

PCUSA WORLDWIDE: Mission renewal

October 16, 2007

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. Subscriptions are available at www.pcusa.org/worldwide/list.htm

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A NEW BEGINNING IN MISSION

Mission leader says two October events point toward a movement of God's Spirit

Presbyterians are experiencing a "movement of God's Spirit that is drawing us together around a common commitment to sharing Christ's love around the world," says Hunter Farrell, director of World Mission for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Farrell's comment came in the wake of two October mission events that he believes will shape Presbyterian World Mission for years to come. "World Mission '07: A Celebration of Grace" drew about 700 enthusiastic Presbyterians to Louisville for the first General Assembly Council-sponsored mission conference since 1999. "Mission Challenge '07" is sending 48 PCUSA missionaries across the country this month to share how God is at work through mission personnel and international partners.

The response to both the conference and the itinerating missionaries has been overwhelmingly positive, Farrell says. "We are hearing from people across the church that congregations are experiencing a new beginning in their relationship with the General Assembly mission effort."

Read more at <http://www.pcusa.org/missioncelebration> and <http://www.pcusa.org/missionchallenge07/>

MISSION WORKERS URGE CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

They ask the PCUSA to offset carbon footprints generated by church events

Thirty PCUSA mission workers participating in Mission Challenge '07 signed a statement requesting the denomination to "explore ways to offset the carbon footprint generated" by "World Mission '07" and "Mission Challenge '07." The statement also urges the PCUSA to "develop and adopt policy to address this concern on an ongoing basis."

"We believe it is our responsibility to be good stewards of the environment that God has entrusted to us," the mission workers said. "We would urge the Presbyterian Church to consider creative ways of achieving this goal, including such options as recycling agricultural waste, planting trees, etc."

The mission workers then collected an offering of \$425 that will be directed to one or more Extra Commitment Opportunities that promote sound environmental practices.

THE POOREST OF THE POOR IN A GARBAGE DUMP

Doug Orbaker writes from Nicaragua:

Every day thousands of tons of garbage arrive in La Chureca, and the families who live there paw through it looking for anything that will help them survive—aluminum cans, glass bottles, anything that can be recycled. People scrape vegetable scraps from the inside of garbage bags and eat them, sometimes having to be wary of the vultures that want the same food. The methane fires deep underground never stop burning, so the smoke is always thick and heavy as the garbage, including plastics and other carcinogens, burns.

Fifteen years ago Edy Perez and his friends, university students, decided no one should have to live like that. Believing that education was the key to getting out of this situation, they built a program to reach the children where they were, help them get ready for school, help them throughout their school years, and help them learn a trade. It was an ambitious program that required help from many people. They named their organization "Dos Generaciones," thinking that in two generations they could move people out of the dump.

God has worked through Edy and his friends. With their help, hundreds of children are now working in jobs where they can live in safer, healthier areas. But when Dos Generaciones began there were about 80 families living in La Chureca. Now there are 350.

Read Doug's full letter at

http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/orbakerd/orbakerd_0708.htm

RESPONDING TO MYANMAR

Presbyterians join those concerned for the Burmese people

Clifton Kirkpatrick, stated clerk of the General Assembly, has sent a letter to the secretary general of the United Nations on behalf of the General Assembly to express concern about the violence being used by the Myanmar government toward protesters. The letter went to President Bush, Secretary of State Rice, and ecumenical leaders.

Many of those concerned for the people of Myanmar invite people of faith to pray. The Buddhist Peace Fellowship offers suggestions of ways to support the people.

On its Web site the Presbyterian Peacemaking Office is providing information, statements on Myanmar, resources for prayer, and a collection of photographs of the people of Myanmar. Visit <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/index.htm>

NEW WEB SITE FACILITATES MISSION GIVING

An easy, quick and reliable way to support PCUSA mission workers

You can make a difference with just \$1 a day! So proclaims a new PCUSA Web site rolled out last month to encourage the support of missionaries. Pass the word along: The world needs to know the transforming power of God's love—and you can help make it happen! Visit <http://www.pcusa.org/mission/>

AND MORE . . .

- **PRESBYTERY TITHES PROPERTY SALE TO WORLD MISSION.** In late September San Joaquin Presbytery in central California voted to tithe its proceeds from the sale of Calvary Presbyterian Church in Fresno for Presbyterian World Mission. The gift totals about \$80,000. The decision was prompted in part by a visit to the presbytery by "Mission Challenge '07" participant Dusty Ellington, PCUSA mission worker in Egypt. Part of the \$80,000 gift will be designated for support of Ellington's position.
- **BABY CAPS HELP SAVE LIVES.** Ladies of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina have elevated the infant cap to an art form, writes Barbara Nagy in Malawi. "A review of our recent sick newborns showed that 10 percent are significantly hypothermic.

One important safety net, especially with small or premature newborns, is simply a hat that prevents the loss of body heat." Read Barbara's letter at http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/nagyb/nagyb_0706.htm

• **PCUSA PARTNER ON NPR AFFILIATE.** Valery Nodem, national coordinator of RELUFA (Network Against Hunger and Injustice in Cameroon) was interviewed on "Worldview," a program produced by National Public Radio affiliate WBEZ in Chicago. Nodem, whose organization works with the PCUSA's Joining Hands program, spoke about the "Transparency Initiative," which seeks to regulate the way mining, oil and gas interests report contractual agreements with host governments. He was joined on the program by Sarah Pray, director of the U.S. branch of the Publish What you Pay Coalition. Read more and listen to the interview at http://www.wbez.org/Program_WV_Segment.aspx?segmentID=13514

• **SOUP KITCHEN IN MOSCOW.** On Sept. 10, to much fanfare, the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy opened up its first mothers and children soup kitchen. A host of dignitaries from the Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Korean Presbyterian, and Baptist churches were present, and the first client was involved in cutting the ribbon. Read more from PCUSA missionaries Bob and Stacy Bronkema at http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/letters/bronkema/bronkema_0710.htm

• **PRAYER REQUEST.** Please keep Les and Cindy Morgan (mission workers in Bangladesh) in your prayers, and their 22-year-old son, Everett. Les and Cindy are with Everett as he undergoes treatments for cancer in Texas.