

Report for Middle Governing Body Executives on Mission Challenge '07

Mission Challenge '07 was a bold initiative aimed at connecting Presbyterians with their mission personnel serving the church around the world. The primary goal was to build stronger relationships between congregations and mission co-workers. It was also a new model and experiment aimed at addressing our members' changing giving patterns and upgrading our own capacity to serve those changing needs.

By many standards, Mission Challenge '07 was an overwhelming success. At the same time, we learned much from this endeavor that continues to inform any future plans in the area of interpretation and funds development.

Throughout the month of October 2007, 49 PC(USA) mission speakers traveled, speaking in **900 churches** and 100 other institutions making **1,400 presentations** to an estimated **56,000 people**. Prior to these presentations, General Assembly Staff made phone contact with every presbytery to identify a mission contact person and make preparations for a visit by a Presbyterian mission co-worker. 144 out of 173 presbyteries agreed to host a mission speaker for a week and coordinate a schedule of presentations. The value of these contacts for General Assembly mission is beyond measure.

Mission Challenge has connected Presbyterians to PC(USA) mission and engaged the hearts, prayers, conversations as well as the budgets of Presbyterians across the denomination who now have a renewed sense of the legacy and future of Presbyterian World Mission. Mission co-workers have also re-connected with their base of support back home. Several stories were shared about how people were proud to be Presbyterian again.

A direct mail response was sent to 161,528 individuals who were identified as previous donors, publication subscribers, or conference registrants indicating a history of interest in the work of the denomination. As of 1/25/08, we received a total of **\$915,034** from **4,107** donors with an **average gift of \$223** for the financial support of World Mission. In addition to cash received to date, San Joaquin Presbytery has pledged \$78,000 and we will continue to receive monthly recurring gifts from some of our donors.

Bulletin inserts and DVDs mailed to congregations expanded the potential reach from 1,000 to 11,000 churches. The purpose of the DVD and bulletin inserts was primarily "interpretation" to support the itinerating mission personnel. As excitement for Mission Challenge '07 grew across the entire denomination, these vehicles were seen as a means to expand the impact beyond the visits and sow seeds for future support of World Mission.

There are many significant learning opportunities gained through this experience that will lead us to do things differently. In the future, we will communicate more effectively through middle governing body leaders and better inform our pastors of the nature, use, and means to support mission throughout the PC(USA).

Generosity begets generosity. In addition to nearly \$1,000,000 raised for Presbyterian World Mission, Shared Mission Support for 2007 came in higher than budgeted and the two Special Offerings that coincided with Mission Challenge increased 5 percent. (It may be noted that one of those offerings, the Peacemaking Offering, includes a 25 percent portion to be used by Middle Governing Bodies.) This would indicate that Presbyterians are generous givers who decide how to give through their basic pledge and also choose how to distribute additional "discretionary giving" dollars.

Mission Challenge Financial Report

Mission Challenge	Mailing to Individuals 9/20/2007 ¹	Bulletin Inserts & DVD ²	Year End Mailing 12/03/2007 ¹	Totals
Quantity Mailed	161,528	1,000,000	45,089	
Gifts Received	2,367	928	812	4,107
Percentage Response ⁴	1.4658%	0.093%	1.812%	
Gross Revenue	\$613,597	\$167,070	\$134,368	\$915,034
Total Costs ³	\$69,814	\$210,634	\$51,049	\$331,497
Net Revenue	\$543,783	(\$43,564)	\$83,319	\$583,537
Average Gift – Gross ⁴	\$259	\$180	\$164	\$223

Notes

¹ Sent only to experienced givers or subscribers of Presbyterian resources.

² Bulletin inserts and the DVD were primarily an interpretation tool, not a fund-raising tool. Many congregations used the bulletin inserts without the envelope device for giving. The purpose was to expand the audience from 56,000 Presbyterians who experienced a face-to-face presentation to as broad as 11,000 congregations and 1,000,000 members.

³ There was an additional cost of \$87,625 for itineration of the mission speakers. This cost was kept relatively low (primarily airfare) due to the fact that most speakers stayed in homes of their host presbyteries. This itineration cost was budgeted as part of World Mission's 2007 program and interpretation costs.

⁴ Goal: 0.5 – 1% response rate with \$80- \$100 average gift.

These amounts exclude the pledge of \$78,000 from San Joaquin Presbytery and recurring monthly gifts from some of the donors.