



Volume 1: Issue 2

October 2011

## **THE HARVEST**

### **Your Mission Dollars at Work**



*"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9 (NIV)*

#### **MISSION AND PER CAPITA GIVING - MAKING MINISTRY AND MISSION POSSIBLE**

Rev. Craig Palmer, Interim Executive Presbyter



What captures your attention when you hear the news, read an online news source, watch network news or The Colbert Report or The Daily Show, or scan the front page of the paper? Most often the headlines capturing our attention focus on the difficulties in the world and our perceived limitations for a response. We focus on issues of disagreement and allow the amazing opportunities for witness and mission to pass us by.

Support for the opportunities of witness and mission in our congregations is the primary focus of the members of our Mission Council, committees and ministry teams. Our annual budget is about one million dollars with most of that coming from your mission and per capita dollars and about half of the budget covers our personnel and office costs. I offer my thanks to sessions and pastors choosing to support this presbytery through your mission and per capita dollars.

Examples of your money at work:

- New church developments, immigrant fellowships and congregations pursuing redevelopment supported by the Congregational Development Ministry Team members and staff.
- Preparation of candidates preparing to serve as pastors supported by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry members and staff.
- The summer program and retreat opportunities at our Mound Ridge Retreat Center along the banks of the Meramec River Camp with leadership offered by members and staff of the Camp and Conference Ministry Team.
- Congregations during changes in pastoral leadership (such as mission studies, pastor nominating committees) supported by members and staff of Congregational Development Ministry Team and Committee on Ministry.
- Committee members and staff working with congregations in conflict whether it is between the pastor or pastors and congregation or within the congregation.

I encourage and invite the 26 congregations that choose not to give general mission dollars and the 22 congregations that choose not to give per capita dollars to reconsider those decisions as we move to the end of 2011 and move into 2012.

## Shaping Our Future Design Team—Rev. Kim Skilling



As a child, stuck inside on a rainy day, I remember staring out the window watching the patterns of the rain on the glass. I would follow the track of the drops and wonder which would reach the bottom first. As I watched, sometimes a rivulet would veer in a new direction, join another drop, gather momentum and race ahead.

When I read a recent entry by Tod Bolsinger on the Middle Governing Bodies Commission blog (<http://pcusa.org.typepad.com/mgbcomm/>), I realized that, as part of the Design Team, I was engaged in a variation on this childhood activity. Bolsinger, referencing the opening words of Calvin's *Institutes*, reflects that "Calvin writes of the 'knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves' as like 'rivulets' that lead to the 'spring' of wisdom." For the last year, the Design Team has been watching the rivulets of the knowledge of God through scripture, study and prayer.

We have also followed rivulets of the knowledge of ourselves through conversations with congregations, ministry teams, staff and presbytery commissioners. Often the rivulets run parallel to each other. But sometimes they have diverged while at other times they have surprised us by converging and challenging us to consider something new. What we are currently seeking is to discern which are gathering into streams that we can follow to the spring of wisdom as together with the Mission Council we make recommendations regarding the purpose and structure of our presbytery.

If you are curious about the rivulets we have been watching, much of what we have heard can be found on the Design Team page of the presbytery website. There is also a link that will allow you to contact the team with questions, concerns or suggestions. We would also covet your prayers that we will follow the right streams as we seek God's wisdom for the future of our Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery.

## Thoughts From the Moderator Rev. Chris Keating



Serving as moderator has given me a unique perspective on our Presbytery, allowing me to see the challenges and opportunities before us as we participate in God's mission together. I've seen that mission come alive during services of installation, commissioning, and ordination of new leaders in congregations. I've seen it as we worship and pray together. These are moments when the work of Presbytery becomes visible to those gathered. Together we give witness to Elijah Parish Lovejoy's prophetic proclamations and Salmon Giddings' evangelical fervor. We see how God is up to something new among us.

As your moderator, it has been my privilege to listen to the struggles many have with aspects of our ministry together and with the church in general. For some the pace of change is too slow, while others are confused and hurt. Yet I also hear our brothers and sisters speak of deep yearnings for new connections and lasting relationships. We long to work together. I am encouraged to hear colleagues of differing theological perspectives share stories of how they were called to ministry. And then I remember the promise to Mary that "nothing will be impossible with God."

God calls us to move forward in ministry together. Like the rivers that surround our Presbytery, there is a current of mission that runs deep and strong. It is my prayer that we will seize this new day that God gives us, remaining confident of Christ's abundant gifts to the church.

## The New Form of Government Rev. Terry Epling, Stated Clerk



The church made big changes to the *Book of Order* this year. We added an entirely new section, *Foundations of Presbyterian Polity*. This is a great resource for basic Presbyterian education with new members, elders, deacons, and confirmation classes. The *Form of Government* was rewritten for better organization and fewer regulations. You probably noticed that there is some new language to get used to, for example, "councils" replace "governing bodies," but we'll get there.

Overall the new constitution is built on the basic Christian assumptions that Jesus Christ is the head of the church, the congregation is the basic form of the church, and the other parts of the church exist to support the congregation in living out God's mission in the world. That's a great place to begin as we rethink denomination and presbytery!

It will take some time to live into being the church in the ways envisioned by the new constitution. It is time well spent if it helps to refocus our ministries on the future to which God is calling us. As always I am available to assist you in interpreting the constitution and putting its principles into practice in your ministry.

# Per Capita

## What is per capita?

*Per capita is an opportunity for all communicant members of the Presbyterian church through the governing bodies to participate equally, responsibly, and interdependently by sharing the cost of coordination and evaluation of mission; and of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed Church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians.* (GA Minutes, Part I, 1995)

Presbyterians have used per capita apportionment for over 150 years to mutually share the costs of coming together to discern where God is leading us. The discernment process includes questions such as:

*How's the best way to be a church today?*

*How do we find and train effective leaders?*

*How do we embody the richness of a multicultural world?*

2012 Per Capita	
General Assembly	\$ 6.63
Synod	\$ 2.72
Presbytery	<u>\$17.90</u>
Total	\$27.25

The following statements respond to the question "What is per capita?"

**Per capita** funding is how Presbyterians mutually share the costs of coming together to discern the Spirit's leading for the future.

**Per capita** is how Presbyterians are trained to become better elders and ministers.

**Per capita** is how Presbyterians discern God's call in their lives.

**Per capita** is how Presbyterians participate in the life of the wider church by serving on GA committees and commissions.

**Per capita** is how Presbyterians participate in the life of the Church universal as we commit ourselves to work and live in fellowship with "all persons in every nation" (*Book of Order*, G-4.0101) The Westminster Confession says, "all believers, are therefore, under obligation to sustain the ordinances of the Christian religion where they are already established, and to contribute by their prayers, gifts, and personal efforts to the extension of the Kingdom of God throughout the whole earth" (6.058).

**Per capita** is a fundamental way in which all of the nearly 11,000 congregations and governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are connected and participate in the work of the wider church. Because it is rooted in the connectional and covenantal nature of the Presbyterian church, as affirmed by the ordination vows taken by elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, per capita could be called the Presbyterian Covenant Community Fund.

### Stewardship Network Team



Standing: Joan Marshall, Zeke Jabusch  
Seated: Liz Kanerva, David Marshall, Jim Madson,  
Saundy Templeton  
Not Shown: Mark Templeton

### Now is the Time ...

- To submit your 2012 Mission Pledge to the Presbytery
- To look for helpful information on the Presbytery Stewardship Network Blog on the Presbytery website: [www.glpby.org](http://www.glpby.org)
- To remit your Peacemaking Offering to Presbytery retaining 25% for congregational peacemaking efforts.
- To promote the Christmas Joy Offering on Sunday, December 18, 2011
- To watch for the next issue of The Harvest in which Leadership in Ministry will be featured.
- Use the last page of this newsletter for your 2011 special offering planning.



# Special Offerings



## SUPPORT PRESBYTERIAN MISSION YEAR-AROUND THROUGH 2011—2012 SPECIAL OFFERINGS

*In believing*

*We care;*

*In caring*

*We share;*

*In sharing*

*We are a blessing*

*To all*

Special Offering Dates  
2011

**Christmas Joy Offering  
December 18**

Special Offering Dates

2012

One Great Hour of Sharing.....April 8  
Pentecost Offering.....May 27  
Peacemaking Offering.....October 7  
Christmas Joy Offering.....December 23



### Christmas Joy Offering

[www.pcusa.org/cjoyoffering](http://www.pcusa.org/cjoyoffering)

**Offering Distribution:**

- 50%: Assistance programs of the Board of Pensions
- 50%: Racial ethnic schools and colleges of the PC(USA)

Standing Orders Received: October

Offering Received: Sunday before Christmas

**December 18, 2011 December 23, 2012**



### Peacemaking Offering

[www.pcusa.org/peacemakingoffering](http://www.pcusa.org/peacemakingoffering)

**Offering Distribution:**

- 25%: Congregational peacemaking ministries
- 25%: Presbytery and synod peacemaking efforts
- 50%: Presbyterian Peacemaking ministries of the General Assembly Mission Council

Standing Orders Received: May

Offering Received: World Communion Sunday

**October 7, 2012**



### Pentecost Offering

[www.pcusa.org/pentecost](http://www.pcusa.org/pentecost)

**Offering Distribution:**

- 40%: Congregational ministries with children at risk
- 50%: General Assembly ministries with youth and young adults
- 10%: Child advocacy at the national level

Standing Orders Received: March

Offering received: Pentecost Sunday, May 27, 2012



### One Great Hour of Sharing

[www.pcusa.org/oghs](http://www.pcusa.org/oghs)

**Offering Distribution:**

- 36%: Presbyterian Hunger Program
- 32%: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
- 32%: Self-Development of People

Standing Orders Received: January

2012 offering received during lent, especially on Palm Sunday (April 1) and Easter (April 8)