



MINUTE FOR MISSION

February 1, 2005

Woven Together around Christ

In Southeast Los Angeles County, California, three congregations are trying to find ways to become woven more closely together. For the past fifteen years, English-speaking Norwalk Presbyterian Church and Korean-speaking Shin Il Presbyterian Church have shared one facility. Shin Il pastor's, Dr. Peter Son, explained that "Shin Il" is Korean for "One Face," expressing the unity of our Trinitarian God.



Elder Nettie Smith of Norwalk Presbyterian Church and organist Grace Chang of Shin Il Presbyterian Church lead morning worship.

Five years ago Hosanna Punjabi Fellowship, a new church development begun by three Southern California presbyteries and comprised of South Asian believers led by Pastor Hameed Barkat, joined Norwalk and Shin Il. They often participate in our collective celebrations. Other prayers were answered as we began 2005: a Spanish-speaking congregation asked to join us! Because we are anchored to Christ in so many different places, we feel we are a strong community.

For at least the past ten years, the English-language and Korean-language congregations have enjoyed a tradition of joint worship and a shared meal. We schedule these events around the festivals of the church calendar. Together we receive the churchwide offering tied to each season, beginning with the Pentecost Offering and ending with Christmas Joy. In October 2004, we added World Communion Sunday and the Peacemaking Offering to our schedule.

We have arranged for the Rev. Steve Yamaguchi, executive presbyter of Los Ranchos Presbytery, to lead our common worship in early February 2005. We chose a date between the beginning of the year and the Lenten season. We will receive an offering for basic mission support on that date. Mr. Yamaguchi will also present our congregations with a certificate acknowledging that we are FIVE for FIVE congregations, that is, that we receive all four churchwide offerings and pledge to basic mission support.

Much of our lives together flows from regular liaison meetings of elders from each of the churches. There are, of course, the usual housekeeping chores that arise when three, now four, congregations share a property. Our focus, however, is always on this question: what more can we do together? We have found that working to become FIVE for FIVE congregations has been a source of great joy.

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For more information on the Witness Season mission education emphasis contact Billie Healy, Associate for Mission Education Resources (888) 728-7228, ext. 5689, or Bhealy@ctr.pcusa.org.