

The Pelican

The Presbytery of Florida is called to serve God using our gifts and skills to **Excite, Encourage, Equip and Empower** our Congregations and Clergy in Mission and Ministry.



January/February 2012

“Let the leader be as one who serves...” (Jesus)

Luke 22:26

Greetings from our Transitional EP

By Sally Hinchman,
Presbytery of Florida
Transitional Executive Presbyter

Since arriving in the bounds of the Presbytery of Florida, I have been on a wonderful journey. I have had the privilege of working with this presbytery for a month and have gained a great deal of information about your rich history of mission and ministry. In these past weeks I have met with committees, talked with staff, attended different churches, read through past minutes, cleaned out files, talked to other presbyteries, and had conversations with individuals. I have also eaten a lot of delicious seafood!

I want to first affirm the fact that you have a competent staff who work well with each other, and they have a strong desire to support the mission and ministry of this presbytery and its congregations. They are a gift to this presbytery.

The Presbytery of Florida is like many of the other presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Many are also in a time of transition and exploring what their mission and

ministry needs to be for the future.

I am not aware of any presbytery that has not been affected by the economy. A common theme across the church is an emphasis on how to best serve and resource its congregations, especially with less money and, in many situations, with less staff. It is a challenging opportunity to explore new ways of being in ministry.

As the Transitional Presbyter, I am asking some hard and challenging questions. The Transition Team will meet on March 12th, and we will explore some of what I have ‘gleaned’ and/or ‘learned’ regarding the future direction of the Presbytery of Florida. If you have thoughts, please contact me at the presbytery office (Ext. 1) or email transition@presbyteryofflorida.com.



Sally Hinchman

Presbytery meets on historic date

By Huw Christopher,
2011 Presbytery of Florida
Moderator

As I, as retiring moderator, called the Presbytery of Florida’s meeting to order on Saturday, January 28, 2012, at Edgewater Beach Resort on Panama City Beach, I noted that on January 28, 1841, the presbytery had been constituted at the First Presbyterian Church in Tallahassee. The first churches to be members of the presbytery were those in Madison, Monticello, Tallahassee, Quincy and Marianna.

The February 20 edition of the Tallahassee newspaper, *The Floridian*, reported that “the business of the presbytery was conducted with a degree of diligence, harmony, and decorum that would have been credible to an older body.” The history of the presbytery also states that “the new presbytery provided nurture and resources to assist the charter churches in carrying out their mission and in aiding the formation of new churches as settlers moved into the territory” (*Presbytery of Florida 150 Years 1841-1991, Frontiers in Faith*, by Hendrix Chandler, page 4)

Grace Presbyterian Church, Panama City, invites you to its annual

Scottish Festival

Saturday March 10, 2012 10 a. m. - 4 p. m.

Highland games & dances | X f Y, Scottish Yeggs | tah tea roo & much moie

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Sunday March 11, 2012 11 a. m.




Pace Presbyterian Church is seeking musicians and singers, especially from the Pensacola area, for a special service, followed by a covered dish luncheon, the 3rd Sunday of each month. Singers or musicians available to participate may contact Larry Plank, CLP, at (850)94553 or butterflyncoyote

Presbyterian University Center outlines a fruitful ministry

At the Presbytery of Florida's Jan. 28, 2012, Winter Stated Meeting, Bruce Chapman, campus minister at the Presbyterian University Center at Westminster House at Florida State University in Tallahassee, shared the following about PUC's ministry:

Fall 2011

By the numbers

- < PUC hosted 17 weekly Listening Point suppers and programs
- < PUC provided 928 meals
- < PUC's Calvin's Coffee House welcomed 4,250 visits
- < PUC hosted four Friday Music Nights attended by 250
- < 30 hours in Bible study groups were conducted
- < Students raised \$500 for Heifer International
- < Three FSU professors and instructors sited classes or other activities at Westminster House
- < 10 students performed a total of 50 hours' service for Tallahassee Presbyterians
- < Students made 17 visits to nine Presbyterian congregations in Florida and Georgia
- < 15 led six Lord's Day services in Presbyterian congregations
- < Calvin's Coffee House visitors and donations increased 100 percent since Spring 2011
- < The December 2011 *Presbyterians Today* featured Calvin's Coffee House
- < 614 students participated in six PUC events
- < PUC has 300+ Facebook friends
- < 12 Student Cabinet members learn, serve and lead together

Gatherings and opportunities

- < All-Out BBQ
- < Mid-term Study Hall



At left, John Calvin (a.k.a. Presbyterian University Center/ Florida State University student Louis bin-Hurtado, of Miami) accompanied PUC/FSU students who spoke at the Presbytery of Florida.

- < Weekly Listening Point supper programs
- < Music Nights at Calvin's
- < CROP Walk
- < Fall and spring retreats
- < Sunday worship visits
- < Service to others
- < Student Residency: "Live-Learn-Serve-Lead"
- < Westminster House Thanksgiving Feast
- < Bible study and prayers groups
- < Exam week study break breakfast
- < Christmas candlelight supper
- < College Conference at Montreat
- < Annual Presbyterian Campus Ministry Summit and Semi-Annual General Assembly

Other PUC facts

- < PC(USA) mission founded by Florida Presbyterians ca. 1929
- < PC(USA) Collegiate and Higher Education Ministries is a first-tier mission field

- < Only PC(USA) witness at FSU and PC(USA) facility closest to its campus
- < Since its construction in 1950, Westminster House has served as a home away from home for thousands of students – a Presbyterian community of faith, sharing a hospitable, secure, alternative space for grace
- < Scores of students and others from FSU and Tallahassee-area communities utilize Westminster House regularly.
- < Seven PUC/FSU graduates either now attend or have graduated from a Presbyterian seminary since 2002
- < Since 2003, 12 have been Presbyterian camp staff



Annual PW Gathering planned for March 17

The Presbytery of Florida Presbyterian Women invite all the women of the Presbytery to their annual gathering Saturday, March 17, 2012, at Lafayette Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee, located at 4220 E. Mahan Dr., Tallahassee. The event will begin with registration and coffee at 9 a.m. EDT, followed by worship at 10 a.m., and will feature greetings from PW Synod Moderator Mary Bell Streetman, as well as music, lunch, fellowship and a little business.

Contact PW Moderator Toya O'Hora at toyao@earthlink.net for additional information.



Presbytery installs, commissions at Jan. 28 winter stated meeting



Moderator installed

Shown at left, from left, incoming Presbytery of Florida Moderator Jean Norman, a ruling elder at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Pensacola, accepts the gavel from Retiring Moderator Rev. Huw Christopher, pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Marianna



Delegates to overseas presbytery commissioned

Shown above, from left, Presbytery of Florida Moderator Jean Norman conducts a service to commission Rev. Tae Ho Cheong, pastor at Pensacola Korean Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Joseph Chung, pastor at Korean First Presbyterian Church of Ft. Walton Beach. The two are travelling to South Korea March 5 - 22, 2012, to serve as delegates to Yeosu Presbytery.



Creation Stewards commissioned

Shown above, from left, Presbytery of Florida Moderator Jean Norman and Associate Executive Presbyter Jean Silva lead the commissioning of Terry Dye, ruling elder at Grace Presbyterian Church, and Kenneth Overholt, ruling elder at Northminster Presbyterian Church, Pensacola. Also commissioned but not present were Caleb Dick, youth elder, Navarre Presbyterian Church; Samantha Graves, deacon, Freeport Presbyterian Church; Dawn Merritt, ruling elder, First Presbyterian Church, Milton; Beckie Mooney, ruling elder, First Presbyterian Church, DeFuniak Springs; and Bill Trautvetter, ruling elder, Navarre Presbyterian Church.



Associate Executive Presbyter installed

Shown above, at left, Kevin Veldhuisen, flanked by Stated Clerk Stephen Yates, is installed in an ordained capacity as Associate Executive Presbyter for Outdoor Ministry and Spiritual Development, a position he has filled in a non-ordained capacity since 2010. Kevin was ordained as a teaching elder Nov. 20, 2011.

 A poster for Children's Day at Dogwood Acres. The background is a photo of a child on a swing in a wooded area. Text on the poster includes:

- Children's Day
- at Dogwood Acres
- Saturday, March 24
- 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. CT
- Kindergarten - 5th Grade
- Cost: \$5
- S'mores
- Hiking
- Parents Q&A
- Crater Time
- Lunch
- Fun Worship
- Land Swims

Register your child for
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www.dogwoodacres.org
 Online enrollment for
 Summer Camp 2012
 also is available
 WANTED: Qualified, energetic
 FT summer camp counselors E
 Application info
 on the website!

Stewardship of Creation Notes

Environmental theology is not unusual

By Pam McVety, *Presbytery of Florida Stewardship of Creation Enabler*

I awoke on “leap year day” to find an opinion piece in the *Tallahassee Democrat* entitled “Environmental Theology is Not Unusual,” by Larry B. Stammer, of the *Los Angeles Times*. Wow! Here it was for all to read – an overview of how deeply-rooted environmental theology is in the different denominations.

Unfortunately, all the good things Presbyterians are doing wasn't mentioned, but we were included in the list of Protestant groups, along with the Catholics, Jews, Evangelicals and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

In case you didn't see it, the article started out as a correction to statements by a political candidate, that “phony theology” drives radical environmentalists. The vast majority of the article was about the views of different religious groups, with a caveat that some people of faith don't consider environmentalism a part of their religion, while many environmentalists see their activism as deeply rooted in Scripture and faith traditions.

I see it a little differently. I see myself first as a person of faith who has come to recognize that the “mauling” of the natural world is at odds with the Biblical mandate to care for creation and to care for our neighbors. I see the ongoing and unrelenting damage to our waters, air and lands as incongruous with our long-term survival or God's mandates.

In Florida, our once-beautiful blue springs are now mostly green and sometimes slimy. Migrating mammals can hardly move around without getting hit by a car or boat – Think of panthers and manatees.

Most of our lakes and streams have health advisories because of



high mercury levels in the fish. The ramifications of this are shocking. One in six women of childbearing age in the U. S. has enough mercury in her blood to put her child at risk of developmental damage should she become pregnant. Exposure to over 80,000 synthetic chemicals daily is unavoidable, and these chemicals are linked to cancer, birth defects, learning disabilities and more. Our children are the most susceptible.

The list of threats is long and, as a rational person, a scientist and a person of faith, I know that this can't go on forever, so I seek answers and direction from my faith. And I struggle to discern what is important and where God is leading me.

After being involved with these issues for close to 40 years, I now believe that the paramount moral issue of the day is not about what is making the headlines, like abortion or gay marriages, but what we are doing to our children and their future as we expose them from fetus to adult to chemicals that kill and harm them.

The U.S. Catholics Bishops have said it best: “It is about the future of God's creation and the one human family. It is about protecting both the human environment and the natural environment. It is about human stewardship of God's creation and our responsibility to those who come after us.”

Need I say anything else, except that, although I read this on a day that comes only once every four years, the reality of the greening of our faiths is here to stay? Thanks be to God.



Conference for administrative personnel approaches

By Nancy Fine,
*Membership Chair, PC(USA)
Administrative Personnel
Association, Florida Region*

The deadline is nearing for your administrative staff to register for this year's Florida Region Administrative Personnel Association Conference in Sarasota May 16 – 20. Don't let this important educational opportunity for your valuable staff members pass.

Attending the conference will nurture your church employees both spiritually and educationally. They do not have to be Presbyterians to join the APA or attend the conference. Members of all faiths who want a deeper understanding of PCUSA issues and theology participate. The knowledge gained by joining and attending conferences will benefit them, their fellow staff members and congregation by allowing them to be more effective in their roles in your organization.

The APA improves the quality of professionalism in those offices that are generally the first contact with congregations, governing bodies and agencies for our denomination. It affirms the Ministry of the Lay Church Professional and recognizes the importance of efficient office procedures and competent personnel who strive for a deeper commitment and understanding of the issues and theology of our Church.

Visit the Florida Region website, www.floridaapa.org, or contact Florida Region APA President Barbara Prieto at 305-666-8586 or rivierachurch@bellsouth.net to learn more. APA benefits of networking, classes and friendship will, in turn, benefit you and your congregation.

