

# The Monarch Messenger

## The Newsletter of The Presbytery of San Jose

Serving Presbyterians in San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties

The Monarch butterfly is the symbol of the Presbytery of San Jose

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Do justice Love kindness

Walk humbly with your God

218th GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2008)  
San Jose • June 21—28, 2008

We're at the finish line!!



It's been a long planning period for many of us and for others a seemingly long time spent answering questions like, "What IS GA? "COLA... isn't that a soft drink (ha, ha!)"

But the question that actually leads to decision making and action is ... "Why should I care?"

We've found many good answers to this question, but the best ones have come from people who eagerly and early got involved...

"We have two reasons for volunteering for GA: first of all we were asked by a friend, and it's hard to turn down a friend! But also, this is one of those

once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to be at a national gathering of people from our denomination who are coming together to share their faith and ideas on important issues concerning us all. This will be a great experience. How could we miss it?

To have General Assembly here, hosted by our own Presbytery, is truly awesome!"

- Jim and Gail Myers, Los Gatos



"When I heard that General Assembly was being held in San Jose this year, I knew right off that I was going to volunteer to help. In fact, I'm taking a whole week off from my job just so I can be there the entire time. General Assembly is only held every other year, and the location rotates each time. **It will never be held here again in my lifetime.** Presbyterians from all over will be coming to "my backyard" to do the business of my church. This is my one opportunity to meet them, talk with them, and worship together with them. This is just too exciting to miss."

Connie Stanley,  
Sunnyvale Church



### Prayer focus for June

By Lynn Viale, COLA vice moderator

**Our amazing, awesome volunteers!**

#### Verses for reflection:

"Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him." - John 13:3-5

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." - 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power. And what did he do with that power? He served others. He washed his disciples' feet.

**Volunteer early and volunteer often!** That is our motto going into these last few weeks before General Assembly. We are so thankful for the many who have already signed up to serve our sisters and brothers during the exciting week of June 21-28. And we are asking that if you haven't yet volunteered that you consider this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to serve in a capacity that brings you joy, working "for the common good."

**A Prayer:** We thank you Jesus for modeling for us the importance and the dignity of serving others. For those who have already volunteered, we give you thanks and ask for blessings on them as they serve at General Assembly. For those who have not yet volunteered, our prayer is that they will respond to your gentle nudging and participate in this Ministry of Hospitality. Thank you for knitting us together into one body and giving each of us specific tasks to make this body function well. In Jesus' name, Amen.

#### TO VOLUNTEER:

**Go to:** <http://www.pcusa-ga08.org/> and sign up today!

**Questions?** Contact your LCC or call the COLA office at (408)286-0927.

## We have some volunteer positions that still need to be filled.

If you haven't signed up yet, now's the time! If you already have signed up, can you please add a shift or add one of these jobs?

1. **Welcome GA attendees at the hotels** as they check in (Friday, June 20, and Saturday, June 21.)
2. **Usher or serve communion** at the **BIG** Worship Service at 10 am, Sunday, June 22 (we need 200 people to serve 5,000 at two worship sites!)
3. **Staff the Presbytery/COLA Booth** during Exhibit Center Hours (4 hour shifts day and night, Saturday, June 21—Wednesday, June 25.)



## From Your Executive Presbyter

### The Rev. Joey Lee

I've been thinking about what exactly is a presbytery. In conversations with non-Presbyterians (and even some Presbyterians) they often ask, "What is a presbytery?" Sometimes I describe it

is a network of congregations. Other times, I'll say it's a confederation of congregations. Depending on church experience (and more and more these days, there is little or no church experience) I'll end up using a secular concept such as a school district, or a corporation with a number of "franchises" in a region. I don't like using these examples as they tend toward the secularization of the church. "Executive" presbyter is another example, but that's another topic.

What is the presbytery for those of us who are in it? For some "the presbytery" is the staff. For others it's the various committees, as when they work with the Committee on Ministry in calling a pastor. While sometimes the conversation about what and who the presbytery is has "you" and "they" language, ultimately we all understand that the Presbytery of San Jose is really "we."

Frequently the word "connectional" is used when speaking of the nature of the Presbyterian Church. I understand this concept organizationally and historically. But to have connections, and even disconnections, brings to mind a sort of a mechanical image, and that the disconnections are problems we can "fix."

I would suggest that we consider "relational" to be added to the conversation, so the question becomes, "What is the nature of our relationships within the presbytery?" We have done much in the past few years to strengthen the ties that bind us, one to another. More can be done. We can share in mission and ministries, church to church. We can welcome new pastors into the presbytery; attend ordination and installation services and go to coffee or lunch. We certainly can pray for each other individually and corporately, especially during your worship service. I'm sure there's even more.

I thank God constantly for the generous spirit and nature of our Presbytery. I am painfully aware that this is not the case in other places. The strength of our relationships, speaks of our faith and common values.

I would like to know what you think a presbyter is, and how you feel about the relational nature of our presbytery. Who are we? Email me with your thoughts: joey@sanjosepby.org

***"They will know you are my disciples by the love have you have for one another" - John 13:35***



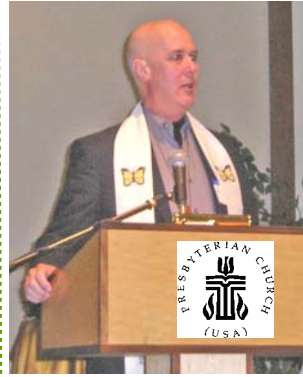
### The Presbytery Peace and Justice Taskforce

**Invites you to Dine and Discussion with Father Elias Chacour** Internationally known Palestinian peacemaker, educator, author, and man of God

**Wednesday, June 25, 6 p.m.**, Sunnyvale Church

Middle Eastern catered dinner (DishDash, Sunnyvale) - \$20

**Reserve your space:** send check made out to "Presbytery of San Jose" to the Presbytery at: 888 N. First St., San Jose 95112 or email pat2sanjosepby.org. The deadline is June 20.



## From Your Moderator Jim Bass

I had the opportunity a few weeks ago to participate in a groundbreaking ceremony at Christ Community Church in Milpitas. It is always fun to be part of a celebration, particularly when everyone else does the work and your part is just to show up. But as I worshipped with them and talked with members of the congregation and

listened to the speakers, I realized that this is not just the natural development of a rich church. It is a very challenging, sacrificial step of faith that is empowered by their love of the Lord, but that is motivated by their love of the community around them. It was convicting for me and I became somewhat overwhelmed by a sense of how much the broken world around us needs what we have been entrusted by Christ to represent.

We represent Christ to those around us in distinct ways. We share our money through our tithes and support for mission programs and hunger relief. We share our time through local and denominational service efforts such as refugee programs, etc. We share our hearts by lovingly explaining the reasons for our faith and the source of our peace with those who don't understand. But these are not, in and of themselves, unique to Christians. Many non-Christians are compassionate and sharing and, Lord knows, there are plenty of evangelical atheists. I think that what sets us apart is our willingness to sacrifice and to do it without expectation of reward and to do it for those who are not members of our immediate social or cultural families. I believe we can do this if we accept the sacrifice Christ made for us. I believe we can do this if we recognize that God's whole creation is precious to Him. My personal challenge is to make what matters to God, matter to me and to be willing to step out of my comfort zone in each of these three areas.

Lord, help me to become more compassionate for your people and more passionate about using all the blessings you have given me for your service.

Speaking of service, I recently volunteered to help at GA via the presbytery website and found it very easy to do. Hope you will encourage those around you to do the same. See you at the next presbytery meeting.



## Mark Your Calendar!

**Our NEXT Presbytery Meeting is Sat., June 7 , 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Onnuri Church, 890 Meridian Avenue, San Jose**

95126-3856 (at Hwy. 280) Lunch will be provided by church volunteers.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY** will be held at the **San Jose Convention Center** June 21—28. For complete details go to: <http://www.pcusa.org/ga218/> **To volunteer go to:** [www.micahscall.org/cola/users.php?mode=new](http://www.micahscall.org/cola/users.php?mode=new)

**The NEXT Presbytery meeting after the June meeting** will be held **Saturday, Sept. 20,** 9 a.m.—2 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of Monterey and will include our annual **MISSION FAIR.**



## St. Andrew Celtic Music Night – A Different Kind of Outreach

By the Rev. Bob Bowles

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Aptos has long celebrated a link to Scotland whose patron saint is Andrew. Toward the end of November each year, the church marks St. Andrew Day with Scottish Country Dancers during coffee hour and bagpipes and the Kirking of the Tartans during worship.

Their piper for the last fourteen years and since he was fourteen years old is David Brewer ([www.davidbrewer.com](http://www.davidbrewer.com)). Now at

twenty-eight, he is arguably the best piper in Santa Cruz County as well as having become expert in the Irish (Uilleann) pipes and the penny whistle.

He and pastor Bob Bowles (also a piper) got together about a year ago and dreamed up “Celtic Music Night” as a way of highlighting Celtic musical traditions and exposing the church to a different demographic of our community. CMN happens every Tuesday night and is free to all. David and perhaps some visiting musician friends play and lecture for 45 minutes, before a break for scones or shortbread. Following the break there is a 45-minute jam session, where other Celtic musicians in the audience pull out their flutes, fiddles, guitars, bodhran (drum), mandolins and penny whistles.

For almost a whole year, the effort brought out only a handful of faithful congregants and friends of David. After that, the idea caught fire and spread rapidly throughout the music community as THE Celtic music hotspot. Now a typical Tuesday night brings 35-45 people to our sanctuary for an hour and a half of fun with a live buffet of Scottish, Irish and Welsh tunes.

## Torture is a Moral Issue

## Banners Across America

By **Geoff Browning**, Peacemaking and Social Justice Ministry Advocate

The **National Religious Coalition Against Torture** (NRCAT) is making June the month for **Banners Across America!** NRCAT is asking congregations of all sizes, from every state, and all faiths, to join in a public witness against torture by **displaying a banner outside their place of worship** during **Torture Awareness Month** (June 2008). Torture is a critical moral issue for our churches. Jesus tells us, “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” (Matt 25:40) There is no social issue more relevant to our faith than the torture of those who bear the image of God. To remain silent in the face of such abuse contradicts the love of God to which we are called to bear witness. **The Peace and Justice Ministry Taskforce of the Presbytery of San Jose would like to encourage your congregation to participate in this important statement against torture.**

If your congregation needs assistance in paying for the banner, please contact the **Peacemaking and Social Justice Ministry Taskforce** ([jim\\_hagan@sbccglobal.net](mailto:jim_hagan@sbccglobal.net)). Please order your banner today at [www.nrcat.org](http://www.nrcat.org)



## 2008 Birthday Offering of Presbyterian Women (PW)

**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN** “**Light Will Break Forth**” - Presbyterian Women will be receiving and dedicating their Birthday Offerings this spring. The following details the history of this offering and the two projects that will receive support this year. Begun in 1922, the Birthday Offering celebrates Presbyterian Women’s heritage of mission giving. The offering may fund up to five projects per year, but for 2008, The Creative Ministries Offering Committee selected only two projects so that the grants could be larger and make more of an impact in their communities. The grant amounts for the two recipients will depend on the funds contributed during 2008. The goal for this offering is \$1.2 million.

“**Building a Stone Future for the Congo**” – **Democratic Republic of Congo** - Students in many rural areas of Congo study in unsafe conditions. These communities want to build or renovate schools and classrooms, but cannot afford the materials. 2008 Birthday Offering monies will supply roofing for 19 schools, build five new structures, supply teachers with textbooks and teaching materials, provide motorbikes to educational supervisors and offer training seminars for instructors.

**Lakeview Presbyterian Church Weekday School Restoration – New Orleans, Louisiana** - In August 2005, during Hurricane Katrina, a break in New Orleans’ 17th Street Canal flood way flooded Lakeview Presbyterian Church’s Weekday School with more than eight feet of water. The water stayed inside the school for two and a half weeks and destroyed everything but the outside of the building. The Birthday Offering grant will be used to help rebuild the facility and expand its services, allowing the school to serve even younger children than before, in addition to its usual age groups. The grant also will be used to buy equipment suitable for the younger age group, replace equipment for the other groups and restore outdoor play areas.

We pray for the success of this important offering and the good works that will be accomplished by it.

**Claudia Hamm**, Moderator



*Extra special musical event at General Assembly*

*Sponsored by*

**JARVIS MUSIC ASSOCIATES, INC.**

*is proud to sponsor and present in concert*

**RODNEY L. BARBOUR**, Organist

**Wednesday, June 25, 2008 at 10:00 AM**

*(right after Ecumenical Worship Service)*

*at the San Jose Civic Auditorium*

*Free and open to the public*

*For more information about this concert go to:  
[www.sanjosepy.org/events.html](http://www.sanjosepy.org/events.html)*

## Presbytery of San José



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The **Presbytery Newsletter** is published 5 times each year: January, March, May, September, and November, for the 46 congregations located in this four-county area.

The deadline for submission of articles for the **NEXT** issue of the Presbytery Newsletter is **Aug. 22, 2008** for the September issue.



Elsa Amboy and Melissa Kreisa

been combining our gifts and passions to welcome and serve the refugees who were resettling in our community. We've come to really understand why Jesus sent his early disciples out by twos!

On June 1<sup>st</sup> we will begin a shared position as Refugee Advocates for the San Jose Presbytery. Our goal is to help other churches welcome and provide community to these refugees who are new to Santa Clara County. We plan to do this by working with Catholic Charities and local agencies to coordinate volunteers in order to help with logistics like transportation, English tutoring, job development, material goods donations, and housing.

Most importantly, we will work to represent a faith community where God's love is felt and communicated within an atmosphere of hospitality and peace. Please contact us at [refugee@svpc.us](mailto:refugee@svpc.us) for more information how your church might get involved in this important and rewarding ministry.



## Silver Lining for Westhope

By Joey Lee

### "Woohoo!"

That was the cry when the good news came that **Westhope Presbyterian Church of Saratoga** had received a **Congregational Transformation Grant** from the office of Mission Program Grants of the General Assembly.

The grant is to assist the congregation in the process of congregational transformation (formerly known as "redevelopment"). The grant is a matching grant from the presbytery. This the second church in our presbytery in recent times to receive the grant. Currently Westminster Church in San Jose is in the fifth year of a seven-year grant.

Working with the Church Health and Growth Task Force, which provides support and oversight to the project, Westhope is on their way in the process of transformation that takes into account these five dynamics:

- Creating Spiritual Energy
- Congregational Identity: coming to terms with the past, present and future
- Congregational leadership: building a ministry team
- Re-entering the surrounding community
- Develop a Ministry Plan

*"The vision is one of complete transformation from a traditional, individualistic, and dying church to a model of spiritual formation, prayer, and discernment. This would lead to an energy of the Spirit and transform the congregation into a spiritually healthy and vital community where the Spirit is known, where there are young families and youth once again, where there is a greater racial diversity and where all are welcome."*



**SAVE THE DATE!** Oct. 4, 2008 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
at the Los Gatos Church

### Presbytery-wide Health Fair sponsored by Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN)

Incorporating the four components of health: physical, mental, spiritual & emotional. Mental Health Keynote address, Parish Nurse panel, workshops and health screening. **DON'T MISS THIS LEARNING OPPORTUNITY!!**



## Our Mission

Called by God as a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Presbytery of San José exists to serve and be a resource for the health and growth of the Presbyterian congregations within our four counties.

### Our Vision is:

- To support our congregations in reaching out to all people in the name of Jesus Christ
- To challenge a diverse community to hold fast to the foundations of our faith
- To build a diverse community unified by the unique gifts of the Holy Spirit for the great work of the church.