has been concerned about trafficking in women and children since the Global Exchange to Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines. This horrendous human rights violation has grown to the second largest illegal trade in the world. The General Assembly (2008) passed a resolution that challenges presbyteries and churches to look for ways to identify trafficked individuals and to advocate and minister to them. At the Churchwide Gathering, I met Brenda Hepler from Lafayette, CA. Working in conjunction with ECPAT-USA, a non-profit children's rights organization whose mission is to protect all children from sexual exploitation, she has created **TassaTags**, luggage tags emblazoned with the ECPAT logo symbolizing a stand against sex slavery and trafficking of children. I will have information and **TassaTags** to show you at the PWP Fall Gathering. In the mean time, you can find out more by going to tassatag.org. To learn more about ECPAT go to ecpatusa.org.

As we live with Joshua this year, may God make us instruments of change in the world in order to make it a better place for all.

**Blessings,
Claudia**

Presbyterian Women is Incorporated

At the recently held Churchwide Gathering of PW, voting representatives to the Business Meeting voted to establish PW as a publicly supported integrated auxiliary of the PC(USA). According to the Internal Revenue Service, an organization is publicly supported if it "receives no more than one-third of its support from gross investment income and more than one-third of its support from contributions, membership fees, and gross receipts from activities related to its exempt functions." An integrated auxiliary of a church is an organization that is "related to a church or convention or association of churches."

PW's new bylaws affirm that it shares common religious doctrines, principles, disciplines and practices with PC(USA).

- PC(USA) has the authority to appoint or remove at least one of PW's officers or directors (e.g., CCT member).
- The name of the organization indicates an institutional relationship with PC(USA).
- PW reports at least annually on its financial and general operations to PC(USA).
- An institutional relationship between PW and PC(USA) is affirmed by the church.

At the national level, PW has been considering incorporation since 2006. The Administrative Committee of the CCT consulted with other mainline denomination's women's organization that have been incorporated for many years. According to Catreli Hunter, 2006-2009 moderator of PW, incorporation will allow PW to establish clear and separate accounting practices, and ensure good stewardship of PW funds in the current economic environment.

Since its formation in 1988, PW has held a covenantal relationship with the PC(USA), and has been the single largest contributor of undesignated funds to support the mission of the church worldwide. That covenantal relationship remains in place.

Churchwide Gathering Generosity

Women attending the Churchwide Gathering gave generously to three projects:

The Gathering Offering, received \$35,073.70, plus a \$20,000 gift. The Gathering offering establishes a supplemental grant for women pursuing a theological education in one of the PCUSA-related seminaries. The grant is particularly directed toward women of color.

The Wonder-filled Gift Cards totaled \$69,250 to be given to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and to the Bellewood Presbyterian Homes for Children in the Louisville area.

A hunger program, Cents-Ability, received \$2,974.62.

More Information on Global Exchange

The *Horizons* magazine of March/April 2009 is devoted to information on the countries and programs visited by participants in the Global Exchange. Coverage begins with a historical overview of Presbyterian Mission in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Carpath-Ukraine and Russia, written by Duncan Hansen, for many years the Europe Coordinator for the PC (U.S.A.).

Perhaps least known to U. S. residents are the Roma, and there is a great story about them starting on page 7. "The Roma are an Indo-Aryan ethnic group of about 15 million people, who are dispersed worldwide."

Our speaker for the Fall Gathering, Gail Parker Marshall, is pictured on page 15, as part of an article titled "Among Equals, the Essence of Inter-cultural Exchanges and Interchurch Relationships."

Joshua, A Journey of Faith

There is still time to participate in the 2009—2010 *Horizons* Bible Study. A review of the book of Joshua, the study has already generated lively discussion in Circle meetings at Stone Church, San Jose. Members explored questions on the nature of God, and on War and Peace (is there such a thing as a just war?), as well as on whether there are any parallels between the Israelite movement into Canaan and the situation in the Middle East today.

This new study is written by Mary Mikhael, an elder in the Presbyterian Church in Beirut, Lebanon. She has a Doctor of Education degree from Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary in New York City, and is an Associate Professor of Christian Education at the Near East School of Theology. She became NEST'S first female president in 1994. She is deeply concerned about the role of women in Christian ministry and as decision-makers in society.

Subscribers to *Horizons* Magazine have received their copies, Others can get theirs through Presbyterian Distribution Services, 800/524/2612.

2009 Thank Offering

The Yearly Thank Offering grant recipients have been announced, and are listed and described in the July/August 2009 *Horizons* magazine. To ensure that all the recipients receive proposed amounts, PW's across the United States will give generously to the Thank Offering this fall.

Projects meet criteria established by the Creative Ministries committee, including consistency with mission concerns and policies of the PC (USA), a purpose that meets basic human needs, provides aid that relates directly to the people being served and is a project less than three years old or a new direction for an existing program. A least 40 percent of Thank Offering funds go to health-related projects.

PW Introduces New TRIP Program

PW is now offering Transformation in Partnership (TRIP), a new travel/study program, which provides opportunities for educational and transformational group travel to Global Exchange sites, USA Mission Experience sites, and other points of interest for Presbyterian Women.

The travel group will

- build relationships with sisters across the country and the world,
- engage in the mission partnerships of PW and the PC(USA),
- explore Reformed heritage, and
- grow spiritually through personal challenge and deeper understanding.

Proposed TRIPs:

Russia, May 3-17, 2010: Visit Moscow, Smolensk and St. Petersburg. Participant limit 10. Registration deadline January 15, 2010. Cost \$3,750 per person, including round trip airfare from Detroit, shared accommodations, ground transportation in Russia, sightseeing and all meals.

Women of the Reformation, August 31-September 8, 2010: Encounter Presbyterian faith heritage in the 16th century Reformation in Switzerland and southern France. Participant limit 20. Cost \$1,500 per person, including accommodations, ground transportation, all meals and sightseeing. Airfare is not included.

Czech Republic, Hungary, Carpath Ukraine, October 5—21, 2010. Participant limit 24. Estimated cost is \$3,250 per person, including round trip trans-Atlantic air transportation, ground transportation, shared accommodations, all meals and sightseeing.

For all trips: Participants must be able to climb stairs and walk long distances; must have a valid passport.

Information: Kathy Reeves, 888-728-7228 Ext. 5402; katharine.reeves@pcusa.org.

Justice and Peace

It's a big world, with big problems, but we CAN do something! Peace happens, but doesn't make the front page, or the top news on TV or Radio. **Good** is happening:

Earth – “Living Waters” – check out the website www.livingwatersfortheworld.org and familiarize yourself with the Mission Project of the Presbyterian Synod of the Living Waters. Women, major water gatherers die on their daily trek – in Darfur and other desperate places. Living Waters enables communities to develop local water resources. Locally, California, Clean Water University will take place at Calvin Crest Campground Oct 4-11, 2009. THINK and LIVE outside the bottle: use your own water bottle, water.

Places - Endangered Christian Communities are getting aid through Church World Service such as in Gojra, Pakistan which is surviving attacks on their churches and homes. Flames are fanned by ignorance, fear and displaced anger. Converting to Christianity can be a death sentence. Hope lies in schools for all children like those in Ibillin/Israel where students are educated, and raised to be neighbors.

People – Cocoa Co-operatives and “REVERSE” Trick-or-Treating? This is where we adults pass out to accompanying ‘treater’ parents information about EQUAL EXCHANGE’s cocoa co-operatives where cocoa producing communities get fair prices for their efforts, for schools, clothing, food. Visit the website:

www.equalexchange.coop/reverse-sign-up.

Or, see me at Presbytery – I am getting 200 cards/chocolates to share with the first folks who WILL do this action.

And, simply, we have our everyday place. We can listen to people, concerns. We can question hurtful opinions, rumors. “Is that so?” we can ask. Dialog, one on one, pray together.

Go to Presbytery Mission Fair – Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church – September 19, 2009!

Linda Hagan, Justice and Peace

Honors for Presbytery Staff

At the June meeting of the Presbytery of San Jose, Presbyterian Women thanked members of the Presbytery staff for their support and encouragement and faithful service. The Rev. **Joey Lee**, Executive Presbyter, and Elder **John Loco**, Stated Clerk, each received an Honorary Life Membership. They join an auspicious circle of men who are Honorary Life Members of PW, including former Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Clifton Kirkpatrick, and Elders Mel Goertz and Fred Gropuso of the Stone Church of Willow Glen, San Jose.

Pat Plant, Hunger Action Advocate and Administrative Assistant in the Presbytery office received a certificate for Christian Service and Dedication. She was honored for her energy, enthusiasm and advocacy as she pushes and prods, making the world a better place for the hungry, and homeless, and working for a GREEN world.

The Linkage is the newsletter of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of San Jose and connects women in the counties of Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz.

You may receive **Linkage** by email by sending your email address to the editor. Or, look for **The Linkage** on the web site of the Presbytery of San Jose. www.sanjosepby.org.

The Linkage is also available through “snail mail.” It costs \$1.00 per person per issue (\$4.00 per year) for printing and postage; currently there are about 125 people on the mailing list. Donations to help defray this cost are welcome. Checks payable to Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of San Jose (PWPSJ) and marked “Linkage” may be mailed to Linda Hagan, 7940 Fall Court, Cupertino, CA 94014-4114.

The Linkage is published 4 times a year. Editor is Alice Thorn, phone (408) 267-7584 or email alice_in_blue@sbcglobal.net.

Remember

October 17 Fall Gathering, Sunnyvale
January 10, 2010 Epiphany Tea
March 13, 2010 Spring Gathering
May 1, 2010 Spiritual Nurture Retreat
June 6, 2010 Annual Gathering

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is the place to order most Presbyterian
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horizons@cambeywest.com (email)
www.pcusa.org/horizons (web site, no
change)

All other PW materials will remain at the PDS
warehouse, including back issues of *Horizons*
magazine and the Bible study inventory.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
In the Presbytery of San Jose
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