

# The Presbytery of Coastal Carolina

## CONNECTIONS Newsletter



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### POINTS TO PONDER...

#### Living in a Bubble—

Sometime back, in the midst of a deep and profound theological discussion, I suggested to a colleague that this person was “living in a bubble”. What I meant to say is that they were so focused on their own particular, long held point of view as to be generally unaware of or inclined to underestimate other very different and differing points of view. As I recall, the response that came back to me was in the form of a suggestion that maybe it was me who was living in a bubble.

Well, since that conversation occurred, several months ago, the idea of living in a bubble has stuck in my mind. And every time I turn around, it seems, I’m reminded of another example of that idea. Gradually what seeps into my thick intellect is the realization that we all tend to live in a bubble: whether ideological, or theological, or political, or cultural. They’re bubbles in which we live, by which we identify ourselves, within which we protect ourselves from other competing ideas or theologies, from other political views or cultural standards. And if we stay in that bubble long enough, insulated from the outside, we may actually come to believe or assume that if everyone “out there” doesn’t see what we see or believe what we believe,...well, they should.

Obviously, beyond a certain point, this is not a position that encourages dialog. If I believe that my “world” within the bubble is the only “real world”, then I have neither the need nor the inclination to listen to your ideas about your world. And increasingly the larger world becomes compartmentalized, subdivided into little islands of special interest, and the gospel-according-to-us.

I am not suggesting here that it is not important for us to know what we believe and to live what we believe. As followers of the Way it is obviously very important. But clearly, we do not all follow in exactly the same way, we do not all interpret the road signs exactly the same. But given that, I do not believe that it is Christ-like to turn what we believe into a private club, or as a shield behind which we are constantly defending ourselves, or as a loft of enlightenment where we can be blissfully ignorant of how or why others arrive at or cling to a different view of the world.

The God that we serve is a God of relationships, who is revealed in the scriptures as intending to be related to creation – the human community in particular. Much of the Old Testament is focused on a specifically defined covenantal community for God’s people, which by the way includes a special concern for reaching out to the stranger in their midst. So also the New Testament portrays Jesus as calling people into relationship with God and with one another in a special way. He called that the Kingdom of God. And much of his teaching seems to be inviting a conversation, a dialog – which is what the parables seem to encourage.

So, whether I am inclined, for instance, to live in a conservative bubble, or a liberal bubble I need to remember that God has not called me to use my faith like a flashlight as I huddle under the blanket with like-minded people who will never challenge or disagree with me. I need to be willing to submit my faith, my beliefs, my interpretations to the test of discussion and dialog, and exposure to different points of view.

But what do you think...?

- David Walker



### LEARNING & DIALOGING

#### Proposed Amendments Forums—

Forums for sharing information and encouraging study about General Assembly’s proposed amendments are being planned for each region. Commissioners to the March Presbytery meeting are encouraged to attend one forum.

#### LOCATIONS & DATES:

##### Western Community - South Region

Sun., 2/1 at Raeford Pres. Church, 3:00 PM - 4:30

##### Western Community - North Region

Sun., 2/8 at Broadway Pres. Ch. (near Sanford) 3PM -4:30

##### Central Community—North Region

Sun., 2/8 PM Haymount Pres. Church, Fay’v. at 4:00

##### Central Community—South Region

Tues., 2/10 at 2nd Pres. Church, Elizabethtown, 7:00 PM

##### East Community - South Region

Sun., 2/1 at Windermere Pres. Ch., Wilm’ton 3PM—4:30

##### East Community - North Region

Sun., 2/8 at Cape Carteret Church, Swansboro, 3:00pm

Presbytery’s vote on the proposed amendments will be at the March 7, ‘09 meeting. You can find the amendments at [www.pcusa.org/generalassembly/amend.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/generalassembly/amend.htm)



### Learn about God’s Word and God’s World—

In partnership with Augsburg Fortress Publishers, Congregational Ministries Publishing once again brings you an exciting Vacation Bible School experience. Discovery Canyon will help your kids explore the wonders of the world in a week of faith-filled VBS fun. Discovery Canyon Critter Friends help bring each day’s theme alive. Activity sites include “Canyon Crafts”, “Gully Games”, “Red Rock Rhythm”, “Sagebrush Storytelling”, and “Shadow Science”.

Each day begins and ends with an opening and closing celebration. During the opening everyone learns the daily theme, Bible story and Bible Memory Verse. There is music available to help everyone remember the good news.

The evangelism theme invites kids to rejoice in the Word, and make a difference in the lives of other kids. This year’s PC(USA) mission project supports the Menaul School in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Find out more at [www.pcusa.org/vbs/](http://www.pcusa.org/vbs/).



### Wow, it’s that time of year again.

Start planning for

### 2009 summer camps.

*Pick up your packet*

A packet of information will be handed out at the **December Presbytery Meeting** for each church. The packet contains brochure,

camp application and Church Challenge Flyer. Please make sure a representative from your church **stops by the CODM table** and picks up this important information. We look forward to working with you again to make this summer a memorable one for our youth.

Contact Ann Locklear at the Presbytery office with questions—1-800-277-7479 or [annlocklear@presbycc.org](mailto:annlocklear@presbycc.org)

Visit the Presbytery’s Outdoor Ministries web page at [www.presbycc-camps.org](http://www.presbycc-camps.org)

**2009 Evangelism Focus for CCRT— Rev. Owen Carricker**  
 In 2009, the Presbytery's Committee on Church Revitalization and Transformation will be emphasizing evangelism in its work within our Presbytery. Feeling that this is vital as we seek to grow Churches and faithfully answer the call of Christ, the goal in the next year is "practical everyday evangelism" for each church and every member of this Presbytery. Efforts will not be geared toward the theories of evangelism, but rather those practical ways that you as a pastor or layperson can share your faith and use your individual strengths and skills in evangelism.

Three efforts are already in the pipeline to help us learn more about how we can share our faith with others.  
**First, we are launching a more user-friendly website** to help with understanding our call to evangelism in the local church. We have signed a one year contract with Missioninsite. Missioninsite is a mission/evangelism oriented company that will enable us to better understand the needs and opportunities in our Presbytery and local Churches. They will be working with us and our Presbytery leaders to develop tools, skills and identifying opportunities to help us strengthen our response to Christ's call.

**Coming in March**

**Evangelism Workshop—**

In March we have invited one of our denominations leaders in the area of evangelism to come and present a workshop for us on evangelism. Chris Walker, through his workshops and website ([www.evangelism.org](http://www.evangelism.org)) has enabled those interested in evangelism to understand and develop their own skills and abilities in reaching others in everyday conversations. He will be with us for three days in March, offering workshops on each side of our Presbytery to help enable and equip us to be confident in our evangelism efforts.

**Coming in October**

**Magnetic Church Workshop—** Andrew Weeks will lead a workshop focused on laypersons and local church efforts in evangelism. It will enable individuals to learn how they and their church can reach out to those in the community around them. Andrew's website is [www.magnetic-church.com](http://www.magnetic-church.com).

We are excited about the workshops we will be offering this next year and hope that all of you will watch for updates and more information about how you can be involved in evangelism. Registration information will be forthcoming in January.

**What is our Presbytery Doing to Fight Hunger?**

The Hunger sub-committee of the Committee for Mission and Outreach is composed of Presbyterians from each of the 6 Presbytery regions. They meet quarterly to discuss hunger issues, to consider grant applications, and to disburse monies received through the **Cents-Ability program of the PCUSA**. Often called 2-Cents-A-Meal, donations are collected in many of our churches and at Presbytery functions. Churches may keep 25% of their collection to help with local hunger projects if they wish.

Of the money received each year, 70% is used for international mission, 25% is used for local area grants within the Presbytery and 5% is used for administrative expenses.

As of September 30, 2008 the following money has helped fight hunger in

- Malawi: Chuluchosema Feeding Program \$9,248.05
- Haiti: St. Barnabas School \$29,247.78
- Haiti Outreach Ministries \$7,312.15

In 2008, hunger grants in the total amount of \$16,000 were awarded to 16 organizations or sponsoring congregations.

**What can your church do?**

- Participate in Cents-Ability
- Make a grant request—the form is on our website.
- Have an ongoing food drive for your local food pantry
- Serve on the Hunger Sub-committee

To find more information go to [www.pcusa.org/hunger.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/hunger.htm).

**Presbytery Meeting on Mar. 7, 2009—**  
**At the 84th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, the General Assembly proposed amendments will be voted upon. The informational packet will be posted online 2 weeks before the meeting at [www.presbycc.org/packets.htm](http://www.presbycc.org/packets.htm).**



**Proposed Amendments—** Each General Assembly approves and recommends to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes proposed changes in the language of the *Book of Order* that, if approved, amend the *Constitution*. Click the link below for a copy of the 218th General Assembly's proposed amendments.  
[www.pcusa.org/generalassembly/amend/proposed-amendments.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/generalassembly/amend/proposed-amendments.pdf)



**The Big Tent event June 11-13 in Atlanta, Ga.—** The Big Tent is your opportunity to attend a great PCN conference and share common worship and workshops with other partner groups. Conferences being held at 2009 Big Tent include: PCN National Conference, New Immigrant Ministries Convocation, National Multicultural Church Conference, the National Elders Conference, the Racial Ethnic Convocation, the Stewardship Conference, the Peacemaking Conference, the Evangelism and Church Growth Conference, the PHEWA Social Justice Biennial Conference, and the Committee of Preparation for Ministry / Committee on Ministry / Seminary Healthy Ministry Conference. See the Big Tent web site at [www.pcusa.org/bigtent](http://www.pcusa.org/bigtent).

**Equipping the Saints**  
**Workshops Promoting Christian Education and Stewardship**

Sponsored by the Committee for Christian Education & Stewardship Development  
 Presbytery of Coastal Carolina  
**February 14, 2009**  
 9am—1:30pm

Highland Presbyterian Church, 111 Highland Ave.  
 Fayetteville, NC 28305

**KEYNOTER: Candace Hill—**Coordinator for Educational Ministries, PC(USA). Candace works with a variety of Christian education networks to support educational Ministries of congregations across the country.

**WORKSHOP OFFERINGS: 2 SESSIONS**

- The Why in Youth Ministry
  - General Assembly 101
  - Going Green
  - Vacation Bible School
  - So Many Resources
  - Establishing Goals Life Long Learning
  - Difficult Texts
  - Stewardship
  - Faith and Film
  - Spirituality Center
- Find registration info. online at [www.presbycc.org](http://www.presbycc.org).



**Bethesda Church Celebrates LoveFeast—**

The Moravian Candlelight LoveFeast is an event that celebrates the birth of our Lord Jesus. Early Christians met and broke bread to signify their union, fellowship, and love. It is also a symbol of the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry.

Bethesda Church, Aberdeen will sponsor a LoveFeast on Dec. 14 at 7pm in the church sanctuary. This is a community service for all ages.

### Presbytery Middle School Retreat—

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

MARCH 7- 8, 2009

Camp Kirkwood

6th—8th Graders are invited for a weekend of fun, fellowship and Bible study.

Cost—\$40.00 per person

Registration—9-10am on Saturday morning

Departure following Sunday Morning Worship

**Keynote: Jon Lloyd**—Youth Director for 1st Church, Lumberton and a member of Presbytery's Youth Council.

Deadline is Feb. 23, 2009 or until event is full.

Email [jennifermaffia@presbycc.org](mailto:jennifermaffia@presbycc.org) to register and with questions.



### Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina

**PW Spring Gathering** is scheduled for April 4, 2009 at Barbecue Presbyterian Church, Sanford.

Check the November/December issue of *Horizons* magazine

([www.pcusa.org/horizons](http://www.pcusa.org/horizons)) for current information on the **Fellowship of the Least Coin** and planning resources for **Celebrate the Gifts of Women**.

**Leadership Development Funds**—created to enable members of PW organizations who otherwise wouldn't be able to participate in presbytery, synod, churchwide or other national events. Find out more at [www.pcusa.org/pw/leadership/index.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pw/leadership/index.htm)

### Order PW and PC(USA) Leadership Resources—

By calling PDS at 800-524-2612 or visit [www.pcusa.org/marketplace](http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace)

- *How to Write Church History*—(PWR-02-105)
- *Together in Service Guide*—(PWR-07-431)
- *2009 Children's Mission Yearbook*— Item # 9781571530899

### CELEBRATE...

#### CALVIN'S BIRTHDAY!

John Calvin is well known by Presbyterians, but he is not necessarily well understood. Historical caricatures of his harsh and somber reputation have threatened to overshadow his remarkable gifts to the church.



As we celebrate the 500th anniversary of Calvin's birth in 2009, we Presbyterians have an opportunity to reintroduce ourselves to Calvin's legacy—his monumental contributions to theology, church government, education, language, music, and politics as well as the more troubling aspects. Take the time to get to know John Calvin better and you may find that a deeper engagement with the man and his legacy will enhance our appreciation not only of Calvin, but of the entire Presbyterian tradition.

In celebration of Calvin's birthday, Witherspoon Press and the Theology and Education ministry of the PC(USA) present a DVD on the life and legacy of Calvin. Order by contacting PDS (1-800-524-2612) for item #17808001D.—\$30.

Visit the following web site to view a 3 minute trailer of the DVD and instructions for making a Calvin mask.

[www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/calvin.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/calvin.htm)



### POINT Person Serves as PCUSA Curriculum Writer—

Our very own **Suzy Edwards** joined 9 other women from across the country to write curriculum for the PCUSA September 21-26th. The group went to Breckenridge, CO. to write the upcoming year's curriculum for *We Believe*. Suzy, a member at First Church, Morehead City has been a writer for PCUSA for over 5 years. She has been a writer for all ages in the traditional style but has now been asked to write for the Rotation Model as well. As she always says, she takes a piece of all the children at First Church with her whenever she writes. She writes with them in mind and uses them as her inspiration. The Rotation Workshop is the new Sunday School Model Suzy helped initiate at First Church. First Presbyterian is very pleased that Suzy can share her voice and expertise, knowing that it will be shared throughout the USA and Canada.

In her position as **Presbytery's POINT person**, Suzy serves as a curriculum advocate and is available along with our second POINT person, Betty Pope, at Community Church, Pinehurst to consult and answer questions about curriculum.

Suzy Edwards—919-844-5515—[sse@clis.com](mailto:sse@clis.com)

Betty Pope—910-295-6848—[bpope@cpccpinehurst.org](mailto:bpope@cpccpinehurst.org)

### A.P.C.E. Annual Event 2009

A Conference for All Persons Serving in Educational Ministry

Crowne Plaza Riverwalk and The Sheraton Gunter Hotels  
San Antonio, TX

Jan. 28 - 31, 2009

Come and celebrate being Presbyterian and Reformed...  
**"A Light to the Nations"**

Find brochure at [apcenet.org/events/annual-next.htm](http://apcenet.org/events/annual-next.htm) .

**Green Living**— means practicing our faith through caring for the creation. Scripture and our Reformed faith tradition calls humans to be stewards of the earth and to participate in God's call to justice. There is a guide titled *Green Living* designed by the PC (USA) to prompt individual lifestyle changes and offer resources and ideas to assist in greening our lives and sharing God's love with the world.

The guide is divided into five sections:

- 1) Green Consumption
- 2) Greening Transportation
- 3) The Green House Effect
- 4) Resources for Further Study
- 5) Enough for Everyone

Download this resource at [www.pcusa.org/justliving](http://www.pcusa.org/justliving) .



A Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years, the **Christmas Joy Offering** is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need.

Fifty percent of the receipts to the Christmas Joy Offering are distributed to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs that provide support to retired and active church workers and their spouses and families. The other fifty percent supports Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education through the National Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council.

Remit your congregation's gifts to the office of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina where your church will be credited with the gift.

**Children's Christmas Joy Art Contest**— Invite the children of your congregation to help create art for the Christmas Joy Offering. The deadline for receiving art is Jan. 30, 2009. Find details at [www.pcusa.org/cjoffering/artcontest.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/cjoffering/artcontest.htm) .