

Presbyterian Connections

A Newsletter of the Presbytery of Pueblo

Synod of the Rocky Mountains * Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
803 W. 4th St., Ste. H, Pueblo, CO 81003 * Phone (719)542-1013/(800)662-1013 * FAX (719)545-7956
Website: www.PuebloPresbytery.org * E-mail: pueblopby@quest.net
Third Quarter, 2007



**The Presbytery of Pueblo believes we are called
as the body of Christ to...
Learn to live together,
Live to love each other,
Love to serve God and neighbors.**



WEAVINGS

"Do this remembering me." Such a clear command and yet we have somehow forgotten it. We have been lured into a kind of "ecclesiastical amnesia." We have forgotten Christ's commands to his church. We have forgotten it is Christ's church. We have forgotten why Christ created the church. Have we also forgotten the Head of the Church? As the "Body of Christ" we have forgotten who we are, whose we are, and what we have been called to be and do. As Christ's church we need to remember who we are and "re-member" the church of Jesus Christ. For the past 20+ years we have "dis-membered" the Body of Christ—lost vital organs, vital parts, vital people that gave the Body integrity, and enabled the Body to make a real difference in the world. Over the last seven years, twenty-two of the churches in our presbytery lost 645 members. In the last five years, nearly 75% of our churches have lost 453 worshippers. Is this being faithful to Christ's commands?

It is time to remember, to return to our roots, to remember the clear and ringing commission of Christ: *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."* This is God's mission in the world. Christ entrusted the church with this holy mission. The Church at its very essence is to be "missional"—*sent* into the world, our communities, our neighborhoods to seek out those who have not yet heard of the grace of God, not yet experienced the healing love of Christ, not yet been connected with Christ's body, the Church. As Tim Dearborn said, "The Church of God does not have a mission in the world; the God of mission has a Church in the world." We don't get to choose the mission of the church. We can only choose to obey Christ and make new disciples or ignore his commandment and remain content with our remaining members and the 4.5% rate of decline each year.

The Presbytery of Pueblo has chosen to be a "Missional Presbytery"—which means that we are first and foremost committed to assisting the churches in our presbytery to fulfill Christ's great commission. We are launching a "Growing Healthy Churches" (GHC) project in 2008 and inviting every session and pastor to participate in this project. We will focus on seven churches each year, working closely with their pastors, their sessions and their congregations to learn new ways of making new disciples for Christ. In addition, we will provide several lay leadership training opportunities during next year led by nationally renowned church consultants.

People of God, people of this presbytery, let us remember Christ's commandments and let us re-member Christ's Body by working together. This is our sacred calling. This is our sacramental offering: to *"do this remembering Jesus Christ."*

Peace and Joy,
Gary Weaver
Executive Presbyter

TRANSITIONS & CONCERNS

➤ *Please remember in your prayers:*

- **Babette Reeves**, wife of the **Rev. Brian Reeves**, traveling to Florida to be with her father, who is gravely ill.
- The **Rev. Sandy Lester** upon the death of her sister, **Pat**, in Chicago.
- Those who have health concerns:
 - **The Rev. Cliff Anderson**, recovering from back surgery;
 - **Brandon Reeves**, son of **Babette and the Rev. Brian Reeves**, as he continues his recovery from a broken arm and surgeries;
 - **The Rev. Dick Spinner**, recovering from a heart attack and stent placement;
 - **Elder CLP Barbara Gilliland**, beginning treatment for type 2 diabetes.

➤ *We welcome:*

- **The Rev. Kirk Webster**, new pastor at Monument Community Presbyterian Church, who will be installed November 4.
- The **Rev. Jason Sinagra**, associate pastor, United Presbyterian Church in Canon City.
- The **Rev. Tom Trinidad**, pastor of the Church at Woodmoor in Monument (non-denominational).
- The **Rev. Jeff Scott**, pastor of the UCC church in Creede, Colo.

➤ *And celebrate with:*

- The **Rev. Dr. Pat Jeffrey**, who was installed as Grace Community Church's pastor on June 3.
- Our friends at CEPAD in Nicaragua write: "Last night (10/17/07) after a brief downpour, the Rio Grande in Matagalpa suddenly overflowed its banks, flooding six neighborhoods in Matagalpa. Four persons are reported dead, and three missing. Damages due to the flooding are considered three to four times worse than those caused by rains from Hurricane Mitch in 1998." Please keep them in your prayers, and consider sending financial help for rescue and cleanup projects. Contact the Presbytery office for information.
- Remember to use the Presbytery's Weekly Prayer Calendar in your prayers. Requests for October, 2007 through December, 2007 are:
 - Oct. 7 – Monument Community Presbyterian Church
 - Oct. 14 – Grace Community Church in Falcon
 - Oct. 21 – Presbytery's Committee on Representation
 - Oct. 28 – Mountain View Presbyterian Church in Colorado Springs
 - Nov. 4 – Westminster Presbyterian Church in Pueblo
 - Nov. 11 – Grainery Ministries in Salida
 - Nov. 18 – Kirkwood Memorial Presbyterian Church in Penrose
 - Nov. 25 – Faith Presbyterian Church in Colorado Springs
 - Dec. 2 – Ecumenical Church in Pueblo West
 - Dec. 9 – First Presbyterian Church in La Junta
 - Dec. 16 – Presbytery's Christian Education Committee
 - Dec. 23 – CommUnity Presbyterian Church in Rocky Ford
 - Dec. 30 – Presbytery's Evangelism & Church Development Committee

(The Prayer Calendar can also be accessed online at our website at <http://www.pueblpresbytery.org/prayercalendar.htm>)

Presbytery Meeting Highlights

The Presbytery of Pueblo met for a Stated Meeting on October 12-13, 2007 at Mt. St. Francis Retreat Center in Colorado Springs. The meeting was called to order by Moderator Rev. Gary Gardner (Trinidad), and keynote speaker Rev. E. Stanley Ott, president of the Vital Churches Institute in Pittsburgh, led a workshop on "Thinking Missionally: See Yourself as Sent." Following dinner, a service of worship was held, led by Rev. Ott, Rev. Gardner, Elder Melinda Orendorff (Westminster), and pianist Liz Shoemaker (1st, Pueblo).

The business portion of the meeting took place the following morning, including:

- Inquirers Phil Bennett and Rory Gillespie were examined by the presbytery and moved to Candidacy;
- Susan Thomas, Mission Co-Worker in Mexico, spoke about her & her husband's ministry (see article);

- Presbytery addressed the difficulties within the La Jara church, listened to the church's board members and mediation team member, as well as COM representatives and other parties. Motion was carried to refer the issue back to COM to meet and work with the La Jara church board and congregation;
 - Election of Coordinating Council, Committees, Moderator, Moderator-Elect, and special representatives was held;
 - Executive Presbyter Rev. Gary Weaver presented the "Growing Healthy Churches" Mission Strategy (see *Weavings* article);
 - Reports were distributed on the four geographical church clusters' meetings, their mission priorities, events and news;
 - The Stated Clerk's report included the election of an Administrative Commission to install Rev. Kirk Webster as Pastor at Monument Community church on November 4, and the report from the Administrative Commission who installed Rev. Jason Sinagra as Associate Pastor at the Canon City church;
 - The Presbytery voted to approve the resolution from the session of First church, Colorado Springs, upholding the presbytery's commitment to the constitutional standards for ordination;
 - A service of installation was held, installing Elder Melinda Orendorff as Moderator and Rev. Bill Tibert as Moderator-Elect for 2008, and members of the new Coordinating Council were commissioned.
- The next Presbytery meeting will be Wednesday, February 27, 2008 at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Pueblo. A Training Event will be held that afternoon.
-

MISSION NOTES

It has been a blessing to have spent the past week in the Presbytery of Pueblo, first at the presbytery meeting and later visiting with individual congregations, to raise awareness and support for PC(USA) World Mission. As one of 48 PC(USA) mission workers sent out to 144 presbyteries for "Mission Challenge '07," I had the opportunity to talk with many of you about the important work of our denomination in 60 countries around the world. Thank you for inviting me, and for making my stay in the Pueblo Presbytery such a memorable and rewarding experience.

As I talked with church members and pastors, I learned about the many mission efforts in which you are involved and was pleased to discover the connections that some churches already have with PC(USA) mission workers and our partner churches and institutions in other lands. One of the primary goals of "Mission Challenge '07" is that every church in our denomination, regardless of its size, would be in relationship with a PC(USA) mission worker through prayer, regular correspondence and financial support. If your congregation does not have such a relationship yet, I urge you to consider ways to make it happen. Your church might decide to support one of the PC(USA) mission workers that calls Pueblo Presbytery "home," or comes from another part of Colorado. Or your church may already have a partnership in a specific region of the world; you could be in relationship with one of our denomination's mission workers who is serving there.

Mission Challenge '07 provides an experience and true stories that interpret what an amazing church God has given us. We are partners in God's mission, which is the mission of Jesus Christ on earth. Mission personnel are engaged in diverse ministries while sharing a deep commitment to doing the work of the gospel and along with international partners bear witness to the transforming love of God. Visits to local congregations reconnect us as we share what God is doing throughout the world.

Prior to "Mission Challenge '07," every church in our denomination received a DVD and a supply of bulletin inserts, and I encourage all of the churches in this presbytery to view the video and use those inserts, which include an envelope for making contributions to support PC(USA) World Mission. God is using our mission workers in amazing ways to make a difference in the lives of people in many places throughout the world. As we celebrate 170 years of sending missionaries to share the love of Christ, thank you for supporting PC(USA) World Mission.

Susan Thomas
PC(USA) Mission Co-Worker, Mexico

Presbytery Calendar

(subject to changes/additions)

October: 21 – CommUnity PC, Rocky Ford, 100th Anniversary celebration

26 – Pueblo/Canon City/Ark.Valley Pastor & Spouse dinner, Pueblo

27 – CLP Training Event, 1st/Pueblo, 9 am – 3:30 pm

November: 4 – Rev. Kirk Webster installation, Monument, 4 pm

7 – Church in Society committee, call for location, 1:30 pm

7-9 – Synod Staff Retreat, Denver

11 – Taize worship service, 1st/Pueblo, 7 pm

22-23 – Thanksgiving holiday: Presbytery office closed

28 – Mission & Interpretation Committee, Westminster, 11 am

December: 9 – Taize worship service, Center for Inner Peace, Pueblo, 7 pm

24-25 – Christmas Holiday, Presbytery office closed

31-1/1 – New Year's Holiday, Presbytery office closed

Have a blessed Christmas and a very happy New Year!