



**HARD COPY—**  
*E-news that's jumped off line!*

**Report to GA completed**—Our report to the 218th General Assembly (2008) is completed. Along with our recommendations to the assembly, the report contains a proposed new section to the Book of Order entitled, "Foundations of Presbyterian Polity;" our proposed revision of the Form of Government; and a proposed "Advisory Handbook for Councils for the Development of Policies and Procedures Required by the Form of Government." The complete report, along with a new study guide for the final report and other resource materials, is on our Web site at [www.pcusa.org/formofgovernment](http://www.pcusa.org/formofgovernment). We remain deeply grateful for the large response we received from across the church that helped to shape our final report and recommendations.

**The Missional Vision**—Put aside these Fridays—April 4, 11, 18, and 25 from 9 a.m. until noon at the Lancaster Theological Seminary. The Rev. Tony Sundermeier and the Rev. Dr. Bruce Epperly are teaming up to bring a continuing education course on Forming the Missional Vision, Preaching the Missional Vision, Equipping for the Missional Vision, and Living the Missional Vision! Don't miss this exciting opportunity!

**Mission to Honduras**—February 24-March 1, 2008, there will be a medical and clothing mission trip to Honduras. Cost is \$1,250 and includes all but a few meals. Travel with Steve Mentzer to the Southern Region of Honduras where we will work in several rural villages and worship with our Presbyterian Friends. For more information see: [www.missiontrav.com](http://www.missiontrav.com) or call Steve at 717-299-4942.

**Presbytery Committee/Department Orientation and Welcome to the Work!**—To be held Sunday, January 27, 2008, from 2 p.m.-5 p.m. at Bellevue Presbyterian Church. This Orientation Training will be valuable to you who are already serving on a department, division, or committee as well as new members. The first part will include an overview of how the presbytery functions including how budget, mission, and other factors affect the overall operation of the presbytery. Led by the Rev. Charles W. Gross, Jr., Acting Executive Presbyter, the training will begin with tips on how to run a great meeting and the latest techniques in conference calling, phone blogging, getting a consensus, and more. Register with Kathy Bartels at [kathy@donegalpy.com](mailto:kathy@donegalpy.com) or by phone: 717-392-4035!

**What a cool way to support our camp!**—You can throw Camp Donegal a penny each time you search the Internet. Start using [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) for your search engine (before going directly to Google), and put in "The Presbytery of Donegal" in the "beneficiary" line before you start using it, and you'll be tossing the camp a penny every time you search. Give it a try!

**Want to raise the bar in stewardship?**—Consider the Presbyterian Stewardship Conference on March 10-12, 2008 at Ft. Worth, TX. Go to: [www.synodsun.com/stewardship/](http://www.synodsun.com/stewardship/) for registration information. The Presbytery office has registration brochures. Call Kathy to have one sent to you.

**Fair Trade Products Online**—Check out this site for fair trade products to aid our Christian brothers and sisters in Palestine. Go to [www.pcusa.org/worldwide/israelpalestine/products](http://www.pcusa.org/worldwide/israelpalestine/products) on the PC(USA)

Web site at [www.pcusa.org/](http://www.pcusa.org/).

**Download Classes with iTunesU**—iTunes has a new category! It's iTunesU—the iTunes university. Available for download are lectures and courses from many excellent colleges. Charlie Gross has checked out the Reformed Theological Seminary link and found many courses free for the downloading! Crank up your computer and your brain. Or, if you have an iPod, you can download them to that device. Charlie recommends some excellent lectures on "The Calvin You Never Knew!" Thanks to Michael Wilson for pointing this out!

**Presbyterian Endowment Education & Resource Network Workshop**—This will be held at the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, 625 Montgomery Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA on Saturday, January 26, 2008, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Come learn how your church can enhance and develop its ministry through an endowment program. This conference is for the church considering creating an endowment program and for the church wanting to revitalize or enhance its endowment program. Cost is \$50 per person. Go to [www.peernetwork.org](http://www.peernetwork.org) for more details and registration information. Special benefits will include:

- Separate tracks for churches at different levels in growing their endowment program (registration survey provided to guide in track selection)
- Worship on theology of stewardship
- Plenary on stewardship
- Networking & roundtable discussions during lunch
- Individual, professional consult before leaving conference to determine plan of action for your church

**Update: Washington, D.C., Nov 27, 2007**—The Internal Revenue Service today issued the 2008 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical, or moving purposes. As of January 1, 2008, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (including vans, pickups or panel trucks) are:

- 50.5 cents per mile for business miles driven;
- 19 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes; and
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations.



**For Sale**

Bob LaForce (Stewartstown) has for sale two Bruno stair lifts for the handicapped. One is for four steps, and the other for 12, but it has an extension so it can be made even longer. We are asking \$2000 for the shorter one (virtually brand new) and \$1,000 for the longer one (older, but works fine). Call Bob at 717-993-2553.

# DONEGAL *Dialogue*

JANUARY 2008

VOL. XLV

NO. 1

## Happy New Year!

*By Charlie Gross,  
Associate Executive Presbyter*

Happy Ambitious New Year! Your Council decided to make 2008 The Year of World Mission! During 2008, we will be studying the world from the perspective of what God is doing through us and in spite of us. We will be examining mission efforts, mission results, and mission perspectives from many different angles. It will be a great year to re-engage with our great ends of the church: the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world. There will be presentations, preaching workshops, mission trips, seminars, poster sessions, and other opportunities offered throughout the year—all designed to raise the bar of your ministry! Together, as the corporate body of Christ, we are stronger and more effective than when we are separate and individual. I am looking forward to learning from you and hearing about the work that God's Spirit is doing in your midst! Enter the dialogue!

Another important part of our year will be a self examination of The Presbytery of Donegal. Assisting us in this introspection will be our transition consultant, the Rev. Dr. John Sharick, and our outstanding transition team, led by the Rev. Dr. Judd McConnell. In January or February, you will be invited into a holy conversation with this team. Watch for more details or visit the Website: [www.presbyteryofdonegalintransition.org](http://www.presbyteryofdonegalintransition.org).

Finally, this year is the 50th year of ministry at Camp Donegal. Our goal is to imprint Jesus Christ on 500 campers this summer. Help us change the world through the love of Jesus Christ. As you can see, this will be a very ambitious new year. Thank you for your personal ministry. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve Jesus Christ beside you!

*P.S. To make this periodical more of a dialogue, please visit: <http://donegalpresbytery.blogspot.com/> and register your response. Or, call: 214-615-6431. Enter pin: 168-049-813 and #, select 1 to record and publish, select account 1000 and #. Then, just follow the instructions to record your message and hit # to end. Or, you could write to us at: Donegal Dialogue, P.O. Box 10054, Lancaster, PA 17605-0054.*

## Let's get connected!

*A Moment with our Moderator,  
by Gail Benjamin*

I have been pondering the meaning of a "connectional" church and how it applies to the Presbyterian Church. What makes our connection different from that of other denominations? I sought responses from several people. They differed, of course, because "connectional" means different things to different people. The "gist" of the answers was that we are connected through a constitution (Book of Order and Book of Confessions), common polity, missions, and ministry. We are accountable to each other through sessions, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly. This accountability works to build up the body of Christ through nurture, guidance, and correction—all of which Christ has instructed us to do.

We may not be very different from other denominations, but I think one of our strengths is that of regularly meeting together, especially at Presbytery. These gatherings are our opportunity for people to grow together, to dream together, plan together, understand each other, and grow in love for each other. If we were a stand-alone church, we could not appreciate as well, our place in God's plan of integration for His church. He does not want us to be independent, but to be dependent upon and accountable to Him. However, we cannot sense His mission for this denomination, if we do not attend presbytery, and if we do not share materials, talents, and time together. We cannot appreciate each other if we do not visit each other, eat together, and share communion. It would be my prayer that we encourage more of our people to attend Presbytery as often as possible—especially our lay people—so they can see the "bigger picture."

One of our first-time attending commissioners last month said she was surprised at how pleasant everyone had been to her—how free and relaxed the give and take of debate, disagreements, etc. had been. And she was pleased. Wouldn't it be good if all our people could learn that for themselves; to come and make some "connections" of their own?

## Our sincere condolences...

...to the family and friends of the Rev. C. Harold Brackbill, H.R., who died on Thursday, December 13, 2007, at the age of 89. He was Pastor Emeritus of the Jamesburg Presbyterian Church in Jamesburg, NJ, Presbytery of Monmouth, where he served as Pastor from 1957 to 1984, when he retired. A Service of Resurrection was held on Tuesday, December 18, at 11:00 a.m. at the Leacock Presbyterian Church.

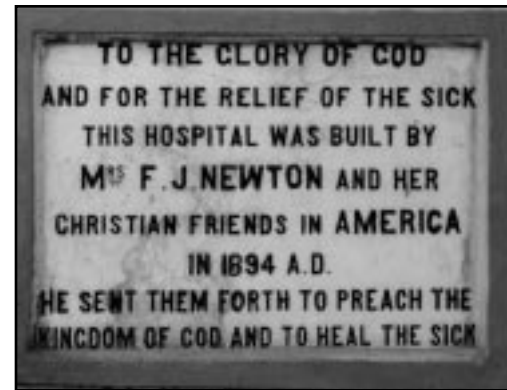
# MISSION: Far Away, but Not So Long Ago

by Jim Caldwell

God uses His people, their prayers, and their money to accomplish what we call MISSION.

In 1991, Paoli Presbyterian Church took on a large PCUSA Bicentennial Fund project—to help three churches of North India hospitals. One of these was Frances Newton Hospital, located in Punjab state, only a half-dozen miles from India's border with Pakistan.

The hospital was founded in 1894 by Frances Newton, the wife of Presbyterian missionary the Rev. Francis Newton. Mrs. Newton was from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. The photo shows the inscription on a restored commemorative stone in the wall of one of the hospital buildings.



The oldest hospital building, still in use, was built in 1894. The newest buildings, including the one shown below were built in 1951.

Paoli PC's gifts for the three hospitals were

sent, through PCUSA channels, from 1992 through 1994, so Paoli PC's 1995 mission trip was to visit the three hospitals. During our four days at Frances Newton Hospital, our team of ten was impacted by the situation of that outpost for Christ in a number of ways.

Firozpur is a military city, home to two Divisions of India's Army, and the hospital is within range of Pakistan's artillery. The hospital's auditorium is in a basement. Above the door to it are two signs. The small sign reads, "AUDITORIUM"; the larger sign reads, "BOMB SHELTER." Yet, as soon as we entered the walled hospital compound, we felt a definite sense of peace—the peace of God's presence there!

The hospital provided the only health care to at least a half-dozen tiny, dirt-poor agricultural villages in the area. The hospital's sizeable nursing and lab technician schools are places where Christians can learn job skills and receive qualifications in a region where Christians have few decent job opportunities.

Our final evening there, our team gathered in the living room of the hospital's Superintendent, Dr. Richard David. He explained the hospital's plight: Three doctors, who had been on the staff for several years, had left a few months before and had started their own private hospital, just down the street. Since then, many whom they had treated at Frances Newton had gone to that new hospital. Without the income from paying patients, care for those who could not pay would have to cease. The hospital was in real danger of having to close in the near

future—the fate of 80% of former mission hospitals in North India.

Then Dr. David put forth a solution: If the hospital could get two doctors to come there, a surgeon and an obstetrician who had both experience and credentials in their specialties, there was hope that financial viability could be regained. The obstetrician would have to be a woman, for cultural reasons; and this time, they should both be Christians.

Even if such doctors could be found, and they would be willing to come, there was one more need—the means to pay them! Was it possible that Paoli Presbyterian Church might be able to cover the cost of \$350 per month for each doctor, for two years? If, in two years, the hospital was still not solvent, it probably would have to close. In any case, they would not ask us to extend help beyond the two years.

Our team members seated around the room, prayed—one by one. Soon after we arrived home, we discovered that our prayers were answered as God had stepped in! A letter from an excited Dr. David told the story: Less than one week from the night we prayed, he had been surprised by a phone call from a couple, both doctors. They felt God wanted them to come to Frances Newton Hospital! The husband was a credentialed surgeon and the wife a credentialed obstetrician, with ten and seven years experience respectively—exactly what was needed! And they were Christians! Dr. David had spoken with them eighteen months prior, but they had not been the least interested at that time. What had caused them to call now? Dr. David knew—"It was a miracle of God," he wrote, "because of your prayers that night."

The excitement of our team members, as they told about this



miracle moved a Mission Committee member to make an offer, "I'll give the \$4,200 per year for two years for one doctor, if the Mission Committee can find the same amount for the other doctor." They did.

The hospital did recover and has moved forward, adding new kinds of surgery to their offerings. Those two

Christian doctors are still there, but perhaps the most significant effect was on Dr. David. That miracle galvanized him! He was filled with hope and confidence. Instead of working for God, he now knew he was working with God! He had been shown unmistakably that the hospital was in God's eye, in God's plans, and in God's will.

Jesus said (John 15:16, NRSV), "... I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name." We had, and God had! All praise to Him!

*Jim Caldwell was Associate Pastor of Outreach Ministries at Paoli PC from 1990 until retirement in 2001. Since then, he and Lois have been part-time staff of World Mission Initiative, the MISSION ministry of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.*

# The Donegal Digest

**Bellevue (W. Davies, Jr.)**—"Christmas Craze" is a program the church does in conjunction with Grace Presbyterian. Among the many activities available for youth are a photo scavenger hunt, Karaoke, and a "Pollyanna."

**Bethany (L. Kelsey)**—On the first Sunday in December, the church gathers for an Advent dinner. The Presbyterian Women cook a roast turkey with fixings, rolls, and beverages and members bring salads, vegetables, and desserts. Each family brings a dish large enough to serve ten. A hymn sing follows the dinner that begins preparations to celebrate Christ's birth.

**Centre (J. Biller)**—The Presbyterian Women of Centre undertake each Christmas to support the women and children at Access York. They set up a "Slipper Tree" to collect donations for slippers and personal items, such as toothbrushes, deodorant, and shampoo.

**Covenant (Dr. J. Moyer)**—Advent activities include a number of events, beginning December 1 and occurring almost weekly throughout advent. A covered dish dinner, concert for the Christ child, and special Christmas eve services are all part of the festivities.

**First, Mount Joy (Dr. R. Burns)**—December's Bible Quiz offered 15 fill-in-the-blanks questions for members and friends. Beginning with the angel's message to the shepherds about the "good news," the quiz highlights portions of scripture that relate to the good news of the gospels.

**First, West Chester (Dr. W. Hess)**—Many churches have begun to use cards—business size or a little larger—to remind people of the times and dates of services and programs. First has responded to the busy lives of their members and friends by providing cards with Christmas Eve service information to help members schedule their

Christmas Eve and reach out to friends with the news of activities at First. **First, York (Dr. J. Morgan)**—A special Christmas Eve program was held at 5:00 p.m. It harkened back to the days of yesteryear before television specials were a common part of the Christmas season. The program highlighted how Christmas was celebrated in the past, and culminated in the timeless story of the birth of the Christ child.

**Highland (W. Jackson, Interim)**—In the middle of December, the church treated Brethren Village to strolling Christmas caroling. After entertaining the residents there, the singers gathered at a member's home to enjoy dessert and fellowship. On December 7, the church hosted the *Peter Mayer Stars and Promises* concert with proceeds benefitting the Highland Family Ministry Committee.

**Paoli (Dr. J. P. Vaughn)**—To harness the many events of Advent happening at the church, Paoli produced a brochure. It is six, "red" pages detailing Advent observations with dates and times of activities. Bible studies, special meals, services of celebration, and a New Year's Day worship service are among the listed events. Among these activities was a "Gift of the Presence" service. This is a special worship service focused on remembering loved ones who are no longer with us to celebrate during this joyous time.

**Slateville (C. Curley)**—The church has been blessed with another mission project. They are helping to mend clothing for the Nazarene Distribution Center. This is a national collection center that receives and ships clothing, crisis care kits, medical supplies, and school paks. So far, the ladies of Slateville have mended seven trash bags of items to be shipped.

## Establishing a Gifts-based Ministry Here's how you can do it at YOUR church! By Gary ArnTessoni

This is the usual scenario: Fall Sunday school is about to start, and First Church needs a Sunday school teacher for the Middle School class. They are on a hunt for anyone who would be willing to fill the vacancy—the truth is, at this point, anyone would do—as long as the position is filled. We all know what this is like, I call it the "Warm body syndrome"—basically any "warm body" will do. While this method may lead to having someone in place, there are also many problems that result. Wouldn't it be so much better to find someone who is passionate and gifted in that area?

At Westminster, West Chester, we are leading the members of our congregation in discovering and employing their Spiritual Gifts in ministry. This is an ancient concept—seen clearly in the New Testament (see 1 Corinthians 12-14, and Ephesians 4). In 1 Corinthians, Paul points out that the Body of Christ is organized by the Holy Spirit. In setting up the church, God gave spiritual gifts to the members of the Body to accomplish the ministries they were called to do.

Here is what we do at Westminster:

### Step 1: Complete A Spiritual Gifts Assessment

We have people take a spiritual gifts assessment. Either on-line (for example the Evangelical Lutheran Church has one at <http://www.elca.org/evangelism/assessments/spiritgifts.html>), or they can take the assessment that we have developed (Our assessment will be on-line in January 2008 and you are welcome to use it on our Web site

[www.westminsterpc.org](http://www.westminsterpc.org).)

### Step 2: Discuss The Assessment Results With A Coach

We have trained staff and lay leaders to help people discern the results of their assessment. The coach's job is to help the member clarify what he or she has learned in the assessment. Coaches also have knowledge of the church's current ministries needs, so the member comes away with 2 or 3 ministry areas to research and explore.

### Step 3: Experimenting With Your Gifts

Upon completing the coaching session, the member contacts the ministry leader in the area they would like to serve and "tries on" some ministries. It is important to create an environment where people can say "no" to something that is not a good fit. During this time of exploration the coach is in contact with the member until they find a place to get involved.

Basically, that's how the process works, and the beauty of it is that it works in large and small churches alike. The benefits of a gift based ministry are many: spiritual growth, renewed purpose, and satisfaction in the lives of those involved. As each member ministers through their God-given gifts, the church is built up, unified, and empowered to be God's people, to bless God, each other, and the world.

For help with establishing a gift based approach to ministry at your church, please feel free to contact Gary ArnTessoni at [gartessoni@westminsterpc.org](mailto:gartessoni@westminsterpc.org)