

PCUSA WORLDWIDE is a monthly e-mail newsletter about the international mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). You are invited to share this newsletter with others interested in the world mission of the church such as newsletter editors, mission committees and Christian educators. Free subscriptions are available at <http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide/list.htm>. Submit story ideas to patrick.cole@pcusa.org.

March 12, 2009

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **HAVE YOU RESUBSCRIBED TO OUR NEWSLETTER?**

If not, you must do so online in order to continue receiving monthly updates

Please visit <http://www.pcusa.org/subscriptions> to renew your subscription to PCUSA Worldwide. This online signup is required to continue receiving the newsletter, which will be sent in a richer html format beginning with the next issue. Thanks for your readership.

- **CAMBODIAN DOCTOR TENDS MOUNTAIN VILLAGERS**

Paul Friesen tells Dr. Thong's story

- **FOUR PARTNER CHUCHES MEET IN BRAZIL**

"We learned a lot from each other and saw many similarities . . ."

- **PRESBYTERIANS SUPPORT MISSION PERSONNEL**

2008 outreach to individuals raises \$835,000

- **PC(USA) MISSION WORKER ASSISTS SISTER MISSION**

Stan Topple gives two weeks volunteer service in eastern Congo

- **SOMETHING NEW IN HUNGARY: VOLUNTEERS**

"A new generation and new perspectives"

- **AND BRIEFLY . . .**

Mission openings around the world, World Water Day, NetWorkers Mother's Day project, Ethiopian jubilee, Indonesian bus riders pray for peace in Palestine

A CAMBODIAN DOCTOR TENDS MOUNTAIN VILLAGERS

Paul Friesen relates the story . . .

Dr. Thong: "One October afternoon a Cambodian husband and wife sit under a tree and pray to God for their sick children. Suddenly in the distance they see a man on a motorbike going up and down, crossing trails and rice fields. They wonder why the motorbike continues to come their way.

"When one of them recognized that it was I who was riding the bike, they all came to greet me and surrounded me with words of praise while they were weeping at the same time. They all said, 'God did answer our prayers! Our Living God did answer our prayers!' and they didn't stop crying. I too began to cry with them, and soon everyone else was weeping without stopping.

I have never cried for so long. After our tears had been wiped away, I started to unpack my medical bag and began to treat them. There are so many of them—200 to 300 patients on just that one day. After that long day of serving these dear farmers and villagers, I was exhausted and I had mixed feelings over those sweet tears. I blessed them and headed home to Phnom Penh."

Pray for my trip to Cambodia, March 13 to April 16. I will be meeting with leaders of the Khmer Presbyterian Fellowship and Dr. Thong in Phnom Penh. Pray that God would give insight and wisdom into ways we can strengthen and expand this ministry.—Paul Friesen, Southeast Asia
http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/friesenp/friesenp_0903.htm

FOUR PC(USA) PARTNER CHUCHES MEET IN BRAZIL

"We learned a lot from each other and saw many similarities . . ."

Is this heaven? Seated in a circle in the living room of a plantation with decorations from around the world, after a scrumptious Brazilian meal . . . We were pastors and theological educators at the third consultation of three partner churches of the PC(USA), the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPIB), the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, and the Presbyterian Church of Egypt. (The first consultation was in Egypt and the second in Ghana.) This consultation in February was about cross-cultural mission.

Rev. Assir Pereira, moderator of the IPIB, said: "I see our four churches as a quartet. My hope is that during this week together we can sing in melodious harmony." I think we did. We learned a lot from each other and saw many similarities in our histories and in our challenges, especially in the Muslim world. Our worship reminded me of people from many tongues praising our one Lord as one Body.

Each church made a presentation of the history of cross-cultural mission projects in their countries and beyond. . . . Rejoice with me for this harmonious quartet! Pray for the four churches as they put into practice all the suggestions and dreams expressed in this consultation. Pray that each of them and their partnerships may continue to produce much fruit.—Sherron George, Brazil

Read more: http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/georges/georges_0902.htm.

PRESBYTERIANS SUPPORT MISSION PERSONNEL

2008 outreach to individuals raises \$835,000

About \$835,000 has been given to support Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission personnel in response to five appeals mailed to selected Presbyterian households during 2008.

“We are grateful that Presbyterians have responded so generously to our requests for funding for mission personnel,” says Hunter Farrell, director of World Mission. “Despite a difficult economic environment, I am convinced that Presbyterians will continue to give faithfully as we seek to increase the number of mission personnel for the first time in half a century.”

In April the General Assembly Council voted to increase the number of mission personnel to 215 in 2009 and 220 in 2010. The General Assembly in June approved the GAC’s proposed budget that included funding for the increase. Commissioners applauded when they learned of the intention to send more mission personnel.

“In order to achieve our goal, \$4 million must be raised in both 2009 and 2010,” Farrell says. “An unprecedented commitment will be required from congregations and individuals.” Another series of appeals will be mailed in 2009 that will tell mission stories and invite support.

In addition, gifts are being sought through conversations with individuals capable of making large contributions and through congregations. Terri Bate, director of funds development for the GAC since November, says her initial visits with congregations and individuals have been positive.

To contribute to mission personnel support, visit <http://www.pcusa.org/mission> or you may contact Bate directly at terri.bate@pcusa.org

PC(USA) MISSION WORKER ASSISTS SISTER MISSION

Stan Topples gives two weeks volunteer service in eastern Congo

Stan Topples, a surgeon and advisor at the Kikuyu Orthopedic Rehabilitation Centre in Kikuyu, Kenya, in January gave two weeks as a PC(USA) volunteer in the city of Goma in eastern Congo with Samaritan's Purse. He writes:

The Goma region has suffered successive disasters. In 1994 the genocide erupting in Rwanda caused refugees to flee over the Congolese border to safety. In 2002, Mt. Nyiracongo erupted, causing lava to flow through much of the city, destroying everything in its path. Now, for the last three years there has been a storm of fighting, looting, rape, and murder in the region.

HEAL Africa, an acronym for Health, Education, Action and Life, which exercises a holistic mission, was begun by a Congolese surgeon about 10 years ago. It consists of a number of programs that are an extension of the 150-bed hospital and also operates an orphanage of 154 war orphans.

The first day after my arrival began in a clinic with surgeries of over 20 children brought to the hospital by International Disabled, and this ran steadily until the afternoon of my departure.

Read more: http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/topples/topples_0902.htm

SOMETHING NEW IN HUNGARY: VOLUNTEERS

"A new generation and new perspectives"

Kathy and Joe Angi write: Something very exciting is happening here in Hungary. We have a group of men who want to be volunteers. In the United States volunteering is a very common practice. But here this is a big deal. Hungary is a post-Communist country where people were "volunteered" for dirty jobs, and the church was a "subversive organization." Almost 20 years later, a new generation of people and new perspectives are now becoming more dominant, and people are hearing God's call in powerful new ways.

The volunteer team is a group of men who want to help their neighbors in emergencies. The land here is flat and when there is a huge snowfall in the mountains of Slovakia or Ukraine, spring brings flooding for many poor villages downriver in the flatlands of Hungary. We have a lot of poor rural people with a couple of acres and no source of income. These people often heat with wood, and house fires are a problem. So, the work of the church's emergency response team here in Hungary will probably be to help recover from flooding those who have little ability to rebuild. Or we may also help a family whose house has burned. Our team also works to cut and distribute firewood to poor families for heating in the winter.

The men want to engage others in the process of serving their neighbors and serving God. Unlike situations where we try to get the most done as efficiently as possible, here we try to get the most people involved to accomplish the task.

To read more: http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/angij/angij_0812.htm.

AND BRIEFLY . . .

- World Mission is **seeking new mission personnel** for a variety of international ministries. Visit <http://www.pcusa.org/msr>.

- March 22 is **WORLD WATER DAY**. In 2009 the focus of World Water Day will be on transboundary waters, with UNECE and UNESCO as the lead agencies. There is enough freshwater to meet everyone's needs, but water is not evenly distributed and often not appropriately managed. Many countries already face increasing water scarcity. In some areas, the availability of good quality freshwater has been reduced due to pollution from human waste, industry and agriculture. Since 1900, half of the world's wetlands, our principal source of renewable freshwater, have been lost. See Presbyterian resources for promoting World Water Day at <http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide/get-involved/waterday.htm>

- **YOUNG ADULT OPPORTUNITY**. The PC(USA) can send two delegates ages 18–30 to CANACOM's Young Adults in Mission 2009 work camp to be held in Jamaica July 25–August 15, 2009. Theme: "Spread the Mission" Thirty-five young adults from 14 different countries will gather to serve in local projects, learn from one another, worship God in many languages, and build community. Cost: \$500. To learn more or apply contact drtimdh@gmail.com.

- The ninth annual **NETWORKERS MOTHER'S DAY PROJECT** is under way, offering Presbyterians an opportunity to support malaria prevention activities in Africa as they honor our mothers in a simple and meaningful way on Mother's Day. Coordinated by the International Health Ministries office and carried out in congregations by Presbyterian Women, the Mother's Day Project offers attractive Mother's Day cards in exchange for donations to the NetWorkers Malaria Prevention Program. Read more: <http://www.pcusa.org/health/international/networkers-mothers-day09.htm>.
- **ETHIOPIAN JUBILEE.** In January a Jubilee Celebration focused on the accomplishments and future of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). On "Members Day" thousands gathered for a day of worship. Marie Lusted, now a volunteer, was one of the missionaries recognized and awarded medals in the service. Read more: http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/lustedm/lustedm_0902.htm.
- One morning a street musician named Cemong climbed aboard the bus I take to work and led us in a **SPONTANEOUS WORSHIP SERVICE** for peace in Palestine. He read from some poetry while a friend played the flute, then another man stood up and sang an Indonesian song about peace. Cemong asked that we each pray for peace silently according to our own religious persuasion. The entire bus sat in silence, heads bowed, as we trundled down the busy city street. He announced a day of music dedicated to peace in Palestine to be held at the Jakarta Arts Center and invited us to join. —Becca Young, Indonesia
http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/youngr/youngr_0902.htm
- **PRAYER REQUEST.** Pray for **TAIWANESE ABORIGINALS** who have lost their jobs in the financial crisis, which has forced many companies in Taiwan to lay off employees or impose mandatory furloughs, resulting in staggering unemployment levels throughout Taiwan. The plight of aboriginals during the highest unemployment in 30 years and the impact of the financial crisis on aboriginals merit our attention because these people are often the ones least likely to find employment. —Choon and Yen Hee Lim, Taiwan. Read more: http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/limc/limc_0902.htm.
- **QUOTE OF THE MONTH.** "Sue and I live on the boundary of two cultures. That is our assignment: to bridge a cultural gap. We facilitate interaction between African and American Christians. Why? Because the gospel is bigger than either side alone. Since New Testament times, when Jew and Gentile first learned how to eat and pray together, the gospel has broken down manmade walls. **Partnership is God's idea, not ours.**" —Ted Wright, Zambia
- **PAST ISSUES** of the **PCUSA WORLDWIDE** newsletter are available in PDF format from <http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide/newsletter>.