



The Presbytery of San José NEWSLETTER

News of Presbyterians in San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and Monterey

Vol 24, No 3
May, 2004

From the Interim Executive....

CALENDAR

Saturday, June 5
Meeting of Presbytery at
San José First Church
49 N. First St. 9 am-1 pm

June 26—July 3
216th General Assembly
Richmond, Virginia

August 15—20
Companions Retreat
Zephyr Point, Lake Tahoe
Contact 415 664 2543



PENTECOST

Pentecost Sunday, May 30,
is an amazing, life-giving
day in the community of
faith. At Pentecost, we cele-
brate the coming of the
Holy Spirit to transform
human life and all of crea-
tion. Through participation
in the Pentecost Offering
we take part in bringing the
transforming love of God to
those in need, especially to
children at risk, youth, and
young adults.

Many years ago, I was hired in my first position as a Director of Christian Education. The second day at work a minister colleague with whom I had worked on a presbytery committee, phoned and said, "If you are going to be in a leadership position in a church in this denomination you should expect to attend presbytery meetings. You should expect to be there at the beginning and stay till the end. This is how you will learn how the wider church functions." He graciously offered to take me to the next presbytery meeting and to interpret the unfamiliar parts of the meeting. I have always been grateful for his wise and thoughtful counsel and also for the pastor and session of the church where I worked because they, too, honored the connectional nature of our church and encouraged me to attend.

I am very concerned about the low attendance at meetings of the Presbytery of San José. Some of you arrive late, or leave early or both and there are some of you I've never seen at a presbytery meeting.

Are Presbytery meetings always interesting or exciting? Of course not! Will presbytery meetings bring forth the kingdom of God? I doubt it. Probably session meetings are neither of those things either. The presbytery gathers to worship and to conduct the business of that governing body required by the constitution. Are

we as ministers and elders supposed to be there? Yes! At the risk of sounding like a scolding mother, I wonder "Is it too much to ask that we set aside a few hours every 2 or 3 months to honor that vow to which we all gave assent, to serve in the governing bodies of the church"? There are so many demands on our time and energy and it always seems as if we need days with more hours and weeks with more days but 5 meetings a year is not an unmanageable commitment—is it?

At our April Presbytery meeting we heard of the many innovative and exciting ways churches in our presbytery are seeking to serve Jesus Christ in their respective communities. Raymond Chao and Jeff Vamos shared their faith stories and two of our candidates, Alison Harrington and Stephanie Downey showed us the quality of leadership we can expect in the future church—a very hopeful sign.

We worshipped together, celebrated the Lord's Supper, and then enjoyed fellowship around the table as we ate the delicious Taiwanese food provided by our host church.

I look forward to seeing many more of you at the June meeting.

Blessings,

Jane

OUR VISION

Called by God as a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (USA) the Presbytery of San José exists to serve and be a resource for the health and growth of the Presbyterian congregations within our four counties.

Our Vision is:

- To support our congregations in reaching out to all people in the name of Jesus Christ;
- To challenge a diverse community to hold fast to the foundations of our faith;
- To build a diverse community unified by the unique gifts of the Holy Spirit for the great work of the church.

We call upon God's grace and help for the fulfillment of this vision.

Office on the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

March 24, 2004

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We have been at war in Iraq for a year now. Close to 11,000 Iraqis have been killed. Nearly 600 United States servicemen and women have died in the hostilities; another 3,000 have been injured. We ask you to join us in continued prayers for those who are impacted by war, those who are serving in the military, and those in positions of authority.

Over the past same year, we cannot help but notice that 28,000 Americans have died and 84,000 have been injured at the barrel of a gun here at home. Unfortunately, this is nothing new for us. We have lost 28,000 to 35,000 people to gun violence every year since the sixties. In fact, many more Americans have died from gun violence in our own land in peacetime than have been killed in all of our wars since 1775.

We are writing to you about this issue in general because of our ongoing concern that gun violence is claiming the lives of eighty people every day, of which ten percent are children and teens. We are also writing to you specifically because it appears that the U.S. Congress is planning to let the current ban on assault weapons expire this coming September without the issue coming to a vote.

Several groups across the country are rallying to ask Congress to renew the ban. One of them, the sponsor of the Million Mom March, is holding a Mother's Day "Halt the Assault Weekend," May 8-10, in Washington, DC. The march is not to take away anyone's hunting privileges or the opportunity to own a gun. The effort is to call on Congress to renew and strengthen the assault weapons ban; hold gun manufacturers accountable for their products; require background checks on all gun purchases; and incorporate safety standards into gun designs. For more information on the march go to www.mmm2004.com.

Since 1968, Presbyterians have frequently spoken in favor of gun control through actions of General Assemblies. Most recently, the 212th General Assembly (2000) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirmed the church's commitment to gun control, citing the escalating crises of gun violence in our society taking place in schools, work places, childcare centers, and private homes. The resolution also called for the reissuing of previous study papers and for strengthening gun ownership legislation.

A compilation of public policy statements of the PC(USA) on gun control is available by calling 800-524-2612 and asking for PDS #72-620-02-706. Additional resources are available online at www.pcusa.org/criminaljustice.

Presbyterians believe that God made the world so that all God's children could learn the ways of peace and live in loving and peaceful communities. May it be so.

In the name of the Prince of Peace.

Susan R Andrews
Moderator, 215th General Assembly (2003)

Clifton Kirkpatrick
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

FROM THE PRESBYTERY MODERATOR

“SPEAK OUT”

Those of you who have attended a General Assembly are probably familiar with the fifteen-minute period called a “Speak Out.” My first experience of one came at the Moderators’ Conference I attended in Louisville this past January. I was impressed with what was shared by other Moderator’s in the one-minute each was allowed. I came back wanting to try this during our Presbytery meetings and at the April meeting we did just that. Speakers were asked to comment on something new and exciting happening in their churches. It went so well that at the June meeting we will “Speak Out” on another topic.



Executive. Mel Goertz is chairing this committee that is in the process of developing a survey instrument that will be sent to all parish and non-parish clergy. The survey will be supplemented with on-site interviews/discussions with Sessions at each church, hopefully involving the pastoral staff, Clerks of Session, and other church members who have been or are active in Presbytery affairs. They will be working carefully to not exclude anyone appropriate to the process, e.g., past and current moderators, Presbytery staff. They hope to have an announcement of their progress at the June 5 Presbytery meeting.

So, if given the opportunity to “Speak Out”, do it!

Grace and Peace to you all,

Claudia Hamm

You may have another opportunity to “Speak Out” to the Presbytery’s Mission Study Committee that has been appointed by Council to gather information about our Presbytery prior to the beginning of the search for our new Presbytery

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS!

Immanuel Presbyterian Church

3675 Payne Ave, San José

will celebrate their **40th Anniversary** and Pentecost on Sunday, June 6th. Worship is at 9:30 am followed by lunch (\$13.50 per person). Please come and join us as we remember this important time in the life of our church
408 244 5298

<http://www.immanuel.org>

West Valley Presbyterian Church

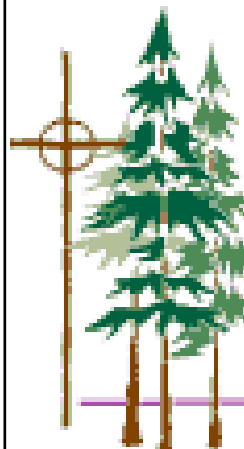
6191 Bollinger Road, Cupertino

will **celebrate 50 years** of Jesus ministry in their midst with events including Celebration Worship during the weekend beginning May 21. July 11th is Anniversary Sunday with worship followed by a picnic for members, past-members, friends and families.
408 252 1365

<http://www.wvpc.org>

WESTMINSTER WOODS SUMMER CAMP

Westminster Woods is still taking registrations. Two new programs which focus on exploring and stewarding God’s creation; Jr. Explorers for 4-6 grade campers, and Discovery Camp for Junior High campers. New also is Service and Leadership Training (SALT) for Senior-Hi students seeking a growth experience in their faith. In addition to living and studying in a Christian community for 3 weeks, SALT campers will receive First Aid and CPR training and certification. They will also choose between training for Life-guard certification, Challenge Course, or Crafts/Archery.



For more information, go to www.westminsterwoods.org or call (707) 874-2426.

JUNE PRESBYTERY MEETING

Marjorie Thompson, featured speaker
Reformed Spirituality

As part of our continuing series of presentations on spirituality and spiritual formation, the Task Force on Spirituality, Nurture, and Discipleship (formerly the Spirituality, Discipleship, and Theology Committee), with the collaboration of Soul Work Studio, is pleased to bring Marjorie Thompson to the Presbytery in June. Ms. Thompson is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. She serves as director of the Pathways Center for Spiritual Leadership and as spiritual director to Companions in Christ. She is also author of *Family: The Forming Center* and *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*.

Marjorie will bring us a Reformed perspective on spirituality and spiritual disciplines, reminding us that our own faith tradition has a rich and strong history of spiritual practice. Previous speakers in this series over the years have included Basil Pennington (on contemplation), Chuck Olsen (on worshipful work), and Thomas Keating (on centering prayer).



216th General Assembly

That All May Have Life in Fullness

Richmond, Virginia
June 26-July 3, 2004

Commissioners elected by San José Presbytery are Rev. Kim Nelson and Elder Jim Tennyson. Elder Diana Lim and Rev. Ron McHattie will also attend as elected alternates for 2004 and Commissioners for the 217th General Assembly to be held in 2006.

Others; observers or casual visitors to the Assembly, are encouraged to contact Administrative Assistant Beverly Raynes 408 279 0220 x304 or beverly@sanjosepby.org

SERVING YOU THROUGH THE PRESBYTERY OF SAN JOSE

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