

Our Common Ministry



Presbytery of Chicago

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Immigration Reform

The Presbytery of Chicago is making immigration reform a priority issue. The Advance Justice Mission Priority Leadership Team (AJMPLT) invited Julia Thorne to help the team learn how best to motivate, educate, and advocate for immigration reform.

Julia Thorne, a Presbyterian elder and a lawyer, is the Manager for Immigration Issues in the Office of the General Assembly. She spoke to an ecumenical religious gathering in Chicago on April 11 and led a pre-Presbytery event at the April 12 Presbytery Assembly.

Immigration reform is a national issue. Nearly 30,000 immigrants are detained in the custody of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) every day. There has been a rapid increase in the number of detainees in recent years. These detainees do not have access to the due process guaranteed American citizen inmates. There are enforceable laws regarding the treatment of criminal inmates, but none such codified guidelines for immigration detainees. And they are held for months or even years while they wait for the outcome of their cases, often in deplorable conditions and without medical care.

The lack of clear guidelines on immigration detainees and the shocking number of detainee deaths in custody of ICE has prompted the call for reform. The Presbyterian Church (USA), at the 216th General Assembly, has called for Comprehensive Immigration Reform, urging congress to act. Statements by the church advocate the following standards:

- Create a process for undocumented immigrants to earn their legal status
- Reduce waiting periods and uphold family unity
- Protect workers from exploitation



Julia Thorne, Manager for Immigration Issues and Immigration Counsel, Office of the General Assembly, PC(USA)

At the gathering of ecumenical leaders in April, the attendees participated in a discussion led by Julia Thorne on how other presbyteries were addressing immigration and how to benefit from the work of net-

works addressing immigration reform.

Representatives from the Methodist Immigration network shared stories about how legal clinics were started and are functioning in some of their congregations. In addition to members of the AJMPLT, two of Chicago Presbytery's Hispanic pastors and Ann B. Jones, representing the New Immigration Committee of the General Assembly attended. Also present was a person from "Arise," an organization committed to workers' rights.

At the pre-Presbytery and Presbytery Assembly meetings, the goal was to provide historical background on immigration from the early 1900's to the present, and to show how the United States and congregations are responding to the

many problems relating to immigration. Among these problems are

- How long it takes to become a documented citizen in the U.S.
- Legal nightmares associated with immigration reform and the terrible affects on immigrants
- Deportation centers and the horrible conditions, most of which are unpublished.

The AJMPLT invited Julia to participate in a conference call during their May meeting to discuss the "next step." The team will form an Immigration Study Mission Team to look at how other Presbyteries are addressing immigration issues and how "Immigration Congregations" can share their stories on how some of their undocumented members are suffering. One of the goals of the

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Wilderness Leadership

BY REV. ROBERT C. REYNOLDS, EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER

In his new book, *Journey in the Wilderness, New Life for Mainline Churches*, Gil Rendle states that mainline protestant churches entered a new wilderness forty years ago, which continues until now. As with other wilderness experiences, this one too feels foreign and dangerous.



Robert C. Reynolds

Perhaps being open to change in these wilderness years is precisely what we need to find new life as Presbyterians. With compelling references to ancient Israelites on their exodus wilderness journey from Egyptian bondage, Rendle proposes alternative pathways for mainline churches toward tomorrow's new "promised land." One of those pathways is the church's new wilderness leadership. Leaders should be less problem-solvers (technical leaders) and more encouragers who help communities face and address together their own realities (adaptive leaders).

Gil Rendle, best known as a senior consultant for the Alban Institute, writes insightfully from many years consulting with thousands of congregations and church leaders. Presbyterians have been among them. His observations are enlightening, if not disquieting, to church leaders seeking solutions for persistent identity problems of our congregations and the larger church.

During the period immediately following World War II, people joined mainline congregations to belong and establish relationships as part of burgeoning family and community life. He writes, "People now come to congregations because they want a purposeful relationship with others who are seeking purpose and meaning in response to the questions that they feel in their lives. . . This represents a difficult shift within congregations from being excessively focused on relationships (keeping members satisfied) to being much more focused on purpose (giving people meaning). Welcome to the wilderness." (p. xiii) This is a must-read book for all, both lay and clergy, who lead today's congregations and governing bodies.

When leadership changes from 'following the leader's vision' to 'influencing the community to face its problems', there is a significant difference in behavior. With this in mind, I

recall a presbytery statement from August 2005 that resembles 'encouragement to face our problems.' It described conflicts and gaps in the life and mission of Chicago Presbytery and its congregations.

We polarize over our differences in interpreting the scriptures. *We are more content to maintain hardened positions than to do the hard work of mutuality and reconciliation. We respond to these differences without resolution and in isolation.*

We create insiders and outsiders within the context of our own racial-ethnic and cultural diversity. *In our common life as a Presbytery we fail to involve the diversity of our own membership. Sunday morning is the most racially and culturally segregated period of the week among our congregations.*

We struggle over the control of mission and resources. *In contrast with past decades, many Presbyterian sessions are changing how they decide, fund, and involve themselves in mission. As a consequence, the nature of connecting with one another is evolving and perhaps is at risk. Communicating our mission story has become more challenging, and partnership has eroded between the more inclusive governing bodies and many sessions in regional, national and global mission.*

The cultures of our congregations and governing bodies enmesh with secular cultures. *We measure success principally in the same manner as do organizations in the corporate sector. We intertwine our faith with secular values so that, at times, it is hard to tell the difference.*

Demands for survival and maintenance in congregations compete with our commitments to evangelism and justice. *We work for membership and financial growth while, at the same time, we exclude or ignore strangers, enemies, and despised persons. We are more intent upon saving ourselves than trusting God's promise of salvation and risking our institutional lives in the name of Jesus Christ.*

A predominant mental model of the church as a growing, powerful institution is at odds with the reality of being a declining weakening denomination. *Historically, our church and its leaders were prominent within the institutions of status, power, and wealth in America. Today we are on the margins of established power, and we resist discerning the leading of the Holy Spirit to shape new models of the church.*

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OCM invites comments, questions and stories from our readers. Please direct your letters to the Editor, Ms. Gerry Parker at gerryparker5@comcast.net. Thank you. We look forward to hearing from you.



Immigration Reform –

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Presbytery of Chicago's Immigration Study Team will be to invite representatives from other faith-based organizations in the area already working in and committed to immigration reform and learn from them how they can partner with the Chicago Presbytery congregations, working toward a generous and just world for all.

Communications continuity

Ms. Laura Cathey has been hired to fill the position of Communications and Resource Center Consultant for Chicago Presbytery. This position provides continuity in the communications and Resource Center responsibilities previously provided by Adele Hensley. Her contract is for three months or until a permanent replacement is hired.

The primary responsibility is supporting day-to-day electronic communications between the various entities of the Presbytery. The secondary responsibility is managing the Presbytery Resource Center.

Our Common Ministry asked Laura to introduce herself to our readers. Following is her response:

"After several years working in I.T. helpdesks and teaching workshops on computer skills – including Microsoft Office Suite, wiki site editing, and virus removal – I'm very pleased to join the efforts of the Presbytery of Chicago in serving congregations, particularly to facilitate communication. I am updating the chicagopresbytery.org web site, sending out wide-circulation emails like the Preview, which points out upcoming events, and managing the Presbytery's Resource Center of books, curriculum, and digital media that's available to ministers and congregations alike. As someone with a Presbyterian heritage, it's good to be home, doing work where I'm proud of my contribution. Feel free to email me at lcathey@chicagopresbytery.org.

Presbyter's Pen – Continued from page 2

If the new leadership requires encouraging Presbyterians to define and face our challenges, perhaps we began to do so then. Unfortunately, we have been preoccupied addressing an extraordinary financial burden. Perhaps, we need to update these gaps and conflicts, acknowledge them together as our own realities, and define the ways of seeking their solutions together. Gil Rendle would have us believe this kind of wilderness leadership will be more effective in today's endangered mainline context than looking for singular leaders to solve our problems.

Thinking outside the box

The Rev. Shawna Bowman has been hired to implement the new initiative in

Proactive Congregational Transformation (PCT). The position is funded in part by grants from the General Assembly and the Synod of Lincoln Trails. Rev. Bowman began her work with the Presbytery of Chicago May 1.

The PCT initiative seeks to prepare and enable selected congregations to shift from being threatened by change to becoming change agents. This project is intended as a resource for churches who find themselves in changing neighborhoods, but who are not in dire situations. An invitation will be posted in Call Papers for churches to choose to participate. In addition, some specific churches may be selected. Churches who are already involved in some other congregational transformation project, such as the Acts 16:5 Initiative or the African American Congregational Transformation Covenant will be exempted.

Shawna brings to this position experience in and commitment to an educational perspective. She is an artist, a creative person with a background as a teacher. Raised in the church, she served as an elder before seeking theological training. She is a graduate of McCormick Theological Seminary. She is a Pastoral Associate at Wicker Park Grace, serving both as facilitator of artistic expression and provider of pastoral care. With a background in a "traditional" church, and experience in an "emerging" church, she seeks to bridge those two streams.

Shawna admires the Presbytery of Chicago and was attracted to this PCT initiative as she sees it as a bold new move – a desire to be 'proactive' in a time of transition for the denomination. She is committed to help churches connect with their communities and with each other. Churches need to feel they are not alone, and to feel excitement and curiosity about the opportunities available to them. "Thinking outside the box," is the way she expressed it.

A project advisory team will be appointed to work with Shawna to provide ideas and feedback. She will report to Loretta Gratiis Bremer, Consultant for Congregational Development, and Bob Reynolds, Executive Presbyter. Some team members already identified were a part of the team who wrote the grant for PCT: Revs. Laura Taylor de Palomino and Larissa Kwong Abazia and Joy Barnett. Others will be added.

We welcome Rev. Bowman to this creative position and wish her every success.



The Rev. Shawna Bowman, Proactive Transformation Coordinator

Chicagoans memorialize young Cuban pastor

When an auto accident on March 20 took the life of a young Cuban pastor – Omar Maren – the shock was felt not only throughout the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba, but the Presbytery of Chicago as well.



The Rev. Omar Maren (center) shares a laugh in November 2010 in Cuba with the Rev. Muriel Miller of Chicago and the Rev. Bill Gannaway, retired pastor from Kansas. An auto accident in March cut Pastor Maren's life short at age 34.

Everything about him was great: his smile, heart and interest in animated conversations about God and life.

Travelers from Chicago first met him in 1999 during an early visit in the partnership between Havana and Chicago Presbyteries. At Havana First, he quickly rose from new church member to youth leader.

From there his spiritual sprint took him to the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas. He helped develop mission churches in Marianao and Guasimas and energized Havana Luyano church. He was a tirelessly optimistic organizer of Presbyterian youth at the synod level and was elected president of the National Executive Committee.

After graduation from the seminary in 2005, he did not slow down. The Rev. Maren (“Omarito,” as he was known by his many close friends) accepted the call to be pastor at the church in Santa Clara. It flourished as a vital part of the community.

The role in Santa Clara made him less visible to his many friends from Chicago who visited Havana, yet he was never forgotten. And so the Cuba Partnership Mission Team, on behalf of the hundreds of local Presbyterians who have visited Havana and witnessed the ministry of the Rev. Maren, has authorized a memorial donation to support the continuation of his work.

The whirlwind life of this charismatic young pastor seems to illustrate the urgency of his church's work as our Cuban brothers and sisters face enormous challenges. Many of these challenges are the results of persistent poor political relations between Cuba and the United States, a reality that keeps the Presbytery of Chicago focused on its role in fostering reconciliation. This reconciliation did not come during the

34 years of the Rev. Maren's life. Hopefully it will be realized during the lives of the young Cuban Presbyterian leaders he so ably nurtured.

For information about the Havana-Chicago partnership, contact the Rev. Muriel Miller at MURIELM366@aol.com.

The produce is coming, the produce is coming!

Have you ever wondered what to do with that glut of tomatoes that gardeners all seem to get at the same time? When one's friends are also dealing with the same dilemma, some folks have set up little roadside stands to sell bags of tomatoes (or whatever) for a buck or two.

Several churches have found other ways to both solve this delicious problem and support their mission commitment at the same time.

Green-thumbed members of **Chicago Good Shepherd** are again participating in Share the Harvest, an annual initiative to help put healthy, fresh vegetables on the tables of their hungry neighbors on the southwest side and suburbs. The work for this year's Share the Harvest began in March when the church distributed tomato, pepper and cucumber seedlings to the growers, who are bringing their harvests to the church for distribution. Produce purchased at local stores and farmers' markets is also contributed.

LaGrange First and **Western Springs** also participate in Share the Harvest (Grace Seeds Ministry) based in their neighboring Baptist churches. As with Good Shepherd, participants at LaGrange and Western Springs receive a tomato, pepper or cucumber seedling to get their gardens started. During harvest season, the gardeners bring their excess produce to church, and it is then delivered – still fresh – to food pantries housed in the Baptist churches. These “growing” mission efforts are also supported by other volunteers who deliver the produce to the food pantries. So even folks without a green thumb can help provide fresh, wholesome, home-grown produce to neighbors in need.

For more information, contact Steve Blough (Western Springs) or Jan Schermerhorn (La Grange) through the churches

Holley goes to Washington

Ecumenical Advocacy Days is an annual event held in Washington D. C. In March of this year Juanita Holley attended this global peace and justice conference as the Hunger Action Enabler for Chicago Presbytery.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days is a movement of Christian denominations and recognized partners and allies which is grounded in biblical witness and shared traditions of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Its goal, through worship, theological reflection and opportunities for learning and witness, is to strengthen the Christian voice of citizens

mobilized for advocacy on a wide variety of U.S. domestic and international policy issues.

Over 700 policy makers, expert speakers and representatives from global regions representing more than seventy different denominations and ecumenical relief agencies, joined church leaders and grassroots activists in reflecting on the 2011 Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) conference theme, “Development, Security and Economic Justice: *What’s Gender Got to Do with It?*” Holley said, “It was profoundly motivating to experience so many different denominations and grassroots advocates working together. Their efforts gave voice to people long silenced and who continue to cry for a world as generous and just as God’s grace.”

Gender’s got a lot to do with it! Around the world, women and girls comprise seventy percent of those living in poverty. The 2011 LEAD conference addressed this vital issue with a particular focus on those most impacted - women, girls and families.

The first day of this event was hosted by the Presbyterian Hunger Program, led by the General Assembly/PHP staff and members from the PHP Advisory Board. During this session Hunger Action Enablers from many Presbyteries shared hunger-relief ideas, programs, and future plans designed to address the root causes of hunger.

During the next three days of the conference there were plenary sessions and workshops addressing a range of issues from ending violence against women to empowering and educating women in the United States, Middle East, Asia-Pacific region, Africa and Latin America.

After several training workshops, participants were given an opportunity to make our voices heard on Capitol Hill, participate in a Federal Budget Prayer Vigil at the Upper Senate Park, and meet with individual members of Congress (or their staff). Legislators were asked not to balance the federal budget on the backs of families or those living on the margins, and to recognize a moral obligation, in a time when more persons are suffering than ever before, to protect and strengthen the health, well-being, and security of women and families by:

- Voting to fully-fund programs that serve families, especially those struggling to overcome poverty - domestically and around the world
- Voting to re-authorize and fully-fund the Violence Against Women Act and co-sponsoring the International Violence Against Women Act when it is re-introduced.

Juanita says, “As a result of attending the 2011 Ecumenical Advocacy Day conference, I am reminded of the importance of our voice, our story, our experiences, and our commitment to a particular ministry and why that mission matters to us as faith driven Christians. People of faith can engage in political work without being partisan. Faith communities can legally and effectively engage in issue-based advocacy.”
Article submitted by Juanita Holley, Consultant for Justice Ministry and Hunger Action Enabler

Disaster assistance in action

At the request of eleven Presbyteries in ten states, members of the National Response Team (NRT) of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) were on site in spring to address disasters due to tornados and flooding. In addition to assistance with immediate emergency needs, PDA provides resources for long-term needs and spiritual/emotional counseling.



PDA volunteers in North Carolina help survivors clean up debris and do temporary repairs following storms and tornados.

The work of PDA is supported through contributions to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. In addition to financial gifts, individuals can provide **Clean up Buckets**. These are especially needed at this time, as families begin the overwhelming task of storm and flood clean-up.

Clean-up buckets

- 5-gallon bucket with resealable lid
- 5 scouring pads
- 7 sponges, assorted sizes
- 1 scrub brush
- 50 clothespins
- Closetline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.
- 1 box dry laundry detergent, 50-78 oz.
- 1 pair work gloves
- 2 pair latex gloves
- 1 liquid concentrated household cleaner, 12 oz.
- 1 bottle liquid disinfectant dish soap
- 1 pkg cleaning towels (18 reusable)
- 24-count roll heavy-duty trash bags (33-45 gallon)
- 1 bottle insect repellent (drops or lotion, not aerosol) 6-14 oz.

Pack all the items in the plastic bucket, seal with packing tape and send to: Church World Service Brethren Service Center Annex, 601 Main Street, New Windsor MD 21765-0188. Churches can also register a team’s interest in future rebuilding possibilities by calling (866) 732-6121.

And all of us can **pray**.

“Creator of the wind and water, thank you for your ever-presence with us. Please be with your children who are displaced by the recent storms, who have lost loved ones, or who will need to begin the task of cleaning up or rebuilding their homes. May the light of your hope and the power of your love shine through your church as we stand with those in need.”

Diversity dinner at Homewood First

Since the mid 1990s, 200-300 residents of the Chicago south suburban communities have gathered in homes one night each April to celebrate their rich diversity. The Diversity Dinners bring people of different races, ethnicities, religions, lifestyles and ages together to share a meal, discuss their common goals, come to understand their differences, address misperceptions, and offer ideas to strengthen their communities.



Teens represent diversity at dinner at Homewood. Andrew Dederer, third from left, and Kyle Matl, far right, were co-hosts.

This year the Session of **Homewood First** agreed to be a host site. On the evening of April 28, sixteen people from the south suburban communities gathered for supper and conversation on the joys and challenges of living in a multicultural community. Six adults (Dan and Laurel Hamilton, Darlene Giesbrecht, Kathleen O’Hanlon and Pastor Nancy Dederer) and two teenage boys (Andrew Dederer and Kyle Matl) hosted the event on behalf of the congregation.

Church member Andrew Dederer, 14, had attended the 2010 PC(USA) National Multicultural Church Conference last May in Chicago, and when he saw the announcement in the bulletin asking for dinner hosts, he said, “I want to do that!” He invited a Jewish friend Kyle Matl from school to co-host, adding to the diversity around the table.

Modeling the opening of the 2010 Multicultural Church Conference last spring in Chicago, as people entered the church they were greeted with the rhythm of African drums. Open chairs and instruments were available for anyone who wanted to join in the music. Following appetizers and introductions, everyone sat down to a catered dinner.

Table conversation touched on all sorts of topics, including politics, education, and crime. One person asked if sports may just be the great equalizer? —And yes, a lesson on the history of desegregation of sports followed! Although this was not a “religious event” *per se*, emails were exchanged by some with the possibility that youth groups might want to get together for their own diversity dinner.

After the event was over and the hosts were cleaning up, they agreed it was a delightful experience and would do it again.

When asked how the evening went, Andrew Dederer grinned and said, “That was FUN!”

Criteria for mission funding

The New Ministry Development (NMD) team at **Naperville River Glen** enables ministry teams to create new opportunities to engage the community by funding projects that would otherwise fall outside the church budget. Proposals are reviewed twice a year, in June and December. The team has developed specific criteria on which requests are judged:

1. Reaching Out – How would the proposal help River Glen to reach unchurched people or those searching for a new church?
2. Growing Spiritually – How would the request involve the congregation in serving God’s mission so that we can be transformed and equipped as disciples?
3. Being the Witness – How would the request provide witness by modeling God’s reign on earth and bring God’s kingdom vision to all dimensions of life?
4. Doing the witness – How would the request provide witness through service and bring God’s kingdom vision to all dimensions of life?
5. Efficiency – How would the request make the church more efficient so that the church can more fully serve God’s mission?
6. Significance – How would the request make a significant difference to further God’s mission?
7. Execution – The plan’s organization and execution with proposed evaluation as to mission value.

Sister churches celebrate simultaneously

Sunday, March 6 saw a wonderful celebration of connections through faith. On that day, and at the same time, **Glen Ellyn Southminster** and their sister church in Guanabacoa, Cuba, marked their respective 50th and 110th anniversaries (the

actual anniversary date for Guanabacoa is March 31). The Cuban church celebrates their anniversary annually, while Southminster was celebrating their 50th anniversary – a one-time event. Members of Southminster are



The Rev. Mirabal Abel at the Cuba anniversary service

considering adopting the Cuban model of celebrating annually.

Guanabacoa, in the Eastern time zone, routinely worships at 10:30am local time, which coincides with Southminster’s

9:30am service. For this special celebration, pastors Wendy Boden and Abel Mirabal collaborated to produce a shared liturgy; both used the same prayers in English and Spanish and chose music that each church could sing in its own language. The theme of the partnership is “One in the Spirit,” and the shared hymn was “We Are One in the Spirit.”

Pastor Abel wrote from Cuba: “With joy I report to you that about 100 people arrived at the appointed hour ... This special service was prepared and celebrated simultaneously...as part of the beautiful fruit and joy that we experience from being united in such a wonderful sister relationship”.

The Rev. Wendy Boden lifted up the 50-hour prayer vigil that both churches engaged in. Members of Southminster signed up for half-hour periods to pray for their church family, including during the night. The Youth Group participated in the prayer vigil, and all half-hour slots were filled! Since it was Transfiguration Sunday, attention was focused on seeing the church family with new eyes – the eyes of Christ.

This article was excerpted from an original piece by Gretchen Fleming

The how, why and where of New Church Development

Members of Chicago Presbytery’s New Church Development team (NCD) attended a NCD workshop in March. The workshop focused on church planting principles, developed by a team of new church development pastors based on their experience. These principles include gathering a team to discern where God is at work. The team would begin clarifying foundational commitments for the new start including the group’s discerned understanding of who Jesus is and what the church is.

The next step is identifying a key area and to coming to know it experientially. An important part of the discernment process is ‘walking a community’ and talking to its residents, rather than solely reviewing demographic fact sheets. Out of this process the mission statement is developed – “Who we are trying to reach and why?” From the mission statement comes a mission plan with strategies for start-up and lastly, a staffing plan or missionary plan.

As a result of the workshop and the group’s experience, a commitment was made to work together going forward to spearhead new church development in the Presbytery. If you are interested in becoming part of this group, contact David Boumgarden, (630) 357-5104

Attending the workshop were: Revs. Samuel Akhtar, South Asian Fellowship NCD; Murphy Ashley, Moderator, Develop Congregations Mission Priority Leadership Team; David Boumgarden, Naperville River Glen and Develop Congregations Consultant; Eric Heinekamp, Director Business Affairs; Clinton Roberts, Naperville Knox; Nanette Sawyer, Wicker Park Grace NCD; John Vest, Chicago Fourth; and Elder Paul Vogel, Chicago Fourth and Moderator, Committee on Ministry. Rev. Sarah Butter, Wilmette, First is also a member of the group

‘Hymn-a-thon’ covers entire hymnal

The Presbyterian Hymnal contains 617 hymns, psalms, carols and spiritual songs. Some are Sunday morning staples, while others are more obscure. In March, each hymn was given its moment of glory when **Orland Park Presbyterian Church** presented a special “Hymn-a-thon.”

Director of musical ministry Larry Dewese led the nearly six-hour event, which included a brief introduction and one verse for each hymn. The event provided an opportunity for anyone in the congregation to come and sing as long as they wished. To allow Dewese occasional breaks, volunteers stepped in at the organ or piano as needed. The congregation was invited to show support by giving donations (a fixed amount per hymn or other specified pledge amount) which were divided between the church’s music and general funds.

Leader/follower relationships

The April Acts 16:5 Seminar, held at **Chicago Morgan Park**, focused on Leadership/Follower relationships. The initial discussion on the whole Acts 16:5 initiative helped re-focus the vision of the attending churches.

The seminar was led by Stan Ott and Steve Ebbeling of the Vital Churches Institute. Ott stressed several points. Among them:

- Foster leadership qualities in others through personal connection rather than electronic communication.
- Nurture leadership qualities to prevent burn out
- Spend time keeping informed about what’s going on, rather than wondering what comes next.
- Lead people without losing them.
- Shift leadership from “leader-using” to “leader-developing.” (Expands the base of leadership.)

Ralph Intagliata, Elder at **Chicago Friendship**, shared something he learned that reminded him of what leadership is:

The 4 “S’s” for a Healthy Congregational Spirit

1. No Secrets
2. No Surprises
3. No Subversion
4. Lots of Support

Intagliata also shared a “leadership” Scripture passage: “So Jesus went with him.” (Mark 5:24). And that makes leadership powerful and effective.



LEAD event energizes church

The recent LEAD event offered hope for declining churches. Elder Jerilyn Willin of **Itasca First** wasn't a shoe-in for LEAD training earlier this year. "I wasn't crazy about getting up at 7:30 on a Saturday morning to go to the LEAD training," she said, "but I am glad I did. I came away from the day so energized I want to share...what I learned."

The workshop that so impressed Jerilyn was called "Hope for Declining Churches," led by the Revs. Michael Winters and Deb Paton. It drew a standing room only crowd. Participants learned that the days of membership rolls of 200 or more are largely gone. One church at the workshop has fewer than 25 people in Sunday worship services. In concert with declining membership comes declining finances. Yet, "It doesn't cost anything to be a church," said one of the moderators, "it's the choices we make that cost money."

Participants were asked to consider whether their churches serve the real community around them, or their perception of what the community is. One congregation had served coffee and tea at their local train station, and was surprised to encounter a mix of ages and races not seen in Sunday worship. "We also learned it is common for much effort and angst to be put into running outdated programs," said Jerilyn. "Not all ministries and missions go on forever."

"Our mission," said the moderators, "is not numbers but rather, relationships. Are we serving the Lord or trying to save the building?" An elder from **Chicago Friendship** (formed last year by the merger of two smaller congregations and currently worshipping in a train station), agreed. "Without the buildings," said the elder, "we have plenty of money for outreach and missions. What we have and want to share is not a building."

"While this is rather extreme," observed Jerilyn, "it did get me thinking. When we crave new members, is it for 'pledge units' to support our building or because we want to share the good news?"

Discussion of the most common "laments" from participants generated a number of ideas for moving forward. These are summarized as follows:

- Reflect on the programs/events your church is doing. What gets you excited?
- Host a dinner at a restaurant for visitors who have attended church – not as a recruitment tool but for feedback. Find out how they heard about the church, how they were treated as visitors, etc.
- Talk to people who get involved in church projects and also those who don't. Ask them why they do or don't. No pressure, just feedback.
- The pastor is the least likely to get people to join the church. The relationship with the congregation is what gets people to join.

- People simply don't "join" things like they used to.
- The answer to church fatigue is to give up control. Let someone else do it their way.
- Take a little risk. Sit in a new place next Sunday. Get a different perspective. (When Jerilyn tried this one Sunday, at least three people commented on her new choice of seat.) She also learned she can better hear herself sing from some places than others. Now, she moves around a lot to keep changing her perspective.

"Of course there are no quick fixes," Jerilyn observed. "But small changes can make a big difference. One thing we might do is open our front doors during worship and let our singing and the word of God float out onto the street. Lots of people walk their dogs past our church. You never know who might be touched."

What small changes might free up your tired leaders and help you share the good news with your community?

Article is based on "Thoughts from LEAD Training" by Jerilyn Willin, Communications Council, Itasca First.

Child Safe Workshop

Participants from nine churches attended the Child Safe Workshop in May, held at the **Riverside Presbyterian Church**. Presenters Elder Julio Peña, and Rev. Martha Ross-Mockaitis presented materials to help churches become safe havens for our children and youth. Child abuse includes neglect, physical and emotional abuse as well as sexual abuse.

The following signs may signal the presence of child abuse or neglect:

- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parent's attention
- Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Lacks adult supervision
- Is overly compliant, passive, or withdrawn
- Comes to school and other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home

Sample policies were shared so that churches may learn what works best for their situation. All persons present committed to having a child protection policy in place.

Work and worship

The Presbytery of Chicago met for work and worship on April 12 at **Chicago First**. Worship included a celebration of our common baptism and a sermon by Rev. Larissa Kwong Abazia.



Commissioners come forward to renew their baptism vows

There were two pre-presbytery events. One centered on the key issue of immigration reform. (See cover article). Ms Julia Thorne, Manager for Immigration Issues and Immigration Counsel for the Office of the General Assembly, shared information about the denomination's response to immigration and how we can welcome and uphold the immigrant, as immigration impacts all our churches. Ms. Thorne also spoke to the Assembly. The second pre-Presbytery event was an orientation for commissioners on how to most effectively serve as commissioners to a presbytery assembly.

The meeting was highly informational. Peg Griffiths, a member of the Middle East Task Force, gave an update on recent developments in the Middle East in light of the "Arab Spring" of governmental upheavals in Egypt, Tunisia and elsewhere in North Africa and the Middle East. While cheered by the students' efforts for freedom, members of the Task Force are concerned for the safety of Christians as there have been attacks on churches. As of now, the trips to the Middle East in June and October are still on.

The Rev. Jennifer Ayers briefed the assembly on the Belhar Confession. She served on the General Assembly committee which recommended approval of the proposal to add this confession to the Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Confessions. The Book of Confessions contains eleven statements of faith, all coming from the European and North American backgrounds. The Belhar Confession comes from South Africa during the apartheid period and is a call for reconciliation and unity of all the denominations and a demand for social justice for the oppressed. Two thirds of the presbyteries must approve it for it to be added to the Book of Confessions. Chicago Presbytery will vote in June.

The Youth Ministry Team and the Committee on Nominations reminded the assembly that preparations for the 2012 General Assembly are already beginning. Nominations are sought for possible elder and clergy commissioners to General Assembly as well as for possible Youth Advisory Delegates.

The Ecumenical and Interreligious Work Group updated the assembly on the Presbyterian/Muslim dialogue. David Boxell, Moderator of the Presbytery's Staff Personnel Work Group, introduced the people who serve the assembly as staff, consultants and volunteers in mission. Adele Hensley, who recently left the staff for health reasons, was particularly honored for her five years of service.

The Committee on Ministry introduced, for first reading, its proposed policy for Commissioned Lay Pastors (CLP). CLPs are elders who receive special training (to be supervised by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry) and are commissioned by the Presbytery for pastoral service to a congregation or other ministry entity. The assembly unanimously approved the recommendation that the Rev. Deborah Paton serve as the installed pastor of Chicago Rogers Park. Deb is currently serving Rogers Park as its temporary supply. It also approved the appointment of an administrative commission to work with the Berkeley-Hillside Church regarding the future viability of the congregation and the possibility for congregational transformation.

The assembly continued its work of processing the proposed amendments coming from the 2010 General Assembly, voting to approve the proposed New Form of Government. If approved by the requisite number of presbyteries, the "new FOG," as it's called, will go into effect on July 11, 2011.

The next stated meeting of Chicago Presbytery will be on June 21, 2011, at 4:00 pm, at Chicago Heights First. Elder Cindy Bolbach, moderator of the 219th General Assembly, will be the featured guest.

Tips for Teams

BY GERRY BLOOMER, MEMBER, STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP

"God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." II Corinthians 9:8
Stewardship Tips for Stewardship Teams! All of creation is a gift from God and God's generosity is without boundary, but it is hard to get excited about "stewardship season". Not many look forward to the annual fund raising drive. It is usually difficult to decide what to contribute personally. It can be even more difficult to ask someone else to give. So, if you are one of the chosen, charged with developing a successful annual drive, here are a few points that might help.



- Include as many as possible. Give them information others don't have. Insiders care more about success.
- Ask a lot of people for a limited and well defined time commitment to the drive. People agree more readily to specific start/stop dates and specific goals.
- Be sure the "face" of your drive reflects your demographics. People presenting the concept of the drive to the congregation should reflect segments- age, ethnicity, life style, etc. Their "presentation/testimony" should be offered from the particular group's perspective.
- Use everything available to deliver your appeal- live voice, mail, phone, e-mail, social media.
- Be sure to do high profile tracking against your goal during the drive. Let people know what the church will be able to do and what success will mean to the church and the community if the goal is achieved.
- Remember to say *Thank You!*

For more suggestions and recommendations, the Stewardship and Financial Development Work Group (SFDWG) has a stewardship toolkit posted on the POC website. Go to chicagopresbytery.org. Click onto the "Work Group" side bar on the right, and then click again on Stewardship & Financial Development. This is a growing site, so please send us ideas for other resources we might include. Email to Nancy Dederer moderator, SFDWG, at njdederer@att.net.

General Assembly taps local leaders

Six members of Chicago Presbytery are serving on General Assembly committees. Rev. SanDawna Ashley, (Formerly Chicago Morgan Park) and Richard Pak (Chicago Lake View) have been named to the *Special Committee to Study the Nature of the Church for the 21st Century*. Sung Yeon Choi-Morrow (Chicago Edgewater) and Rev. Eddie Knox (Chicago Pullman) serve on the *Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth*. Knox moderates this group. Rev. Barbara Bundick (Presbytery's Stated Clerk) serves on the Permanent Judicial Commission. And Rev. John Vest (Chicago Fourth) was appointed to the *General Assembly Commission on Middle Governing Bodies*. Congratulations and prayers are in order as these leaders share their gifts.

Transitions

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

New Inquirers

- **Mr. Jeffrey Courter**, Chicago Heights First
- **Ms. Kara Smith-Laubenstein**, Libertyville First

Certified Ready to Receive a Call and approved for Ordination

- **Mr. Fernando Gomez**
- **Ms. Laura Lyter**

Removed from the Roll (at own request)

- **Ms. Patricia Lind**
- **Mr. Richard Steele**

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

Arrivals

- **Rev. Katherine "Cully" Culpepper**, laboring within bounds as Interim Camp Director and Spiritual Leader of Presbyterian Camps, Saugatuck, MI
- **Mr. Adam Malak**, to be ordained as pastor of Tinley Park Faith United

Changes in Presbytery

- **Rev. SanDawna Ashley**, from pastor, Chicago Morgan Park, to Associate for Gender and Racial Justice in Racial/Ethnic and Women's Ministry, Presbyterian Women's Ministry area of the General Assembly Mission Council
- **Rev. Jeffrey L. Deardorff**, from interim pastor, Arlington Heights First, to member-at-large

- **Rev. Barbara Weiss Gorsky**, to interim associate pastor, Arlington Heights First
- **Rev. Judith Watt**, from pastor at Palatine Presbyterian Church, to associate pastor, Chicago Fourth

Departures

- **Rev. Margaret Asabea Aboagye**, to the Presbyterian Church of Ghana;
- **Rev. Ali Trowbridge**, to Albany Presbytery (NY);
- **Rev. Jennifer Parker Wrzeszcz** to Detroit Presbytery (MI).

Honorable Retirement

- **Rev. Coleman Gilchrist**, from Chicago Second, effective June 1, 2011.

Removed from the Rolls

- **Rev. Andres Carranza** (inactive since June 12, 2007).

Spring Youth Ministry Events

In March, seventy-two youth and adults from six churches met in Saugatuck for the annual Confirmation Retreat offered by the Presbytery's Youth Ministry Team. Three churches participated in this retreat for the first time. Together the confirmands explored what it means to be faithful, respectful, and collaborative Christians in the multi-faith circles in which we live.

The retreat was led by Rev. Erik Dailey from Lake Forest First. Music was led by Rev. Kurt Esslinger of Agape House. As usual, we enjoyed the beauty of the camp, regardless of the weather, along with the fantastic food, and the wonderful hospitality we always receive from the staff.



Youth gathered for AWOL

In April, a record ninety-eight youth and adults from nine churches in the Chicago and Blackhawk Presbyteries gathered at **Chicago First** for our annual AWOL, A Work of Love overnight mission event. Members of the Youth Ministry Team led devotions, introduced icebreakers, and prepared the meals for the weekend, focused around the stewardship of the earth.

Saturday morning was rainy and cold but the weather did not dampen the spirits of the youth who had come to help Chicago First prepare three community gardens. New fencing was installed, mulch was spread, and a plot for a new garden was cleared following the demolition of a residence at the site. We closed the weekend in prayer with thanksgiving for the many hands that participated in this important ministry.

The Youth Ministry Team announces future events – retreats and mission opportunities for Middle School, Senior High Youth and College Young Adults, made possible through the financial support of the Empower Ministry Mission Priority Leadership Team.

Senior High Retreat – Nov. 4-6, 2011

College Urban Plunge, Monday, Jan. 2 – Thursday, Jan. 5, 2012

Middle School Retreat, Jan. 27-29, 2012

Confirmation Retreat, March 2-4, 2012

AWOL, April 20-21, 2012

Coming Events

2011

- **Jun. 21**, 2:00 pm, pre-Presbytery meeting, Conversation with Elder Cynthia Bolbach, Moderator, 219th General Assembly, PC(USA).
 - **Jun. 21**, Presbytery Assembly meeting, 4 pm, Chicago Heights First. Vote on Belhar Declaration. Greetings and sermon from PC(USA) moderator Cynthia Bolbach.
 - **Jun. 21**, Collection of Church World Service Hygiene kits, Advance Justice MPLT.
 - **Jun. 30-Jul.2**, Big Tent, "Growing Christ's Church Deep and Wide, Indianapolis, IN
 - **Jul. 3-8**, Covenant Gathering: Peace by Piece, Hillsdale, MI
 - **Sept. 20**, 10:30 am, pre-Presbytery meeting, End Hunger and Homelessness Mission Team
 - **Sept. 20**, 10:30 am, pre-Presbytery, Doug Kelly, Board of Pensions
 - **Sept. 20**, Presbytery Assembly meeting, 1 pm, Evanston First.
 - **Oct. 5-18**, Middle East traveling seminar, led by Pauline Coffman
 - **Oct. 14**, True North Boundary Training, 9 am– 3:30 pm, Arlington Heights Southminster
 - **Oct. 17-28**, Trip to Israel and Palestine, led by Garnett Foster and Douglas Dicks
 - **Nov. 19**, 9 am, Mission Fair
 - **Nov. 19**, 9:15 am, Pre-Presbytery, Multicultural Church Ministry and Peacemaking Mission Teams
 - **Nov. 19**, 9:15 am, Pre-Presbytery, PCUSA Mission, Hunter Farrell, General Assembly Mission Council
 - **Nov.19**, Presbytery Assembly meeting, 11 am, Wheaton First
- For more information on these events, call (312) 243-8300 (press 0 for operator) unless otherwise noted.*

Justice and care for all creation

The Rev. Milton Mejia, Presbyterian Professor of Theology and pastor in the Reformed Church of Colombia is known to Chicagoans through his visits to Chicago Presbytery. He has a published article in the *PHP Post*, journal of the Presbyterian Hunger Program, about "Free Trade Agreements and the Christian Faith." He states that Christians in Colombia oppose free trade agreements that protect the interest of the powerful at the expense of the poor.

Mejia cites The Accra Confession, which affirms that the economic model promoted by free trade agreements increases poverty, causes the death of millions of human beings and destroys God's Creation. The Confession states that "such destruction results when the ultimate purpose of the economy is to maximize financial gains and investments, which benefits the wealthy few while excluding the majority of people and treating the environment as a commodity."

Mejia concludes his article by saying that "trade and production should be based on justice and care for all human life and Creation, and we as Christians need to continue helping communities organize themselves in that way. "

McCormick elects president

In May, the Board of Trustees enthusiastically elected Dr. Frank M. Yamada as its tenth president. He succeeds the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Campbell.



The Rev. Dr. Frank Yamada, President-elect, McCormick Theological Seminary

Dr. Yamada is the first Asian American to lead a Presbyterian (USA) seminary. When Dr. Campbell became president seventeen years ago, she was the first female president of a Presbyterian (USA) seminary. Yamada says, "McCormick has a long and rich history of being on the cutting-edge of change in theological education. I believe we will be leaders in that change... This is who we are."

Yamada is currently an Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible at McCormick. Prior to joining McCormick's faculty in 2008, he was an Associate Professor at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston. He earned his Masters of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy from Princeton Theological Seminary. He is a published author and a sought-after speaker and consultant on issues of diversity and cross-cultural theological education.

In accepting the call to McCormick's presidency, Yamada said, "These are challenging times but we are poised to do something great. It is in this type of climate that God calls individuals and communities to face the future with courage."

Studying racial ethnic and immigrant church growth

The 219th General Assembly voted to create a task force to study the racial ethnic and immigrant growth in Presbyterian churches. The Rev. Eddie Knox, pastor of **Chicago Pullman**, is the Chairperson of the task force.

In 1998, the PC(USA) set a goal of 20 percent racial ethnic and new immigrant membership by 2010. Those goals were not met, so this new task force is challenged to review the strategy from 1998 and determine the reasons for not reaching the goal. In addition, the group is asked to identify middle governing bodies who are effectively responding to demographic change and see what they are doing that could work in other contexts. The task force will discern what resources are needed at the General Assembly level to assist

and support efforts at the middle governing level.

Finally, the task force is asked to determine what is the current call to the church in light of Jesus' continuing call to repent of our racism and "make disciples of all nations." They are to report to the 220th General Assembly in 2012.

Historic vote on ordination standards

In May, the eighty-seventh Presbytery voted to approve Amendment 10-A in the Book of Order regarding ordination standards. This vote provided the required simple majority, which means the amendment will become effective July 10, 2011.

The text of the new paragraph follows:

"Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life. The governing body responsible for ordination and/or installation shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation. Governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the confession in applying standards to individual candidates."

This replaces the current text in the Book of Order which reads:

"Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and woman or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament."

What this means is that a person in a same-gender relationship may now be considered by governing bodies for ordination to the office of deacon, elder, or minister of the Word and Sacrament. All other churchwide standards for ordination remain unchanged. Congregations retain the right to choose their own leaders, and will continue to examine the officers-elect for their faith and suitability for office. Presbyteries retain the responsibility and right to determine their own membership and examine candidates for ordination and ministers seeking membership for their faith and suitability for office.

In Chicago, a clear majority of Presbytery commissioners voted affirmatively for Amendment 10-A. Approximately a quarter of the commissioners opposed it. Our Presbytery, like others across our denomination, faces an ongoing challenge to find common paths of faithfulness and witness in the midst of our differences. We have a long tradition of doing so in Chicago Presbytery.



Reforma de Inmigración

El Presbiterio de Chicago está haciendo de la reforma migratoria un asunto prioritario. El Equipo de Liderato de Misión Avance de Justicia (AJMPLT por sus siglas en inglés) invitó a Julia Thorne para ayudar al equipo a aprender la mejor forma de motivar, educar y promover la reforma migratoria.

Julia Thorne, anciana presbiteriana y abogada, es responsable de asuntos de inmigración en la Oficina de la Asamblea General. Ella habló a una reunión ecuménica religiosa en Chicago el 11 de abril y dirigió un evento pre-presbiterio el 12 de abril en la Asamblea de Presbiterio.

Reforma migratoria es un asunto nacional. Casi 30,000 inmigrantes son detenidos en custodia del Servicio de Inmigración y Aduanas (ICE, por sus siglas en inglés) cada día. Ha habido un aumento rápido en el número de detenidos en los últimos años. Estos detenidos no han cometido ningún delito al estar en violación de las leyes de inmigración, pero se encuentran en cárceles y prisiones con personas convictas de crímenes, a veces violentos. No tienen debido acceso al proceso garantizado a reclusos ciudadanos estadounidenses. Hay leyes aplicables con respecto al tratamiento de reclusos en penales, pero ninguna de esas directrices para los detenidos de inmigración. Y son encarcelados por meses e incluso años mientras esperan el resultado de sus casos, a menudo en condiciones deplorables y sin atención médica.

La falta de claras directrices para los detenidos de inmigración y el alarmante número de muertes de detenidos en custodia del ICE impulsó la llamada reforma. La Iglesia Presbiteriana (EUA), en la 216^{ta} Asamblea General, ha llamado por una Amplia Reforma de Inmigración, urgiendo al Congreso a actuar. Las declaraciones de la Iglesia abogan por las siguientes normas:

- Crear un proceso para que los inmigrantes indocumentados ganen su estatus legal
- Reducir los períodos de espera y defender la unidad de la familia
- Proteger trabajadores de la explotación

En la reunión de líderes ecuménicos en abril, los asistentes participaron en un debate dirigido por Julia Thorne sobre cómo otros presbiterios fueron abordando la inmigración y cómo beneficiarse de la labor de otras redes de trabajando con la reforma de inmigración.



Julia Thorne, Directora de Asuntos de Inmigración y Abogada de Inmigración. Oficina de la Asamblea General, IP(EUA)

En las reuniones de pre-Presbiterio y Asamblea del Presbiterio, el objetivo era proporcionar antecedentes históricos sobre la inmigración desde principios del 1900 hasta el presente y mostrar cómo los Estados Unidos y congregaciones responden a los muchos problemas relacionados con la inmigración.

El AJMPLT invitó a Julia a participar en una conferencia telefónica durante su reunión de mayo para discutir el "siguiente paso." El equipo formará un

Equipo de Estudio de la Inmigración para observar como otros Presbiterios están abordando asuntos de inmigración y cómo "Congregaciones Inmigrantes" puede compartir sus historias de cómo algunos de sus miembros indocumentados están sufriendo. Uno de los objetivos del Equipo de Estudio de Inmigración será invitar a representantes de otras organizaciones basadas en fe en esta área ya trabajando y comprometidos con la reforma de inmigración y aprender de ellos trabajando hacia un mundo generoso y justo para todos.

Gente de Chicago recuerda a joven pastor cubano

Cuando un accidente de auto el 20 de marzo tronchó la vida de un joven pastor cubano: Omar Maren – el choque se sintió no sólo en toda la Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada de Cuba, sino también en el Presbiterio de Chicago.

Todo sobre él fue grande: su sonrisa, corazón y el interés en animadas conversaciones sobre Dios y vida.



El Rdo. Omar Maren (centro) comparte una risa en noviembre del 2010 en Cuba con la Rda. Muriel Miller de Chicago y el Rdo. Bill Gannaway, pastor retirado de Kansas. Un accidente de auto en marzo redujo la vida del Pastor Maren a 34 años.

Viajeros de Chicago primero le conocieron en 1999 durante una visita temprana de la alianza entre los presbiterios de La Habana y Chicago. En el La Habana, Primera, ascendió rápidamente de nuevo miembro de iglesia a líder de la juventud.

Desde allí su carrera espiritual lo llevó al Seminario Teológico Evangélico en Matanzas. Ayudó a desarrollar iglesias de misión en Marianao y Guásimas y revitalizó la iglesia Luyano de La Habana. Fue un incansable organizador optimista de la juventud presbiteriana al nivel de Sínodo y fue electo presidente del Comité Ejecutivo Nacional.

Después de graduarse del seminario en 2005, no se tranquilizó. El Rdo. Maren (“Omarito,” como era conocido por sus muchos amigos cercanos) aceptó la llamada a ser pastor en la Iglesia de Santa Clara. Ésta floreció como parte vital de la comunidad.

Su rol en Santa Clara le hizo menos visible a sus muchos amigos de Chicago que visitaron La Habana, pero nunca fue olvidado. Y así el Equipo de Misión de Asociación con Cuba, en nombre de los cientos de presbiterianos locales que han visitado La Habana y fue testigo del ministerio del Rdo. Maren, ha autorizado una donación en su memoria para apoyar la continuación de su trabajo.

La vida torbellino de este carismático joven pastor parece ilustrar la urgencia de la labor de su iglesia mientras nuestros hermanos y hermanas cubanos enfrentan enormes desafíos. Muchos de estos desafíos son el resultado de la persistentes

pobres relaciones políticas entre Cuba y los Estados Unidos, una realidad que mantiene al Presbiterio de Chicago enfocado en su papel de promover la reconciliación. Esta reconciliación no llegó durante los 34 años de vida del Rdo. Maren. Esperemos que se realice durante la vida de los jóvenes líderes presbiterianos cubanos que tan hábilmente alimentó.

Para información sobre la Asociación La Habana-Chicago, comuníquese con la Rda. Muriel Miller en MURIELM366@aol.com.

Trabajo y adoración.

El Presbiterio de Chicago se reunió para trabajar y adorar el 12 de abril en Chicago, Primera. La adoración incluyó una celebración de nuestro bautismo común y un sermón por la Rda. Larissa Kwong Abazia.

Hubo dos eventos pre-presbiterio. Uno centrado en la cuestión clave de la reforma de inmigración. Julia Thorne, Directora de Asuntos de Inmigración y Abogada de Inmigración de la Oficina de la Asamblea General, compartió información sobre la respuesta de la denominación a la inmigración. (Vea el artículo de portada). Thorne también habló a la Asamblea. El segundo pre-presbiterio fue una orientación para Comisionados/as para compartir cómo más eficazmente servir como Comisionados/as en una asamblea de presbiterio.

La reunión fue muy informativa. Peg Griffiths, miembro del Grupo de Trabajo del Medio Oriente, dio una actualización sobre los acontecimientos recientes en el Medio Oriente a la luz de la “primavera arábiga” de trastornos gubernamentales en Egipto, Túnez y otros lugares en el norte de África y el Oriente Medio. Mientras celebrado por los esfuerzos de estudiantes por libertad, miembros del Grupo de Trabajo están preocupados por la seguridad de los cristianos pues han habido ataques a iglesias. Por ahora, los viajes a Oriente Medio en junio y octubre siguen en pie.

La Rda. Jennifer Ayers informó a la Asamblea sobre la Confesión de Belhar. El Libro de Confesiones contiene once declaraciones de fe, todos procedente de los trasfondos europeos y norteamericanos. La Confesión de Belhar proviene de Sudáfrica durante el periodo del apartheid y es un llamado a la reconciliación y la unidad de todas las denominaciones y una demanda de justicia social para los oprimidos. Dos tercios de los presbiterios deben aprobarlo para que añada al Libro de Confesiones. El Presbiterio de Chicago votará en junio.

El Equipo del Ministerio de Juventud y el Comité de Nominaciones recordó a la asamblea que los preparativos para la Asamblea General del 2012 ya están comenzando. Se buscan nominaciones para posibles Comisionados/as laicos y pastores/as a la Asamblea General, así como de posible Delegados/as Jóvenes Consultores.

El Grupo de Trabajo Interreligioso y Ecuménico actualizó a la Asamblea sobre el diálogo presbiteriano/musulmán. David



Boxell, Moderador del Grupo de Trabajo Personal del Presbiterio, introdujo a las personas que sirven a la asamblea como personal, consultores y voluntarios en la misión. Adele Hensley, quien recientemente dejó el personal por razones de salud, fue especialmente honrada por sus cinco años de servicio.

El Comité de Ministerio presentó, para la primera lectura, su política propuesta para Pastores/as Laicos/as Certificados (CLP, por sus siglas en inglés). CLP son ancianos/as que reciben entrenamiento especial (a ser supervisado por el Comité de Preparación al Ministerio) y son comisionados/as por el Presbiterio para servicio pastoral a una congregación u otra entidad de ministerio. La asamblea aprobó por unanimidad la recomendación que la Rda. Deborah Paton sirva como pastora instalada de Chicago, Rogers Park. Deb sirve actualmente Rogers Park como su suplente temporal. También se aprobó el nombramiento de una comisión administrativa para trabajar con la Iglesia de Berkeley-Hillside con respecto a la viabilidad futura de la congregación y la posibilidad de transformación congregacional.

La Asamblea continuó su trabajo de procesar las enmiendas procedentes de la Asamblea General del 2010, votando para aprobar la propuesta Nueva Forma de Gobierno. Si es aprobada por el número requerido de presbiterios, la "FOG" (por sus siglas en inglés), como es conocida, entrará en vigor el 11 de julio del 2011.

Bolígrafo del Presbítero

Liderazgo en el Desierto

POR ROBERT C. REYNOLDS, PRESBITERO EJECUTIVO

En su nuevo libro, *Viaje en el Desierto, Nueva Vida para Iglesias Tradicionales* (en inglés), Gil Rendle afirma que las iglesias tradicionales protestantes entraron en un nuevo desierto hace cuarenta años, que continúa hasta ahora. Como con otras experiencias de desierto, esta también se siente extraña y peligrosa.

Quizás abrírnos al cambio en estos años de desierto es precisamente lo que necesitamos para encontrar nueva vida como presbiterianos. Con referencias importantes de los israelitas en su éxodo en el desierto desde la esclavitud egipcia, Rendle propone vías alternativas para las iglesias hacia la nueva "tierra prometida del mañana." Uno de los caminos es el nuevo liderazgo del desierto de la iglesia. Los líderes deben ser menos solucionadores (líderes técnicos) y más fomentadores que ayuden a las comunidades a enfrentar y abordar juntos sus propias realidades (líderes adaptables).



Robert C. Reynolds

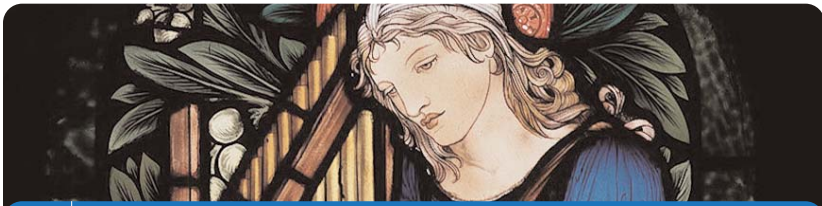
Gil Rendle, mejor conocido como consultor del Instituto Alban, escribe con discernimiento por los muchos años de consultoría con miles de congregaciones y líderes de la iglesia. Presbiterianos han estado entre ellos. Sus observaciones son esclarecedoras, si no preocupantes, a líderes de la iglesia que buscan soluciones para los problemas persistentes de identidad de nuestras congregaciones y la iglesia mayor.

Durante el período inmediatamente posterior a la Segunda Guerra Mundial, las personas se unieron a las congregaciones y establecieron relaciones como parte de la creciente vida de familia y comunitaria. Él escribe, "personas ahora llegan a congregaciones porque quieren una relación con propósito con otros que están buscando el propósito y significado en respuesta a las preguntas que sienten en sus vidas... Esto representa un difícil cambio en las congregaciones de ser excesivamente centradas en las relaciones (mantener miembros satisfechos) a ser mucho más enfocadas en propósito (dar a las personas significado). Bienvenidos al desierto." (p. xiii, traducción libre). Este es un capítulo que todos debemos leer, tanto laicos/as y pastores/as, que lideran hoy congregaciones y cuerpos gobernantes.

Cuando el liderato cambia de 'seguir la visión del líder' a 'influir en la comunidad para enfrentar sus problemas,' hay una diferencia significativa en comportamiento. Con esto en mente, recuerdo una declaración del presbiterio en agosto del 2005 que se asemeja a 'aliento para enfrentar nuestros problemas.' Describe los conflictos y las lagunas en la vida y misión del Presbiterio de Chicago y sus congregaciones.

- Nos polarizamos sobre nuestras diferencias en la interpretación de las escrituras.
- Creamos incluidos y extraños en el contexto de nuestra propia diversidad racial étnica y cultural.
- Peleamos por el control de misión y recursos.
- La cultura de nuestras congregaciones y cuerpos gobernantes se mezcla con culturas seculares.
- Demandas por la supervivencia y mantenimiento en congregaciones compiten con nuestros compromisos con la evangelización y la justicia.
- Un modelo mental predominante de la Iglesia como institución creciente, potente es contrario a la realidad de ser una denominación debilitada decreciente.

Si el nuevo liderazgo requiere motivar a los presbiterianos a definir y enfrentar nuestros desafíos, tal vez comenzamos a hacerlo entonces. Lamentablemente, nos hemos preocupado por hacer frente a una carga financiera extraordinaria. Tal vez, necesitamos actualizar estas diferencias y conflictos, reconocerlos como nuestras propias realidades y definir las formas de buscar sus soluciones juntos. Gil Rendle nos hace creer que este tipo de liderazgo en el desierto será más eficaz hoy en día en el contexto de las iglesias amenazadas que buscan líderes particulares que resuelvan nuestros problemas.



VISION STATEMENT

“Chicago Presbytery – A Beacon of Hope, guiding Leaders, Congregations and Communities.”

Presbytery of Chicago 100 South Morgan Street Chicago, IL 60607

Memories and anticipation

BY CINDI KARSTENS, MODERATOR, CAMP OVERSIGHT AND DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP

LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens. --Psalm 8:1

Summer cabins have been opened; summer staff has arrived; Kema, Gray, and Westminster Woods are all ready for the hustle and bustle of Summer 2011 at Presbyterian Camps. The first day of summer will be here before you know it. Are you ready? Do your summer plans include a trip to Presbyterian Camps in Saugatuck, MI?

“Every summer as I drive past the ‘Watch for Presbyterians’ sign near the entrance of Presbyterian Camps, I feel the joy of returning to a place that holds wonderful memories, and anticipate the possibility of creating new ones. Continuing down the winding road to Westminster Lodge, I am in awe of God’s creation and am energized by the opportunity to spend time away from the daily grind. As I greet familiar faces, I am reminded of the more than a century of community-building that has occurred in this place and pray that the building continues. When I meet someone for the first time, I know God has brought them to this place to be nurtured and to grow in Christ. It is here that I find myself a bit closer to God and my spirit renewed.”

Under the enthusiastic leadership of Cully Culpepper, the Interim Camp Director and Spiritual Leader, full-time and summer staff are ready for an exciting summer. New faces have joined the returning staff and they are working together to create unique and wonderful experiences for campers of all ages using our curriculum *GOT SPIRIT? Finding God in the Everyday!*



Presbyterian Camps welcoming sign

Memories will be made, spirits renewed and opportunities to explore faith and experience God in creation are available for all campers. **Camp Gray**, at the northern part of the property, pro-

vides programs for some of our younger campers. Sixty campers are housed in six cabins with meals eaten in Peniel Hall. Junior and Senior High Campers enjoy living at **Kema** in the woods located high in the dunes at the southern end of the property. Four platform tents provide space for thirty-two campers and staff. **Westminster Woods**, located in the middle, is used by family and adult campers. This site includes twelve lake front cabins and five high walk cabins along with an outdoor worship center, Program Center, Camp Store and Westminster Lodge, the main dining hall and kitchen.

There is a camping experience here for everyone. Choose the camp that fits the needs of you and your family and call the camp office @ (269) 857-3751 to register. Or register online @ www.prescamps.org.

We are grateful for all who continue to support the ministry and mission of Presbyterian Camps. We are blessed by all who have walked the trails of this holy place or have sat on the sun-soaked shores of Lake Michigan. We are thankful for the opportunity to once again provide another summer of spiritual renewal.