

## TRANSITIONS & CONCERNS

### ➤ Please remember in your prayers:

- The Rev. Brian Caselles (former Pastor at Pioneer United Church, Del Norte) and his family as he accepts a new Call in Western Colorado Presbytery;
- The Rev. Mark Epperson, former Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Colo. Springs, now a member-at-large;
- The Rev. Jason Sinagra, former Associate Pastor at United Presbyterian Church, Canon City, as he moves to Pennsylvania to begin a new church development;
- The members of Aguilar Presbyterian Church upon its closure on July 1, 2008.

### ➤ We celebrate with:

- The Rev. David Markwalder, who has accepted a Call from Gateway Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs;
- Elder Pricilla Hill (member of First Presbyterian Church, Pueblo) upon her election as the Presbytery's new Stated Clerk;
- The Rev. Randy Wilcher (at-large member) upon his election as the Presbytery's new Treasurer.

### ➤ Remember to use the Presbytery's Weekly Prayer Calendar in your prayers. Requests for July through September 2008 are:

- July 6 – Korean First Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs
- July 13 – Loaves & Fishes, Canon City
- July 20 – First Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs
- July 27 – Presbytery's Committee on Ministry
- Aug. 3 – First Presbyterian Church, Lamar
- Aug. 10 – Sangre De Cristo Hospice, Arkansas Valley
- Aug. 17 – Gateway Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs
- Aug. 24 – Westside Cares and Northern Churches Care, Colorado Springs
- Aug. 31 – Pioneer United Church, Del Norte
- Sept. 7 – First Presbyterian Church, Pueblo
- Sept. 14 – Presbytery's Coordinating Council
- Sept. 21 – Korean United Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs
- Sept. 28 – Presbytery's Nominating Committee

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

### **Presbytery Calendar**

(subject to changes/additions)

- Aug.: 17 – Installation of the Rev. Bill Johnson at Pueblo West Ecumenical Church  
22-24 – Growing Healthy Churches Weekend Consultation, Westminster/Pueblo
- Sept.: 1 – Labor Day: Presbytery office closed
- 2 – Stewardship Committee, 11:30 a.m., First/Colo Springs
  - 3 – Nominating Committee, Presbytery office, time to be determined
  - 4 – CLP Coordinating Committee, 10 a.m., First/Pueblo
  - 10 – Coordinating Council, 11:30 a.m., First/Pueblo
  - 12-14 – Growing Healthy Churches Weekend Consultation, First/Pueblo
  - 16 – Committee on Ministry, 11 a.m., First/Pueblo
  - 19 – Retired Ministers & Spouses lunch, Beulah
  - 25 – Growing Healthy Churches pastors, 9 a.m., Presbytery office
  - 25 – Colorado Springs Cluster meeting, 4 p.m., Gateway
  - 26-28 – Growing Healthy Churches Weekend Consultation, Mountain View/Colo.Sp.

# Presbyterian Connections

## A Newsletter of the Presbytery of Pueblo

Synod of the Rocky Mountains \* Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
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Third quarter, 2008



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

*Jesus said, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)*

With the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly's recent actions of once again proposing an amendment to the Constitution regarding G-60106b (the so-called "fidelity or chastity" requirement for ordination of ministers, elders and deacons), some would assume that this is once again the priority concern of the congregations in our presbytery. I am appealing to you NOT to let this once again distract us from faithful obedience to Christ's "Great Commission," to NOT derail the momentum and excitement about our new Mission Design and our commitment to "Growing Healthy Churches," to NOT forget God's vision for our presbytery that we discerned after a 2 ½ year process:

*Our new vision for Pueblo Presbytery is that we become a covenantal community in practice as well as theology in order to become more effective instruments of God's grace, mercy and peace in Jesus Christ.*

*To fulfill our vision we propose to experience our life together in ways that are missional, connectional and participatory; in other words, to share ministry and mission together as churches whenever profitable and possible in ways that connect us as faith communities.*

The ordination standards in G-60106b are still in effect until or unless the majority of presbyteries approve the new amendment, which is to delete the current text and replace it with the following:  
*"Those who are called to ordained service in the church, by their assent to the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003), pledge themselves to live lives obedient to Jesus Christ the Head of the Church, striving to follow where he leads through the witness of the Scriptures, and to understand the Scriptures through the instruction of the Confessions. In so doing, they declare their fidelity to the standards of the Church. Each governing body charged with examination for ordination and/or installation (G-14.0240 and G-14.0450) establishes the candidate's sincere efforts to adhere to these standards."*

Whether you are for or against this amendment, your Session will have the opportunity to send their commissioners to the presbytery meeting in February

*Continued...*

to vote on this question. Let us trust the Holy Spirit to guide all 173 presbyteries to discern God's will in this matter.

Meanwhile, let us be about God's mission in the world: to love the world as God loves us, to care about the suffering and injustice in the world as God cares, to reach out with the love of God to touch and heal the wounds of our society as God has touched and transformed our lives, and let us tell the story of God's mind-boggling love in coming to us in human form and dying for us so that we might live with hope, courage, peace and joy. In such a time as this we are called to a higher commission than internal church disputes about theological or biblical interpretations. We are called to obey Christ's high, holy calling to do the impossible, to be a witness to the world, to hear and heed his ultimate commandment: *"That you love one another as I have loved you!"*

Peace & Joy,  
Gary Weaver

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### Highlights of the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in San Jose

A complete list of G.A. actions and referrals are available on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) website: <http://www.pcusa.org/ga218/>. Listed below are some of the more pertinent actions of the Assembly that should be of interest to our churches:

- elected a new Moderator: the Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow;
- elected a new Stated Clerk: the Rev. Grady Parsons;
- did not remove the church's constitutional ordination standard of "fidelity in marriage and chastity in singleness" although the following amendment was proposed to the 173 presbyteries to approve or not by a majority vote: To replace the current language of G-6.0106b with the following--

*Those who are called to ordained service in the church, by their assent to the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003), pledge themselves to live lives obedient to Jesus Christ the Head of the Church, striving to follow where he leads through the witness of the Scriptures, and to understand the Scriptures through the instruction of the Confessions. In so doing, they declare their fidelity to the standards of the Church. Each governing body charged with examination for ordination and/or installation (G-14.0240 and G-14.0450) establishes the candidate's sincere efforts to adhere to these standards.*

- adopted a new Authoritative Interpretation (AI) on G-6.0106b: *Interpretive statements concerning ordained service of homosexual church members by the 190th General Assembly (1978) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the 119th General Assembly (1979) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and all subsequent affirmations thereof, have no further force or effect;*
- adopted a new AI on G-6.0108 to allow someone who is being considered for ordination or installation as a deacon, elder, or minister to register a conscientious objection to the standards or beliefs of the church and ask the ordaining body to enter into a conversation with them to determine the seriousness of the departure;

- referred the revision of the Form of Government (FOG) proposals to a new Task Force who will consult with the presbyteries and churches to study and recommend to the 2010 General Assembly any and all revisions;
- started the process of correcting a mistranslation of the German into English of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Presbytery has scheduled a "Dialogue and Discernment on G.A. Actions" pre-presbytery meeting on October 31, 1:30-4:00 p.m. for any who wish to discuss these issues. Location TBD.

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### Reminders for upcoming events...

- Scholarships are still available for the Western National Leadership Training Event this October 8-10 in Jackson, Wyoming. Contact Janet at the Presbytery office for information.
- Don't forget to sign up your Middle School- and High School-age kids for their Fall Retreats! The Middle School Retreat is October 18-19, 2008 at Hermit Basin in Westcliffe, and the High School Retreat is November 7-9 at Golden Bell Conference Center in Divide, Colo.
- Saturday, October 18 is the "Lay Leadership Training II" with Michael Carey. Your churches will receive notices and registration information soon!
- Paul Borden will be speaking at the October 31-Nov. 1 Presbytery meeting at Mt. St. Francis. He will also be leading a Pastor's Forum at Mountain View Presbyterian Church on Oct. 31.

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### Highlights of the Presbytery Meeting: July 12

- Elected a new Stated Clerk, Elder Pricilla Hill, First Presbyterian, Pueblo, who will serve part-time starting July 15<sup>th</sup>;
- Elected a new Treasurer, the Rev. Randy Wilcher, Colorado Springs, who will serve as a volunteer;
- Heard an inspiring sermon by Dr. Jack Haberer, editor, *PRESBYTERIAN OUTLOOK*, on "The Ultimate Intention" of God's covenant to "the people of God";
- Received an offering for the "Growing Healthy Churches" project amounting to \$533;
- Heard the Executive Presbyter's report on the four participating Growing Healthy Churches that together they have increased their average worship attendance by 10.25% in the first five months of 2008;
- Adopted the 2009 Mission Budget of \$484,463 (4.5% decrease from 2008) and a presbytery per capita of \$17.50 which along with the Synod's \$6.38 and G.A.'s \$6.15 totals: \$30.03 for next year;
- Heard from the four commissioners and youth advisory delegate reporting on General Assembly (see "Highlights of G.A.");
- Approved the Administrative Commission's report on the closing of the Community Presbyterian Church of Aguilar, bringing our total number of churches to 28;
- Acknowledged C.L.P. Sam Madrid for serving the Aguilar congregation as pastor for 25 years;
- And Honorably Retired the Rev. Harold ("Tex") Russell, effective Sept. 1, 2008.