



December 2008

Presbytery of Plains & Peaks

A New Opportunity for the Presbytery!! What??? - A Presbytery-wide Book Study!!

This winter, our Presbytery will sponsor its first-ever Presbytery-wide book study. We will be reading *Humble Leadership* by N. Graham Standish, who is a Presbyterian pastor in Pennsylvania and who leads workshops on spiritual leadership across the country. He is the author of several books. We will be arranging regional discussion groups to be held in January. YOU are invited to participate!! The staff at Westview Presbyterian Church in Longmont, Colorado has been reading and discussing this book and has found it intriguing. St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Boulder, Colorado is trying to make it a congregation wide study. If you would like to be involved, please contact your regional coordinator:

- ✦ Boulder area - Jim Reed - 303-776-7537 - jim.reed@ncsl.org
- ✦ Larimer area - Rich McDermott - 970-482-6107 - rich@firstpresfc.org
- ✦ Eastern Plains area - Jane Westfall - 970-848-2285 - janew@plains.net
- ✦ NE Panhandle area - Scott Thompson - 308-262-0134 - pastorscottthompson@msn.com

They have books available for a purchase price of \$10.00 (list price of \$18.00!) and will be setting up the local discussion groups. We hope you'll take this opportunity to join in discussion with other Presbyterians in your area.

(Exciting footnote - Graham Standish will be presenting at a workshop entitled "Leading Your Church in Spiritual Vibrancy" at Highlands Presbyterian Camp and Retreat Center near Allenspark, Colorado in June - being part of the book study is a great way to learn about some of Graham's philosophies so that you can decide if you might like to attend this workshop.)

Pastoral Transitions

- ✦ The Reverend Joanne Dobie was granted Honorably Retired status as of October 1, 2008
- ✦ The Reverend Sylvia Edwards was granted Honorably Retired status as of November 1, 2008
- ✦ Aric Clark is the new pastor at United Presbyterian Church in Ft. Morgan, Colorado
- ✦ The Reverend Thelma Burgonio-Watson is now an Active member in the Presbytery
- ✦ The Reverend Harold Armstrong has left First Presbyterian Church in Yuma, Colorado, for a call in Hobbs, New Mexico

Presbytery of Plains & Peaks

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The Nominating Committee needs YOU!!

At the November 2008 Presbytery meeting, the Nominating Committee presented a slate of names for committees for the Class of 2011 (plus some other classes). There are still a few available opportunities available. If you are interested in any of these positions, please contact the Presbytery office at bobbi@plainsandpeaks.org and Deb Anthony (the Nominating Committee moderator for 2009) at deb@anthony-associates.com.

- + Committee on Ministry
 - + Minister - class of 2009
 - + Minister - class of 2011
 - + Elder - class of 2011
 - + Elder - class of 2011
- + Committee on Preparation for Ministry
 - + Minister - class of 2011
- + Congregational Leadership Equipping Workgroup
 - + Elder - class of 2011
 - + Elder - class of 2011



The Presbyterian International Peacemaker Program

In 1984 The Presbyterian Church itinerated International Peacemakers in Presbyteries for the first time. There are many purposes for having an International Peacemaker in the Presbyteries: a) to help us understand the breadth of God's ministry; b) to know the challenges Christians face in their country; c) to understand more of the history of other countries; and d) in many cases - Praise God and be thankful of what we have.

Last year our Presbytery hosted Rev. Yahya Tirta Prewita from Indonesia. We learned how Christians, who are only 3% of the population, carry out God's mission of love and compassion.

This year we hosted Petru Solca, from Romania. We wish to thank the following congregations for hosting Petru: Estes Park, Boulder - St. Andrew, Akron, Boulder - United Nations Association, and Ft. Collins - Colorado State University.

Some history: Romania is still recovering from 50 yers of Communism. "Bishop Laszlo T k'es, tells that "in December 1989, the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu ended due to, in part, the brave opposition of the Reformed Congregation of Temesvar/Timisoara where Bishop Laszl T k'es served. Bishop Laszlo T k'es, tells that after the fall of the communist government we trained new pastors and re-established schools. Tasks that were formerly prohibited by the communist government, and even though the government has changed hands, it still holds 2,000 of our church properties, properties that have been confiscated since 1945. Our link with the United States is our Presbytery Partnership with Lehigh Presbytery in Allentown, Pennsylvania." ⁽¹⁾

Petru told us that "President Nicolae Ceausescu wanted to have the largest and strongest army in the world. To that end he demanded that parents have many, many children. Any parents who had four children or less, had to pay higher taxes." Hence the need for help finding homes for the orphaned children as parents could not afford to keep all of their children.

"At this time over 125,000 children are in Romanian orphanages. NOROC, a Christian-based, non-profit organization whose mission is: To share God's blessings by providing new opportunities for Romanian orphaned children. Currently the program is focused in the orphanages of Tulcea County. Big Hearted Grannies, Big Hearted teachers, who are retired, and Big Hearted friends who provide abandoned children with loving care and a chance to make a positive difference in the innocent lives of God's children". ⁽²⁾

"The most terrible heritage in Romania is the devastating orphanage system and the mentality behind the way children and youth were treated. To overcome this seems impossible without churches and Christian individuals who share their practice of the Good News of Jesus' healing love." ⁽³⁾

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Reverend Mary Ferris has served since 2001 as a mission co-worker in Tulcea, Romania, in partnership with New Opportunities for Romanian Orphans (NOROC). (See the 2008 Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study, page 163)

If any congregation, which did not host Petru, needs the handouts, which were sent from the Peacemaking Program, please contact Una Stevenson (Peacemaking contact for CMPW) at unast@netzero.net and she will make them to you.

(1) Minute for Mission - a Secret Battle

(2) <http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide/romania/international.htm>

(3) <http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide/romania/international.htm>

Witness in Washington Weekly
The Washington Office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Urge Peace Efforts in the DR Congo

Following a landmark peace agreement and a tumultuous political transition backed by the world's largest UN peacekeeping operation, the Democratic Republic of the Congo held largely successful elections in 2006. However, elections were not a panacea to Congo's ills; 45,000 people die each month, mostly from the crippling effects of widespread displacement in the country's eastern provinces. Worse still, armed groups routinely commit acts of rape and sexual violence against Congolese women and girls.

The offensive by the rebel Laurent Nkunda's National Congress for the Defense of People, or CNDP, has dramatically worsened the crisis in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. This latest fighting threatens to once again draw Congo's neighbors directly into the fray in a damaging escalation that would effectively undo a six-year regional and international effort to stabilize the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

The immediate crisis should not distract the world from a larger truth: peace in the Congo – and indeed the Great Lakes – requires a comprehensive strategy, robust diplomatic engagement, and a strong and capable peacekeeping force. It also requires the world's sustained attention. Intermittent and inconsistent crisis management must be replaced by a broader effort to deal with the drivers of endemic insecurity and atrocities.

For a brief history of the conflict go to <http://www.pcusa.org/washington/may-june05.htm#3>.

Take Action - Go to the Presbyterian legislative action center at <http://capwiz.com/pcusa/issues/alert/?alertid=12166601> to send an email to your members of congress.

Fact Sheet

1. The source of the conflict in the Congo is a result of the scramble for the Congo's natural wealth, which began in its latest expression in 1885 and continues to this day.
2. Local elites, neighboring countries, multilateral institutions (IMF, World Bank) foreign governments and foreign corporations have established an alliance to pilfer the Congo's wealth at the expense of the Congolese people.
3. Nearly 6 million Congolese have died due to conflict and its affects since 1996. This is the largest number of deaths due to conflict since World War II.
4. In spite of trillions of dollars worth of wealth in Congo's soil, some estimates are as high as \$24 trillion, the average Congolese lives on only \$100 per year.
5. Congo is endowed with enormous wealth. The Congo River alone has enough hydropower to provide electricity for the entire African continent. Congo's fertile soil has the capacity to feed the entire world through 2050 when the world's population is estimated to reach 9 billion.
6. Congo has the largest reserves of untapped minerals in the world. The country boasts two thirds of the world's reserves of coltan, ten percent of the world's copper, thirty percent of cobalt, vast fresh water reserves, a part of the second largest rainforest behind the Amazon.
7. Congo is strategically placed in the center of the African continent, bordered by nine countries and is as large as Western Europe with a population of 60 million people, hence the common saying as the Congo goes so does Africa.
8. The proper usage and management of Congo's wealth can serve as an engine for the development of the entire African continent and make Congo a major player among nations in the global arena.

General Assembly Guidance - Presbyterian have a long history of mission and ministry in the Democratic Republic of Congo and General Assemblies have frequently called for peace and prayer for its people. In 2001, the 213th General Assembly called for "a full and open dialogue in Congo; withdrawal of all foreign troops; a complete United Nations Peacekeeping presence; and free and fair elections for Democratic Republic of Congo Leadership." The Assembly further lifted up, "The request of our brothers and sisters in Christ in the Congo is for each one of us to find our voice in our communities, in our states, and in our country to speak out for peace and to uphold these four points, which are seen as the basis from which they can move forward as a nation." (Minutes, 2001, p. 227)



Don't forget to mark your calendar for our annual Christmas Party on Saturday, December 6th from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. We have 18 quilts pledged for the Quilt Auction that will be part of this event. We'll also be celebrating our volunteers. You won't want to miss this special celebration!



Highlands will begin offering Elderhostel programs in the fall of 2008

Dec. 26th – Dec. 30th, 2008 - Rocky Mountain Holiday: Re-Discover Old Time Traditions in a Getaway With Your Grandchild

March 8-13, 2009 - Rocky Mountain National Park: Winter Wonderland

April 5-10, 2009 - World Affairs Conference: Reflecting in the Rockies

May 3-8, 2009 - Emerge into Spring at Rocky Mountain National Park

August 9-14, 2009 - An Intergenerational Elderhostel: Summer Spectacular in the Colorado Rockies

Be sure to go to www.elderhostel.org today to register!



At General Assembly, Way-Points, a cooperative organization of 13 Presbyterian Camp and Retreat sites was launched. In 2009 Highlands, and 12 other sites will begin offering programming for adults and intergenerational family groups. Highlands will be offering these programs:

Rocky Mountain Fourth of July Family Vacation - July 2-5, 2009

Relax in our majestic mountain center for your vacation. Located in the heart of the National Forest with spectacular views into Rocky Mountain National Park, Highlands is the perfect place for your summer family vacation. Activities will include horse-back riding, worship, canoeing, fireworks, Bible study, and exploring Rocky Mountain National Park.

21st Century Thought in Astronomy, Geology, and Theology - August 16-21, 2009

What are those lights in the night sky? How did that mountain get so tall or that lake so deep? Who or what created it all? Join astronomers Drs. Irene and Steve Little; geologist Dr. Gary Wallace; and the Reverend Brad Rohwer to explore the sky, the earth, and God's wonderful creation as they play out in the Rocky Mountains.

Longs Peak: Towering Treasure of Rocky Mountain National Park - September 27-October 2, 2009

From early climbing expeditions to the creation of Rocky Mountain National Park, the story of 14,259-foot Longs Peak boasts colorful characters (like Enos Mills), technological innovators (like F.O. Stanley), and artistic inspiration. Visit the ranger station, tour museums, and hear a National Park Ranger and others talk about this wonderful peak.

Be sure to go to www.way-points.org and check out all 39 of the programs that will be offered around the nation.

Prayer Circle

Our Presbytery, like all PCUSA Presbyteries, has been challenged once again to study the Proposal from our General Assembly recommending changes to language in the Book of Order concerning the requirements for ordination, Section G-6.0106b. This is referred to as Amendment B and relates to “fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness”. A vote will be taken at our forthcoming February 2009 Presbytery meeting in Yuma, Colorado. Numerous publications, memos and letters are being circulated concerning pros and cons of the issue.

As individual Christians, we are called to have a high level of commitment to the spirit filled life and must call upon our God to hear our petitions, concerns and desires of the heart, in Jesus name. As we gather over the next two months as Sessions, congregations, prayer groups, and Presbytery, we need to be a witness to one another in grace, peace, and love. The foundation for a right attitude must be bathed in prayer and not in arguments, challenges, and stressful conversations.

To make this happen we want to be the Body of Christ, elevated above the fray, and a single fellowship willing to follow Jesus. Prayer is the answer. A small group of Plains and Peaks churches are committed to pray for wisdom, discernment, and unity. We would like to invite all churches within the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks to be a part of the Circle and accept the responsibility to pray for our meeting and this important vote in Yuma.

Bud Frith, Elder at First Presbyterian Church in Boulder, Colorado, has agreed to coordinate the existing Circle and increase it as more churches join the prayer fellowship chain. A person selected from each church should make contact as soon as possible, and a note will be forwarded periodically with scriptures, heart felt statements, and words of encouragement to keep us all on track.

Please join us in the Prayer Circle.

Bud Frith - 303-664-1281 - budfrith@aol.com

The Bible Box[®]

A unique Christian education tool that builds lasting images of key events in the Bible is now available. A First Presbyterian Church, Boulder, class of adults with developmental disabilities, a volunteer Sunday School teacher with creative and artistic talents, and a wooden model of a Bible with 15 molded figures have become an educational experience for many different applications.

For the past year, The Bible Box has been marketed to teach the basic stories in the Bible from Creation to the Gates of Heaven for both domestic and international groups. The Plan of Salvation is easily presented to learning challenged children and adults. Missionaries in India and South Africa have stated that “it is excellent as a parallel aid to translated Bibles”. Students have both the visual and tactile recall of Bible truths with the individual figures. A manual is provided for effective preparation. Several of the many applications are Sunday School, VBS, children’s church, Christian schools and hospitals, home schooling, parent and grandparent mentoring, mission projects as well as for gifts and games.

Please call or e-mail for additional information and literature - 303 664-1281 - contact@bibleboxonline.com - or Visit the Website at www.bibleboxonline.com.

NOTE: A Special Presbytery of Plains and Peaks 20% Discount is available for churches and individuals by contacting The Bible Box directly and not ordering online from the website.

The Bible Box
PO Box 850
Lafayette, CO 80026

Interesting Church News

Loveland, Mtn. View

The Mission Committee of Mtn. View Presbyterian Church in Loveland, Colorado, is offering the following items as alternative gifts for this Christmas:

Bricks for India helps build a high school building in Dalit (“untouchable”) students in the Agra region of India. These children are denied education from the higher caste schools. This is a project of Witnessing Ministries of Christ. \$25.00 buys one brick.

Just Coffee for the caffeine freak in your life! The coffee is grown in Chiapas, Mexico; roasted and packed in Agua Prieta. The growers are assured of a fair price for their crop. Regular, dark roast, and decaf are available in ground and whole bean at \$8.00 a pound. Fabric gift bags are complimentary with purchase.

Malawi Projects directly benefit our partner congregation at Engalaweni, Malawi. Funds will go to one of two projects: the Orphan Fund or the Bible Fund. \$5.00 will provide a Bible in the Tumbuka language; \$50.00 provides food for a year for a child orphaned by AIDS.

Africa Bags - By buying cloth grocery bags made in Malawi, we will provide a sustainable income opportunity for Malawi residents and we will help to diminish the use of environmentally hazardous plastic grocery bags. Each bag is only \$10.00.

Church World Service Program - Church World Service responds to disasters and provides caring to people in need around the world. \$5.00 can provide a warm blanket for a person left homeless, \$10.00 provides families with a gift of rabbits, and \$25.00 provides a gift of 50 chicks.

There will be Alternative Giving Brochures available beginning Sunday, November 30. You may purchase gifts through the church on each of the Sundays in Advent. Someone will be available in the Narthex to help you during Fellowship Time before and after church.

Mtn. View also offers the following for 2009 - Other Opportunities to Serve -

Family Mission Trip - we are hoping to organize a family trip - children invited along with parents to - Galveston, Texas in mid-June 2009. An informational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 11, 2009. If you are interested, please attend or call Tom Dragano, 970-223-0536.

Community Kitchen - a non-profit providing one hot meal per day to those in Loveland. MVPC has volunteer teams serving on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. and the 5th Sundays from 2:00 - 4:30 p.m. If you would like to volunteer, call Tom Dragano for more information.

Loveland, First

Each Sunday in Advent our choir members and chimers will be assisting our congregation in a call/response Advent Litany piece as we light the candles of Advent each week.

On December 7 our choir will share the well loved Advent care “Dona Nobis Pacem” and a trio of two flutists and an oboist will share “The Birthday Cantata” by Bach.

Our youth will be inspiring us with their Christmas Pageant on December 14. They travel through a time machine to see our church in the future.

For December 21 our choir shares “The Huron Carol” - a Canadian favorite, accompanied by our percussionists. John Bergquist will also be accompanying the congregation with his bagpipe during “O Come All Ye Faithful” and ending the service with “Amazing Grace” and “Highland Cathedral”.

As we come together in the silence of the night on December 24 - our candlelight service is blessed by our various musicians and the lessons of Advent - 7:00 p.m.

Come share the season with us - For additional information please call our church secretary at 970-667-0605.