

TRANSITIONS & CONCERNS

▪ *Please remember in your prayers:*

- The family of Mrs. Lorraine Shotwell, who passed away on Feb. 1;
- The Rev. Gary Weaver's brother, Don, recovering from a heart attack;
- Moderator-Elect Elder Ray Burt, recovering from surgery;
- The Rev. Stephen Griffis, continuing his recovery from surgery, and rejoicing in the news that there is no sign of cancer;
- The Rev. Sid Skirvin, also continuing his recovery from surgery, and doing well.

▪ Remember to use the Presbytery's Weekly Prayer Calendar in your prayers. Requests for February-April, 2011 are:

- Feb. 6: First Presbyterian Church of Las Animas
- Feb. 13: Pikes Peak Habitat, Colo. Springs
- Feb. 20: Commissioned Lay Pastor Coordinating Committee
- Feb. 27: Pueblo Hispanic New Church Development
- Mar. 6: The Rev. Dr. Karla Koll, missionary/teacher in Guatemala
- Mar. 13: First Presbyterian Church of Monte Vista
- Mar. 20: Colorado Council of Churches
- Mar. 27: Presbytery's Presbyterian Women
- Apr. 3: Alamosa Presbyterian Church
- Apr. 10: Presbytery's Permanent Judicial Commission
- Apr. 17: United Presbyterian Church of La Jara
- Apr. 24: Bristol Presbyterian Church

(The Prayer Calendar can also be accessed online at our website.)

Presbytery Calendar

(subject to changes/additions)

February, 2011

- 8 – Committee on Preparation for Ministry
- 9 – Presbytery Meeting, Westminster/Pueblo
- 21 – Presidents' Day, Presbytery office closed

March, 2011

- 9 – Ash Wednesday
- 16 – Coordinating Council, First/Pueblo, 11 a.m.
- 22 – Hispanic Ministry Task Force, First/Pueblo, 1:00 p.m.

April, 2011

- 2 – San Luis Valley Cluster meeting, Antonito church, 9 a.m.
- 6 – Presbytery Called meeting, Kirkwood Memorial/Penrose
- 21 – Maundy Thursday
- 22 – Good Friday, Presbytery office closed
- 23 – Easter Sunday

*From the staff of the Presbytery of Pueblo:
Have a blessed, happy Easter!*

Presbyterian Connections

A Newsletter of the Presbytery of Pueblo

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First Quarter, 2011

God's Gift of a New Day

I wrote a maxim several years ago to remind myself of a fundamental perspective on life:

Life offers no guarantees, only gifts.

It seems to me we enter this life in a condition of fear which keeps being reinforced as we grow and age. Consequently, we look to some authority, starting with our parents, then teachers, then government, then God to ensure our safety, our security. In my deepest self, I assume something or someone out there needs to protect me from harm, hurt, disaster, disease, death. And so when any negative thing happens to me, my first reaction is indignation. Why me? Why now? Why this terrible thing? The next reaction is blame: My parents (or spouse, or boss, or president, or church, or God) failed me, let me down!

We do need an antidote to fear (or the other words we use, like anxiety, tension, stress, angst, terror, etc.) in order to live with courage and a peaceful spirit. But I don't believe the antidote is found in looking for guarantees of protection from all that threatens us. Rather, it's changing my assumption that I am somehow entitled to be shielded from harm or difficulty to an awareness that every day is a gift from God, that most of my days are lived in peace, in good health, and, because of the gift of being born in this country, most of my days are relatively free from concerns of shelter, food and clothing. In other words, the antidote to fear is faith. But faith in what? Faith in a loving God, a God who creates all good things, a God of grace, of giving, who blesses us all with the gift of life, the gift of love, and when we have them, the gift of health, humor, peace, awareness, curiosity, wonder and appreciation. When we wake each day and begin by thanking God that we are given another day to live, another day to rise up and walk, another day to enjoy the aroma of brewed coffee and the taste of bacon, then we will live with a sense of thankfulness for all God's gifts, rather than fears of not having enough.

All of this brings me to the other maxim by which I try to live:

A grateful life is a graceful life.

Continued...

When I can remember to approach each day with the awareness that I am always in a state of grace, my natural response is gratitude, of feeling blessed every moment, with every breath. I imagine myself breathing in faith in God's good gifts and breathing out my fears of not being good enough, or strong enough, or capable enough, or not having enough to live contentedly, confidently, and peacefully with whatever life brings. Paul says it best, *"Rejoice in the Lord ALWAYS; again I will say, Rejoice...do not worry about anything...and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."* (Phil.4:4-7)

Good friends, it's a New Year! But more importantly, it's a new day—God's gift to us!

Peace & Joy,
Gary Weaver
Executive Presbyter

News from the Stated Clerk

Elder Pricilla Hill

At our February Presbytery meeting we voted on Part 3 of 3 of the proposed amendments. Amendment 10A (G-6.0106b) was defeated with 49 against and 22 affirmative. Amendment 10N also was defeated with 58 against and 11 for. All others, 10B-10O were supported with a majority.

We will have a **Called** meeting on **Wednesday, April 6 at 10am** at Kirkwood Memorial in Penrose. We will again present pros & cons of the proposed nFOG, followed by discussion and **vote**. Information on the proposed inclusion of the Belhar Confession to our constitution will also be presented. This amendment will be voted on at our June 18th presbytery meeting.

In addition to the amendments at the called meeting, the Future Presbytery Task Force will give a progress report of their work.

Please join us for all of these meetings – there is certainly a lot going on and we need your participation and prayers.

Thank you to all who have completed and returned the annual reports (clerks of session, and Honorably Retired MWS, MAL and those in validated ministries). If you haven't done so, please return at your earliest convenience.

Statistical Reports: Hooray! - 13 churches have completed this annual time consuming task. Pastors and clerks of session – you're doing a GREAT JOB! You still have until **February 23rd** to complete the report on line. Please call me if you have any questions.

Presbytery Meeting Highlights

February 9, 2011

- **The Rev. JoAnn Brechbill** was installed as **Moderator of Presbytery** for 2011;
- Presbytery saw a **PowerPoint presentation on the New Form of Government (nFOG)**, which presented both pro and con sides of this proposed amendment. (This PowerPoint file is available to download and view: contact the Presbytery office.)
- Candidate **Christopher Holmes** (First, Colo. Springs) was approved by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry as **ready to receive a Call and to circulate his PIF**.
- Inquirer **Blair Buckley** (First, Colo. Springs) spoke to Presbytery about her faith journey, and was **approved to advance to Candidacy**.
- **The Rev. Pat Jeffrey and Elder Dick Schubert** reported to Presbytery on **Grace Community Church in Falcon**, on the church's events, missions supported, and that the new building is overflowing on Sundays and during the week. Council has extended the Presbytery's loan to Grace church for one year.
- A brief report on the **Future Presbytery Task Force** was given: more information will be presented at the April 6 Presbytery meeting.
- **CLP Terry Buckman** was Commissioned to the **United Presbyterian Church of Antonito**, where he will serve as Moderator for their session, preach weekly, administer the sacraments, and provide pastoral care and leadership development.
- **Elder Pricilla Hill** was Commissioned to the Presbytery of Pueblo as a **Commissioned Lay Pastor**, in a validated ministry as Stated Clerk, with all rights and privileges.

MISSION STATEMENT



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.**

