

# mission crossroads

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Hunter Farrell

## Isn't it amazing?

By Hunter Farrell  
director of World Mission

Some people will tell you that Presbyterians' reliance on committees, tradition-encrusted rules and procedures, and Robert's Rules of Order doesn't leave much room for God's Spirit to move in our church's biennial General Assembly. I disagree.

Last July, I watched as an overture from Arizona's De Cristo Presbytery to strengthen the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program came to the General Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination—generally the place

where well-meaning hopes and dreams hit the brick wall of “budget realities.” Numerous new programs in other areas of ministry had been proposed, and the committee members, acting with appropriate fiscal responsibility, had looked at shrinking budgets and voted no. But the Spirit was already moving before the committee even began its work—six of the commissioner members were either former YAVs or closely related to former YAVs. During the hearings, member after member shared powerful testimonies of the impact the one-year, cross-cultural ministry experience had made on them or their loved one.

All well and good, you say, but how do you resolve decreasing revenue and a proposal to spend more for the YAV program? Christine Chakoian, a minister commissioner from Chicago Presbytery, served on the Committee on Mission Coordination and recalls her reaction to the testimonies: “I personally was so moved that this was the right thing to do that, on the spot, I pledged that somehow I would raise \$50,000 from my congregation.” Chris went home, preached on the program, and called to tell us that a congregation member's family had committed \$70,000 to the goal!

It's amazing how the Spirit will work through all who are willing to witness to the powerful and loving ways of God. Together with our global partners and U.S. Presbyterians passionate about mission, Presbyterian World Mission has discerned three critical global issues that will form the foundation of our engagement with God's world:

- addressing the root causes of poverty, especially as it impacts women and children;
- strengthening the capacity of the global church to witness to God's love in Christ; and
- working for reconciliation in cultures of violence, including our own.

Will you join us to witness for a world of peace and justice that knows God's love in Christ? The Spirit is leading the way!

*Mission Crossroads* (formerly *Highlights*) is a General Assembly Mission Council publication about the church's mission around the world.

Presbyterian World Mission is committed to sending mission personnel, empowering the global church, and equipping the PC(USA) for mission.

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### ABOUT THE COVER

Former Young Adult Volunteer Paige Stephan walks with Kenyan friends during her service in the country during 2003–2004. Stephan, now an ordained PC(USA) hospital chaplain in Chicago, is one of many former YAVs who are in leadership roles in the church. See story page 1.

Photo by David P. Young



General Assembly  
Mission Council



*JED KOBALL, now a mission co-worker in Peru, began exploring his calling to mission service while serving as a Young Adult Volunteer in the Philippines.*

## Inspiring Service

The Young Adult Volunteer program molds leaders for the PC(USA).

Ask Jed Koball to identify where his road to long-term mission service began, and he will without hesitation point to his year as a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Young Adult Volunteer (YAV).

“I went to the Philippines looking for an experience that would change my life, and it did,” says Koball, who served during 1996 and 1997. “I spent most of my time there working on an organic farm and teaching farming methods to peasant communities in the mountains, but it was then that I began to explore my calling, wrestling with the messages of the gospel, and, more than anything else, thinking about the poor and our relationship with the poor.”

After his year as a YAV, Koball attended seminary and upon graduation took a position in parish ministry. The door to mission service did not open for him at that time, but he longed to fulfill his sense of call to serve in cross-cultural ministry. “God has a funny way of working,” he says. “God led me to the parish, which I had never anticipated in a million years, but it provided me a rich experience.”

In 2009 he became a mission co-worker, serving in Peru as the companionship facilitator with the Joining Hands network. Joining Hands links churches,

NGOs, and other groups in developing countries with Presbyterians in the United States to fight the root causes of poverty and injustice.

“I’m in it for the long haul,” Koball says. “This is my life, this is my dream. I’m living my dream right now.”

The YAV program is open to young adults ages 19 to 30 who are part of a worshipping community and who will commit to one year of service in a community of need in the United States or a foreign country. YAVs also focus on growing spiritually through prayer and Bible study, living in intentional Christian community, and discerning their future vocation.

“This is a leadership training program for the PC(USA),” says Shannon Langley, coordinator of the YAV program. “About one-third of YAVs go to seminary” when they finish their term. While that number is significant, Langley is quick to add that developing lay leaders is a prime goal of the program. “We are looking for folks who will be elders, Sunday school teachers, and youth group leaders,” she explains. “We want to develop strong Presbyterians who will be active leaders in their churches and communities.”

YAVs encounter firsthand some of the world’s most complex problems and the people who are trying to



*DOUG BAKER, a YAV site coordinator in Northern Ireland, enjoys a moment with YAVs along the North Atlantic coast.*

solve them. For example, in Northern Ireland YAVs serve in support roles for organizations and churches that are committed to a lasting peace between unionists and nationalists, YAV site coordinator Doug Baker says. They often work with youth and children trying to build relationships between Catholics and Protestants and

**“As one does better in school and relationships, one builds self-esteem and is less likely to look down on those who are different, and that’s a building block for peace”**

tutor children in low-income neighborhoods. “As one does better in school and relationships, one builds self-esteem and is less likely to look down on those who are different, and that’s a building block for peace,” Baker says.

The YAV experience with pressing issues is not superficial, notes Jesse Larson, who served in Ghana in the 1999–2000 YAV class. “The YAV experience, whether national or international, provides you with an experience with some of the real issues happening in the world,” says Larson, who now works in campus ministry at Collegiate Presbyterian Church in Ames, Iowa. “You are faced with justice issues, real life-and-death sorts of things, and you are in a reality where you have to deal with them.”

While developing relationships with the people they serve, YAVs also build close bonds with each other as they strive for Christian community. Living in Christian community is “probably the thing that shaped my experience the most,” says Karen Ware Jackson, who began two years of YAV service in Hollywood in 2003. “Living in Christian community is difficult,” acknowledges Jackson, now an associate pastor at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio. “When you are engaging people on that level, you really can’t hide anything about yourself. You can’t hide the broken edges and the rough edges, but you still learn to love and care for each other.”

YAVs also build close affinity for the places they serve. “The relationships they build with the people they work with and serve and with each other have been so meaningful,” says New Orleans site coordinator Kathy Lee. “During the past two years I have had five of the eleven Young Adult Volunteers stay in the city after their period of service. I think that speaks to the lives they live in New Orleans.” They are continuing to help the city recover from Hurricane Katrina through service in church and nonprofit organizations.

Essie Buxton, an associate for the Young Adult Volunteer program, says one goal of the program is to help YAVs continue to draw on the lessons learned during their YAV service throughout their lives. The program has just started the “Deacon Project,” which matches recently returned YAVs with former YAVs

whose service ended at least a year earlier. Those who have been away from the program for a year or more will be a “listening ear and prayer partner” for the new YAV alums and help them adjust to life beyond the YAV experience.

How are YAVs’ lives transformed? Former YAV site coordinator Cobbie Palm, who now directs the Spiritual Formation program at Silliman University’s Divinity School in the Philippines, says the song “Spirit of the Living God” describes how God works through the experience.

It involves a “melting” of one’s life as radically new realities are confronted, says Palm, who was a mentor to Koball. Then, he explains, there is a gradual “molding” with a deeper understanding of self and the social-cultural context. This invites a desire to “know more and be filled,” Palm says. “Finally, one reaches the moment when the new self begins to feel purpose and usefulness and has the desire to be used by God.”

It’s this spiritual component that sets the YAV experience apart from other worthwhile service opportunities for young people, Langley says. “This is a way to do service in the name of Jesus Christ in a faith community.”



*DOUG BAKER has been mentoring future PC(USA) leaders since 1994.*



## Christie Valentine

YAV Service Year: 2008–2009

YAV Service Location: San Antonio, Texas

Current Occupation: Student, American University,  
Washington, DC

Home congregation: Fourth Presbyterian Church,  
Chicago

After her freshman year of college, Christie Valentine realized that she had never really stopped to think about what she wanted to do or be.

Thanks to the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program, her walk of faith put her on a path to her passion. When she completed her year of service, she transferred to American University, where she is a junior majoring in international studies.

“Although I had always had an interest in international relations, I didn’t ‘get it’ until that year,” Valentine says. “Now I’m eager and excited to be in school. I see now how very blessed I am, and I want to help others with the blessings that I have.”

As a YAV, Valentine served with a refugee resettlement ministry in San Antonio. “It was inspirational to see how these families persevered and maintained a home here after all that they had gone through,” she says. “Their whole life up until that point had been about impermanence, and yet they were so resilient. If it were me, I don’t think I could be as hopeful.”

Christie first learned about the YAV program from her mother, Linda, executive director of the General Assembly Mission Council. “I had honestly never thought about doing a church-related program,” the younger Valentine notes.

Valentine says that her year as a YAV helped her claim her faith as her own. “Although I grew up with a church background and involved parents and always had that as a foundation, my faith was more of a ‘family affair.’ I never took it to the next level and lived out my faith for myself.”

*Reporting by Emily Odom*



## Erik Berg

YAV Service Year: 2000–2001

YAV Service Location: Buenos Aires, Argentina

Current Occupation: Senior chip design engineer,  
Intel Corp.

Current Congregation: First Presbyterian Church,  
Portland, Oregon

Erik Berg will not forget the community he served in Argentina. That's partly because of clear memories of his Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) experience and partly because of his ongoing relationship with La Lecheria de la Solidaridad in Buenos Aires.

La Lecheria de la Solidaridad is a community center where Berg tutored teenagers and provided them with other enrichment experiences. About five years ago, he founded an organization called Conduit of Hope that brings recent high school graduates who participated in La Lecheria de la Solidaridad's programs to Portland for a semester or more of intensive English study at a university.

At Berg's church, where he was ordained as an elder, Berg has promoted funding scholarships for students at La Lecheria de la Solidaridad.

He says that working in Argentina with people who live on the margins continues to raise questions for him on many issues, including the stewardship of personal resources. "What exactly do I need to live?" He asks, "How do I spend the money I have? Am I buying things that are beneficial to all parties involved?"

Berg entered the YAV program after going through a time of personal crisis and searching. At the time a doctoral student in electrical engineering, he entered a period of "deep, intense, and personal prayer," and a call to mission service was the result. He entered the YAV program after he earned his doctorate from the University of Michigan.

Does he regret postponing his career for a year's service? Not a chance, he says. "Everybody I know who went through this program had a tremendous experience."



## Hardy Kim

YAV Service Year: 1997–1998

YAV Service Location: Northern Ireland

Current Occupation: Associate Pastor for Church Growth,  
First Presbyterian Church, Atlanta

Presbytery membership: Atlanta

Hardy Kim went to law school hoping the experience would prepare him to change the world. While serving as a Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) in Northern Ireland, he learned that change can happen through building relationships.

"The connection I had with the communities in the context of Northern Ireland was far more powerful than anything that I had experienced in legal offices and case prep," Kim says. "Though the context may not be as broad, it was the connection with the people and the relationship with the people that were really fulfilling to me."

Kim worked at a YMCA in Lisburn with young adults who were out of school and out of work. Having grown up witnessing the violence between unionists and nationalists, the young people didn't readily trust anyone, including Kim. Yet Kim says he learned valuable lessons in how to build trust gradually. "The guys who were threatening to beat me up and who were saying all kinds of crazy things to me became the people who were the saddest to see me go."

Kim returned to law school after his year of YAV service, but he harbored serious doubts about a legal career. He eventually recognized that he was called into another vocation. "I ran away from law school and went to seminary," says Kim, who left law school just two classes short of graduation.

The lessons he learned as a YAV continue to serve him in ministry, Kim emphasizes. "I don't want church growth ministry to be about giving somebody a brochure and telling them to plug in wherever," he explains. "I want to provide people safe spaces and open spaces to get to know one another and build relationships."



## Paige Stephan

YAV Service Year: 2003–2004

YAV Service Location: Nairobi, Kenya

Current Occupation: Chaplain, Rush Medical Center, Chicago

Presbytery: Chicago

As a chaplain in her hospital's neonatal unit, Paige Stephan listens carefully to parents as they express worry, fear, grief, and hope. She says her ability to listen to people in difficult situations was one of the skills she learned as a Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) in Africa.

Stephan worked for Church World Service from its regional office in Nairobi. A public relations major in college, she traveled to countries in East Africa, where she wrote stories of people whose lives had been touched by Church World Service. "I was in Sudan listening to stories of war, displacement, pain, and grief and in Rwanda hearing women share stories of finding hope," she says. "I learned to acknowledge that one's story is valuable and deserves to be heard."

Being in places like Rwanda, where the Tutsi minority was subjected to genocide in 1994, "rocks your world," she says. Nevertheless, she developed valuable relationships with Africans.

"The people I spent time with and who stood next to me in this profound era of growth called me daughter, friend, and sister," she says. "Being engaged this way means choosing to love enough and to be open enough and humble enough to let somebody else's experience ooze into your own."

Stephan brought to the YAV experience solid Presbyterian credentials. She was a Presbyterian camp counselor, a participant in the Presbyterian Youth Triennium, and a youth advisory delegate to the General Assembly. Yet she never heard God calling her to pastoral ministry until she went to Africa.

"A lot of the things that get you distracted here weren't present in my life there," she says. "I became aware of the stillness, and there I learned to value listening to God."

# YAV Application Deadline January 20

Applications for service in the Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program year 2011–2012 are due by January 20, 2011.

Usually 60–70 people participate in the program each year. About half of them serve at the ten national sites and half at the six international sites.

YAVs are required to raise a portion of their support. The amount required ranges from \$4,500 to \$8,000 depending on the site. These funds typically come from congregations, family, and friends. YAVs are provided housing, health insurance, a monthly stipend, a travel grant, and a grant for student loans.

In the 2011–2012 program year, YAVs will be serving in Atlanta, Chicago, Cincinnati, Denver, Guatemala, Hollywood, India, Kenya, Miami, Nashville, New Orleans, Northern Ireland, Peru, San Antonio, South Korea, and Tucson.

To learn more or to  
apply online, visit  
[www.pcusa.org/yav](http://www.pcusa.org/yav).



*CHRIS McREYNOLDS (left), a mission worker at the U.S.-Mexico border, and two mission workers in Africa, will receive financial support from Trinity Presbyterian Church in McKinney, Texas, which will contribute a tithe of its capital campaign to mission.*

## So Many Ways to Grow

We can send as many mission workers as the church will support.

After feeling concerned over dramatically cutting their mission contributions four years ago, the good folks at Trinity Presbyterian Church in McKinney, Texas, have decided to make up for the short fall in a very big way.

The 675-member church will tithe 10 percent of an upcoming \$400,000 capital campaign to mission. Of the \$40,000 to be tithed to mission, \$20,000 will

go to local mission while \$20,000 will be given to Presbyterian World Mission:

\$10,000 to support mission co-workers Jeff and Christi Boyd in Cameroon, Africa, and another \$10,000 for sending and supporting mission co-worker Chris McReynolds, U.S. coordinator for Proyecto Amistad, one of the six projects of Presbyterian Border Ministries along the border between the United States and Mexico.

“We held a huge capital campaign four years ago to construct a much-needed addition to our

facilities,” said Mally Baum, associate pastor at Trinity Presbyterian. “Afterwards, we were forced to dramatically tighten the belts on our operating budget. We did not feel good about cutting the money we give to mission, and this is one way we can make up for it.”

A thousand miles away, the congregation of Crossroads Presbyterian Church in Mequon, Wisconsin, had the same idea as that of Trinity Presbyterian. Crossroads chose to tithe 10 percent of its \$2-million capital campaign to World Mission.

Terri Bate, director of Funds Development Ministry at the General Assembly Mission Council, says that tithing from capital campaigns is just one of many ways churches and individuals can give to Presbyterian World Mission.

“We want to get the word out that funds are needed for sending and supporting mission co-workers,” said Bate. “How much we can do and how many mission co-workers we can send out depends entirely upon our presbyteries, congregations, and individual members. We can send as many as the

**“When we all work together, great things can be accomplished.”**



church will support. This is a concrete way in which Presbyterians can become connected and engaged in God's mission in the world."

As part of World Mission's Second-Mile missionary support program, Shenandoah Presbytery, which covers parts of Virginia and West Virginia, has committed to raise \$34,000 for world mission. The goal was set after retired pastor Homer Cornish, chairman of the presbytery's Worldwide Ministries Committee, suggested a challenge to raise \$2 for each of the presbytery's 17,000 members.

"It's pretty simple when you think about it," said Cornish, who has served churches in the Shenandoah Valley for nearly fifty years. "What it amounts to is giving up a couple of cups of coffee or soft drinks. Not every day, but just one time. It doesn't sound like much, but it adds up. When we all work together, great things can be accomplished."

Bate points out that pastors can play a vital role in opening doors to funding for world mission.

Senior Pastor Tim Hart-Andersen of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, knew of two members of his congregation who cared deeply for world mission. Hart-Andersen arranged a meeting between the two and Linda Valentine, executive director of the General Assembly Mission Council, and Hunter Farrell, director of World Mission. The meeting led to sizeable contributions for the work of World Mission.

"The Tim Hart-Andersen experience shows that pastors can open the door to substantial gifts," said Bate. "There are people out there who are very passionate about world mission. Pastors can guide them in the right direction."

The 219th General Assembly (2010) has instructed the General Assembly Mission Council to continue to make missionary support among the highest priorities in the agency's work. The General Assembly invited each of the 173 presbyteries to participate in sharing the costs of at least one mission co-worker during 2011 and 2012.

Fifteen presbyteries have already adopted a goal to have 100 percent of their churches join in supporting mission co-workers.

"The annual cost of sending and supporting an individual mission co-worker is \$75,000, and for a couple it is \$125,000. If we can get 100 percent support from our presbyteries, that will be a huge step in the right direction," said Bate.

Bate said that staff members are traveling to presbyteries and churches throughout the country to conduct workshops and get the word out about World Mission.

"We are telling the story of the long history and heritage of Presbyterian World Mission, and letting our church know that we continue to answer God's call to spread the gospel throughout the world, with the goal to grow Christ's church deep and wide. In sharing this story we know that the Holy Spirit will inspire us to action to reach out to our hurting world."

**"Our partners in mission around the world have asked for us to share in their mission as they seek to spread the gospel message."**

"Presbyterians are generous and respond when they see a vision and a need. Our partners in mission around the world have asked for us to share in their mission as they seek to spread the gospel message. Presbyterian World Mission becomes a platform from which Presbyterians can connect and engage with our neighbors in the world, providing a witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ."

"As we continue to invite Presbyterians to this table, we celebrate the many creative and different ways financial support has come. Every penny and every dollar count."



*TERRI BATE, director of the GAMC's Funds Development Ministry, emphasizes that the number of mission workers the PC(USA) will send depends on the financial gifts of presbyteries, congregations, and individual members. Photo by Michelle Jones.*

*Jeff and Christi Boyd (left) a mission couple based in Cameroon, work with partners to lift people out of poverty. Amy Robinson, a mission worker serving at the U.S. – Mexico border, facilitates peacemaking ministries. Elisée Musemakweli, president of the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda, is one of many global church leaders who have received financial support from the PC(USA) for graduate study.*



## Charting a Future Course

Presbyterian World Mission will focus on three critical global issues.

Carrying on a denominational tradition that's more than 170 years old, Presbyterian World Mission seeks to serve a hurting world in desperate need of Christ's good news.

Presbyterian World Mission, after more than a year of study, has identified three critical global issues that will be the focus of its ministries. The issues were identified after prayerful consideration and thorough discussion with international partners, mission personnel, and mission leaders from congregations, presbyteries, synods, and other Presbyterian organizations involved in international ministry.

These groups will play a crucial role in efforts to address the three issues, says Hunter Farrell, director of Presbyterian World Mission.

"Presbyterian World Mission recognizes 'we're better together' and our role is to serve as catalyst, casting a vision and serving as a platform for Presbyterians to live out global discipleship and be transformed in the process," Farrell says. It's a way of doing mission that he and other mission leaders are calling "Mission in 3D." The three dimensions are international partners, Presbyterian World Mission, and U.S. Presbyterians from congregations, middle governing bodies, and other Presbyterian groups.

Presbyterian World Mission has been addressing the three critical global issues for many years. While these are not new concerns, they now will claim the main thrust of its ministries.

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### 1 Addressing the root causes of poverty, especially as they impact women and children

In a village near Kimpese in Lower Congo, schoolchildren are enjoying four new classrooms, thanks in part to the work of Jeff Boyd.

Boyd, regional liaison for Central Africa, arranged for Congolese Presbyterians and Presbyterian Women (PW) in the United States to work jointly on the project. The Congolese agreed to build the walls for the classrooms, and PW provided funds for a metal roof. The careful stewardship of resources helped the Presbyterian school add four new classrooms instead of the three that were originally planned.

Around the globe, schools founded long ago by

Presbyterian missionaries are still offering quality education under the leadership of partner churches.

Studies have shown that education is the best way to lift people out of poverty in the developing world. This is particularly true for women. Education empowers them to stand up against injustice, start businesses, and build a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities. Presbyterians pioneered the education of girls in many places around the world, and today the commitment to educating girls and women continues.

Christi Boyd, Jeff Boyd's wife, is a companionship facilitator for Joining Hands, a ministry of the Presbyterian Hunger Program that creates networks to focus on the root causes of hunger. Joining Hands links churches, NGOs, and community groups overseas with Presbyterians in the United States.

Christi Boyd works in Cameroon, where she and her husband are based.

The Joining Hands network helps farmers like Salomon who lost the field he rented to plant pineapples when the landowner struck a deal with a large international fruit company instead. The same thing happened to him three years earlier when he and 15 other farmers were forced off yet another plot of land.

With decreasing amounts of land to farm and diminishing markets for their products, small farmers fear that the only future for their children will be to work as day laborers on large corporate farms.

Yet there is hope for them because of the work of the Cameroonian network RELUFA, its partnering congregations in the United States, and Christi Boyd. A fair trade dried fruit project is being developed in Salomon's community that promises to improve the living standards of the farmers. Through Fair Trade, the producer generally receives 20–45 percent of the retail price, compared with 1 percent in conventional trade.

Christi emphasizes that her work for social justice is rooted firmly in her faith. "Through the words of Jesus and the prophets, God consistently defends the cause of the poor, vulnerable, and oppressed," she says. "The Scriptures call us to follow in their footsteps."

## 2 Strengthening the capacity of the global church to witness to God's love in Christ

Elisée Musemakweli was a doctoral student in Belgium in 1994 when he heard reports of genocide in his native Rwanda. He interrupted his studies and went home to help his country recover.

Sixteen years later, he continues to help Rwanda and its churches rebuild. Musemakweli is now president of the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda and dean of the Protestant Theological College of Butare.

The genocide had a devastating effect on Musemakweli's country and family. An estimated 800,000 Tutsis died at the hands of Hutu militia forces. When the violence erupted, the first report that Musemakweli received from Rwanda revealed that his house had been plundered and his mother, two brothers, and seven of his brothers' children had been killed.

"In spite of our faith we do not understand the senseless deaths of my mother, brothers, and relatives and many other fellow countrymen," Musemakweli said at the time. "It is so painful and cruel that we cannot comprehend it." He later learned that 20 members of his extended family had been murdered.

After dealing with his own grief and helping others pick up the pieces of their shattered lives, Musemakweli returned to Belgium and finished

his dissertation. A scholarship from the PC(USA) paid for his studies.

The 300,000-member church that Musemakweli leads has cared for the many who were made widows and orphans by the genocide. It also has emphasized ministries of peace building and reconciliation among younger people.

Musemakweli and his colleagues at the Protestant Theological College, are preparing future ministers to meet the growing demand for clergy in Rwanda and neighboring Burundi.

Musemakweli and many other able church leaders around the world may not have been able to receive the preparation they needed without financial assistance from the PC(USA), says Doug Welch, Presbyterian World Mission's associate director for mission partners and programs.

"Elisée is a prime example of one who received support from the PC(USA) for his education and then returned to his home country to provide stellar leadership," Welch says. "Both the Protestant Theological College and the Presbyterian Church in Rwanda have made giant strides under his guidance."

## 3 Working for reconciliation in cultures of violence, including our own

In the border city of Juarez, Mexico, a new community center stands as a witness to the gospel of peace in a region that has been engulfed by drug-related violence.

The community center is a project of Pasos de Fe, one of six sites of the Presbyterian Border Ministry (PBM). A joint initiative of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, PBM is engaged in church development, health care, education, and other ministries.

The center in Juarez is called Verdad y Esperanza (Truth and Hope), a name that reflects the deep yearnings of the surrounding Guadalajara neighborhood.

The new community center currently hosts a computer lab, English classes, and a small library. Future plans call for regular visits from dentists and a nurse practitioner and a childhood nutrition project.

"Some people might say that in a city ravaged by violence, computer labs and English classes are not the community's greatest needs," says Amy Robinson, a PC(USA) mission worker and U.S. coordinator of Pasos de Fe. "However, an analysis of the drug trade and the violence that accompanies it can show you that drug trafficking preys on those who are most economically vulnerable. By providing training, education, and resources to our community, Pasos de Fe is strengthening its neighbors and giving them the skills necessary so that the drug trade is not nearly as tempting an option for those seeking work."



*MISSION TEAM MEMBERS hold a moment of prayer with community members before opening the clinic. Photo courtesy of the Sudan Advocacy Network.*

## Global Connectors

Work in Sudan models community of mission practice.

Surrounded by the harsh realities of war, the Duk Lost Boys Clinic serves as an oasis of hope for the people of South Sudan.

Established by the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Skaneateles and now operated and funded by the John Dau Foundation, a nonprofit organization created by the church, the clinic has been in operation since 2007 and serves more than 32,000 people. On staff it has a doctor, nurses, twenty-five midwives, counselors, lab technicians, and pharmacists who treat medical problems such as dehydration, pneumonia, measles, malaria, malnutrition, Pott's Disease, and tuberculosis.

Craig Lindsey, senior pastor at First Presbyterian Skaneateles, says that the clinic would not be able to serve the people of Sudan as efficiently and effectively as it does without the resources and assistance provided by the Sudan Mission Network and its partners.

"The network and World Mission office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) have proven to be an invaluable asset to our mission and ministry in South Sudan," Lindsey said. "Information is vital to running a mission overseas. With the Sudan Mission Network, the sharing of ideas and networking can offer direction and guidance in terms of finding what resources are available and in other areas such as grant writing."

Lindsey points out that one of the things the congregation of First Presbyterian Skaneateles is most proud of is the clinic's work with expectant mothers.

"Through the clinic, our church has helped bring

life to an area of the world where death is more common than birth," Lindsey said. "Where at one time eight out of ten children and mothers died in labor and delivery, now every mother that comes to the clinic receives prenatal and postnatal care, and every infant is inoculated against preventable diseases. We are the hands of God reaching out and providing hope where many think there is no hope."

Lindsey said he does not have specific figures on how dramatic a shift there has been in the number of deaths of both mothers and children during labor, but he feels certain that it has been cut in half at the very least.

Bill Andress, convener for the Sudan Mission Network and the Sudan Action Advocacy Forum, agrees.

"First Presbyterian Skaneateles is doing wonderful things to help the people of Sudan," Andress said. "We have been able to assist them by putting them in touch with other churches, presbyteries and organizations doing mission work in Sudan. By providing them with more avenues of communications and information, we help them better serve the people of Sudan."

The Sudan Mission Network is one of thirty-three networks that connect Presbyterians who share a common mission interest. Most participants in the networks are involved in mission partnerships through congregations, presbyteries, or synods. Network members come together to coordinate efforts, share best practices, and develop strategies. These networks serve as positive examples of the PC(USA)'s new emphasis on communities of mission practice. The term "community of mission

practice” refers to the space of interaction between U.S. Presbyterians, their global partners, and World Mission workers and staff.

Lis Valle, the PC(USA)’s associate director of Equipping for Mission Involvement, described a community of mission practice as a “place for global connection” and “adding a member to an existing relationship.”

Many congregations struggle with how to make a real impact in a complex and remote location. “The communities of mission practice add avenues of support that can help in eliminating miscommunication and mistakes that can possibly harm or provide difficulties for our global neighbors,” said Valle. “They offer an expanded network with which to gather information and resources.”

Andress, who has been with the Sudan Mission Network since its creation in 2000, says that while most see the purpose of the network as “giving money and taking action,” it is far more than that.

“We serve as a political liaison between mission workers and organizations and government leaders,” said Andress. “We serve as a distributor for situation updates and action requests. We have a network of more than 2,000 people working with us in Africa and Europe. While all of this is very important, the most important thing we do is call for prayer for the people of Sudan. Prayer is a part of everything we do.”

Andress and leaders of mission networks were in Louisville from Sept. 30 to Oct. 2 for a Mission Advocates & Mission Network Leaders joint event. The event brought together mission advocates from the middle governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), conveners and other leaders from the PC(USA)-related mission networks, regional liaisons from around the globe, and other World Mission staff.

“Communities of mission practice—in this case, the Sudan Mission Network—provide a space for mutual transformation,” said Hunter Farrell, director of Presbyterian World Mission. “No one who has been in Sudan has not been transformed by the experience, and the Sudan Mission Network helps transmit the power of that transformation to other U.S. Presbyterians who may never travel there.”

Michael Weller has served as the Mission Liaison for Sudan and Ethiopia since 2007. He works directly with both the Sudan Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church of the Sudan. He facilitates communications between the two churches and their partnerships with mission networks and individual presbyteries and congregations in the United States.

“In most cases I work directly with presbyteries and congregations,” said Weller. “I assist them in arranging mission trips and making them aware of the specific needs of the communities our partners serve.”

Weller said many mission projects are focused on education, but other projects assist with healthcare and agriculture.

“The needs for primary and secondary education are great,” said Weller. “Considerable support is also given to Nile Theological College. Our partners also have two other Bible colleges that are given assistance. Education is so important because it is empowering.”

One particular agricultural project Weller drew attention to involved the Majengir, a community of just under 150 people. They sought help through the church in making the transition from hunting and gathering to agriculture.

“The Sudan Evangelical Presbyterian Church contacted me and I communicated the needs of the Majengir to the networks and presbyteries,” said Weller. “We were able to clear 40 hectares (400,000 square meters) of land and plant fruits and vegetables. We organized a school and taught some of the community members the basics of agriculture. We also dug a well and made a spring for drinking water.”

Weller pointed out that having long-standing relationships between the two Sudanese churches and PC(USA) presbyteries has made communicating needs much easier.

“They are very much aware of the situation here in the Sudan and know the plight of the people,” said Weller.

Shenandoah Presbytery recently celebrated its twenty-first year in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of the Sudan. Shenango Presbytery has a twenty-year partnership with the Sudanese church. Redstone Presbytery has been in partnership with Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church for four years.

“For those churches or presbyteries that have a passion for Sudan or another area of the world and want to make a difference, the networks can help put you in the right direction,” Lindsey said. “What you and your church may want to do may not be what the people need. The networks have a vast amount of information and resources to share and can help you discern what needs you can meet that will best help the people you are serving. By working together, we really can change the world.”



*MISSION TEAM from Trinity Presbytery heads for work in Sudan. Photo courtesy of the Sudan Advocacy Network.*



Mission worker Chenoa Stock was literally lifted up during a visit to San Francisco Presbytery, which has a partnership in Bolivia, where Chenoa was recently assigned. She serves as companionship facilitator for the *Joining Hands for Life (UMAVIDA)* network in that country. At the end of a presentation to middle school and high school students, they and their leaders gathered around her to pray for her and her ministry.

## WM staff changes

World Mission celebrated the service of the following persons who have completed their service on the staff. Their years of service to World Mission and other PC(USA) entities are noted in parentheses:

**Jon Chapman** (1975–2010), retired as area coordinator for Europe

**Stan deVoogd** (1997–2010), left as area coordinator for Central America and Mexico due to staff reductions

**Victor Makari** (1967–2010), retired as area coordinator for the Middle East, director of the Jinishian Memorial Program

**Jay Rock** (1987–2010), retired as coordinator for interfaith relations

**Peter Kemmerle** (1989–2010), resigned as coordinator, Mission Connections office, to pursue other interests

**Elaine Matthes** (1999–2010), retired as coordinator, Mission Personnel Relations

**Pat Hendrix** (1997–2010), retired as Sexual Misconduct ombudsperson

**Rob Moore** was welcomed to the staff as an associate in the Mission Connections office. Also joining World Mission are **Bryce Smith** as formatter for *Mission Connections*, **Cathy Holland** as administrative assistant for the Asia office, and **Denise McCoy** as administrative assistant for Equipping for Mission Involvement. **Anne Blair** and **Carol Wetzel** have been promoted to new positions in the Global Discipleship area: Anne, program assistant for Recruitment; Carol, program assistant for Mission Payments/International Evangelism. **Ellen Sherby** will be on maternity leave until January 2011. She gave birth to Darío Manuel Zavala-Sherby on October 3 in Louisville.

## Two PC(USA) honorees

A book of essays has been released by Westminster John Knox Press that honors the life and work of Clifton Kirkpatrick, stated clerk emeritus of the PC(USA) and president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. *That They May All Be One: Celebrating the World Communion of Reformed Churches* includes more than 25 essays on the theme of the importance of ecumenism in working for mission and justice. The book was released to mark the historic union of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Reformed Ecumenical Council in May in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

In August in Chennai, India, Dennis Smith, PC(USA) mission worker in Guatemala—soon going to a new assignment in Argentina—was one of six people granted a Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa, by the Academy of Ecumenical Indian Theology and Church Administration. Smith, currently president of the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), and WACC General Secretary Randy Naylor were honored for their contribution to the ecumenical movement. Smith presented a paper titled “A Latin American Pilgrimage Towards Ecumenism.”

## ‘Iraqi Women for Peace’

Seeking to build up women’s ministry in the Middle East and respond to the need of the Presbyterian Church in Iraq, the Near East School of Theology (NEST) hosted its third annual seminar for Iraqi Presbyterian women this spring on the NEST campus in Beirut, Lebanon. Ten women from Iraq participated, representing the Presbyterian churches in Basra, Baghdad, Kirkuk, and Mosel. The women, of various ages, are involved in their local churches: some serve in the Sunday schools with children, some with youth, and some with other women. In churches where there is no pastor, the women lead the Sunday worship, including preaching, do visiting, and help families in need. NEST President Mary Mikhael said the focus of the seminar, titled “Iraqi Women for Peace,” was on “how can women make peace, maintain peace, spread and promote peace through the family, church, and in the whole society.” The seminar included lectures on such topics as the significance of prayer in the life of the church, counseling, planning, leadership and ministry development, and especially how to reach out to younger women.

## Vanuatu Presbyterian elected to WCRC post

At the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in June, a Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu pastor, Allen Nafuki, was elected to a seven-year term on the WCRC Executive Council. This was quite a coup for Vanuatu, according to the PC(USA)’s partnership facilitator for the Pacific, David Walter. Despite the fact that nearly 35 percent of the people of Vanuatu are Presbyterian (possibly the highest percentage in the world), Vanuatu is a country of only 220,000 people spread over some 83 islands. Traditionally delegates from Australia represent Oceania on the executive council, but Walter says “this time it was time for one of the little guys.”

## Focus on the Philippines

The September issue of *Presbyterians Today* included a feature titled “Working for Change in the Philippines” by Mark Koenig, director of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations. Presbyterians have been active in advocating for human rights in this country, where some 20 church workers and lay leaders of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) are among those who have been killed. The UCCP asked the PC(USA) to send observers to the May 2010 elections in hopes of helping deter fraud and violence and to inform the Philippine government that the world was watching.

More recently, Gradye Parsons, stated clerk of the PC(USA), sent a letter to President Benigno Aquino of the Philippines calling for the release of Judilyn Oliveros, who gave birth to a son on July 23, and the others of the “Morong 43” community health workers arrested in February at a health care training event. They were accused of undergoing explosives training and have been held in prison since that time.

Donations to ECO E052070 aid the UCCP in support of victims of human rights’ violations and their families.

Philippines President Aquino has drawn public support for his “agenda for change,” but Rex Reyes, general secretary of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), has said reform will be hard to achieve if Aquino misreads “the fundamental roots of its misery”—the issues of land, social justice, and sovereignty. Reyes spoke during a meeting of church leaders in August, where he referred to Aquino’s anti-corruption-centered reform agenda after Aquino assumed office on June 30. The NCCP has called for “genuine agrarian reform” in this country where those in power still hold vast agricultural lands.

## ‘A marvelous thing’ in North Korea

Sue Kinsler, mission worker in Korea, took a group of eight Korean Americans with her on her third trip this year to North Korea. At the time the Korean peninsula was in turmoil over the explosion that sank the South Korean naval ship *Cheonan*, but the group continued with their planned visit to help needy North Koreans and further peaceful relationships. They were received warmly and found helpful cooperation. The group visited Mirim Orphanage-School, with 580 orphans, where Sue had recently sent rice, flour, cooking oil, and kitchen utensils from Seoul. The group also visited the Potonggang Sheltered Workshops, where Sue and officials of the organization talked about the North’s interest in increasing similar workshops to train more persons with disabilities. “Somehow in this work,” Sue and her husband, Art, write, “God has been doing a marvelous thing—providing food that after several years makes the children healthy, demonstrating that people with disabilities can make a contribution, and bringing relationships that enhance the hope for peace on the peninsula.”

South Korea’s national church council urged humanitarian assistance for people in the north so they can try to cope with floods that hit this summer. The council said there had already been an acute shortage of food there. More than 5,000 people were evacuated as floods hit the northwestern part of the country.

## Area coordinator for Middle East, Europe, Central Asia named

Amgad Beblawi began service in October as coordinator of the PC(USA)’s mission work in the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia. He succeeds Victor Makari, who has been serving as Middle East coordinator, and Jon Chapman, who served as Europe coordinator. Both retired this year and their positions were combined.

Beblawi served for the last five years as the General Assembly Mission Council’s associate for Middle Eastern congregational support in the United States. Prior to joining the PC(USA) national staff he served at Fuller Seminary as academic advisor and director of the Career Services. He also worked with nonprofit organizations in the Washington, D.C., area for a short time prior to his appointment as General Assembly staff.

“I believe Amgad will be an active and dynamic resource for our mission personnel serving in the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia, other Presbyterians from the United States involved in these regions, and our partners there,” said Doug Welch, Presbyterian World Mission’s associate director for mission partners and programs. “He brings a wealth of experience and commitment to his new role.”

## Pakistan Flood Response

Responding to the worst flooding in Pakistan’s history, which has left about 1.5 million homeless and has caused the death of more than 1,600 people, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has funneled nearly \$250,000 through ecumenical partner agencies to aid flood relief efforts. The floods began in the northern parts of the country and have spread to four provinces, covering about 82,000 of Pakistan’s 340,132 square miles. This disaster has been described as affecting more people than the earthquake in Haiti and the 2004 Indonesian tsunami combined. The floods have destroyed communities—demolishing entire villages, roads, and bridges; ruining fields and crops; and killing livestock.

One Great Hour of Sharing funds were sent immediately to help with the provision of the basics—food packages, shelter materials, and non-food essentials. Church World Service Pakistan, which has worked in the area for more than five decades, is providing medical teams and mobile health facilities that are helping to provide emergency health services. With thousands living in makeshift shelters—many of whom are still trying to recover from previous disasters—food and shelter are the most urgent needs. PDA funds will help provide emergency food assistance to 35,000 people, emergency shelter supplies to meet the needs of 17,500 people, and mobile health access for 17,500 people. The food packages consist of basics for a family for a month. Shelter kits include a winterized tent and plastic sheeting.

Donations for Pakistan flood relief can be made online at [www.pcusa.org/donate](http://www.pcusa.org/donate).



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## Global Kaleidoscope

### Haiti Update

Response by Presbyterians to the recovery efforts in Haiti is nearing \$11 million, with \$4 million already committed to specific relief and recovery projects. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) continues to assess needs and venues for long-term recovery, including the possibility of beginning to host teams of mission volunteers by the end of the year. It anticipates programming for three to five years with this funding, based on identified needs and the capacity of meeting those needs. PDA will continue to work with ecumenical and local partners on these initiatives:

- Repairing/building permanent housing
- Supporting agricultural sustainability
- Managing spontaneous camps of displaced people
- Addressing the needs of vulnerable children
- Empowering people with disabilities
- Providing medical support

The Medical Benevolence Foundation, a PC(USA) validated mission support group, is partnering with a Pittsburgh group, the City of Champions for Haiti, in a \$10.5-million project in Haiti for the expansion and reconstruction of Hôpital Sainte Croix and other ministries in Léogâne supported by the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti, a longtime partner of the PC(USA).

A three-and-a-half-minute video, "Walking with Haitians... Walking with Jesus," is available for downloading from [www.pcusa.org/resource/walking-haitians-video/](http://www.pcusa.org/resource/walking-haitians-video/). It shows both the destruction that Haitians endure and their hope resulting from the January earthquake.

Donate online to Haiti relief at [www.pcusa.org/donate](http://www.pcusa.org/donate).

### Hunger Networks Affect Financial Disclosure Legislation

The PC(USA) has been a central voice in a historic campaign that worked to give citizens in resource-rich countries the information they need to combat corruption in the oil and mineral sector and to demand government accountability for responsible resource use. A Senate vote in July gave final approval to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act with a landmark provision requiring energy and mining companies registered with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission to disclose how much they pay to foreign countries and the U.S. government for oil, gas, and minerals. The House had previously passed the same legislation.

"As a church, we've been linked to Africa for more than 100 years, and the call for this legislation came to us from hunger-related networks there," says Gradye Parsons, stated clerk of the General Assembly. "Presbyterians across the United States worked hard for its passage. Our charity is never going to solve the problems of inadequate health care, deficient education, poor infrastructure, and horrible abuses of human rights. These reforms will empower civil society to press governments to help solve these problems by diverting millions of dollars that are now channeled into corrupt purposes and into fueling conflict."

The measure is a major victory for the global Publish What You Pay coalition, which includes more than 600 faith, human rights, and development groups working in over 55 countries. The PC(USA) joined the coalition in 2008 by action of the General Assembly, at the initiative of the Joining Hands network of the Presbytery of Chicago. This network is partnered with RELUFA, a Cameroonian organization that is linked to the Presbyterian Hunger Program.