



Volume 22 • Issue 1 • Spring 2012



The Racial Ethnic TORCH



**Grow, Transform,
Empower, Lead,
and Develop**



The Racial Ethnic TORCH

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A message from the director, Rhashell D. Hunter

The 220th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) convenes in Pittsburgh on Saturday, June 30, and concludes on Saturday, July 7, 2012. Several items of committee business seem to be converging this year as part of a strategy from various segments of the church to grow diverse new worshiping communities, develop transformative church leaders, partner with young adults, and realign and renew funding streams for ministry in the PC(USA).

General Assembly (GA) is both exhilarating and challenging. A schedule filled with worship and music, speeches and awards breakfasts, and joys and concerns shared from across the church adds to the excitement of this biennial event.

The Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries Reception, the first event to welcome the newly elected Moderator of the 220th GA, will be held the evening of June 30, following the election. And the Women of Faith Awards Breakfast, one of the most popular breakfasts at the assembly, will be held on July 1. There are several racial ethnic and multicultural lunches and dinners, and staff in Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries will resource several GA committees.

The General Assembly Mission Council (GAMC) will ask the GA to approve its budget and Mission Work Plan for 2013-2016, including an initiative to grow 1,001 new worshiping communities. There will also be committee reports, overtures, and resolutions on racial ethnic and new immigrant church growth, Hispanic/Latino-a leadership, African American church growth, and creating a climate for change in the PC(USA).

Reports will be offered from several committees, commissions, and task forces, including the Mid Council Commission Report (and its racial ethnic strategy task force). This report asks the assembly to consider changes to our mid council structure. In this issue, you will read more about GA and about the Native American Consultation held earlier this year. We ask your prayers for commissioners and others who will be attending this year's GA, and we pray for the PC(USA).



Save the Dates

May 12: Brazilian Fellowship meeting
Louisville, KY

May 15: Racial Ethnic Ministry Area Youth Meeting
Louisville, KY

June 18–22: 41st Assembly and Annual Conference
National Council of Korean Presbyterian Churches
(NCKPC)
Denver, CO

June 22–24: Theological Education for New Immigrant
Lay Leaders
Stony Point, NY

June 28–July 7: 220th General Assembly
Pittsburgh, PA

July 6–8: Multicultural Youth Conference
Mo-Ranch Conference Center
Hunt, TX

July 17–21: Presbyterian Women Churchwide Gathering
Orlando, FL

July 23–26: Korean Presbyterian Council in the
Synods of South Atlantic and Living Waters Conference
Panama City, FL

July 30–August 2: Annual Evangelism Conference
St. Pete Beach, FL

July 30–August 2: Korean NCD Pastors Conference
Tempe, FL
New Church Development National Conference
Hispanic Track
St. Petersburg, FL

August 8–13: Continuing Education Seminar for Hispanic/
Latino-a Presbyterian Ministers
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

September 10–12: Consultation on Korean American
Ministries
Atlanta, GA

Fast facts

Did you know?

The 10 largest racial ethnic congregations in the PC(USA) are either Korean or African American, and these individual congregations have 1,200 or more members.

The first racial ethnic worshipping community in the PC(USA) was Native American.

The most recent church chartered in the PC(USA) is Neema Community Church in Overland Park, KS, an African New Church Development that began as a Bible study with eight people in a pastor's home.

Sources: PC(USA) Research Services and Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW.



A children's group at Neema Community Church

On the front cover of each *Racial Ethnic Torch*, you will see our mantra: *Grow, Transform, Empower, Lead, and Develop*. The core ministry and the purpose for our work in the Racial Ethnic & Cross Cultural Ministries offices are as follows:

1. **Church Growth**, with a focus on new worshipping communities
2. **Transformation** of existing congregations
3. **Social Justice and Empowerment**
4. **Leadership Development**, with a focus on developing racial ethnic, women, and young adult transformational leaders
5. **Cross Cultural Ministries**

Thus, our mantra is *Grow, Transform, Empower, Lead, and Develop*. The Racial Ethnic & Cross Cultural ministries offices equip, connect, and inspire racial ethnic and new immigrant worshipping communities and develop and empower racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders.

The ministry area does this through training, coaching, resource development, leadership institutes, and networking, and by providing grants to congregations, racial ethnic schools and colleges, and racial ethnic and immigrant members and leaders. In Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women, we engage the church in its mission to become more diverse and inclusive of racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups, and we equip women for leadership in all ministries of the church.

General Assembly 2012: Reports and Recommendations

African American Church Growth Strategy Task Force

Growing African American Congregations: Striving to Build upon a Legacy

The African American Church Growth Strategy task force was created following the 219th GA (2010) to monitor the progress of African American church growth. The task force found the goals for racial ethnic membership growth need more “mid council support and funding to create and implement the Racial Ethnic & Immigrant Evangelism Church Growth Strategy” and noted there was a 10-year delay in creating the strategy, from 1998 to 2008.

In addition, the task force found the strategy needs a clear structure of accountability, was unclear on ways congregations and presbyteries can implement the strategy, was not designed for the participation of the whole denomination, needs more support from the National Black Presbyterians Caucus (NBPC), and needs a more clearly defined vision statement.

The task force recommends a national consultation that includes representatives from the GAMC and the NBPC as well as African American leaders with experience in evangelism and church growth. It also recommended that mid councils be held in 2013. The group noted that the African American Growth Strategy is a “strategy of the whole church, thus all participants must commit to work together to grow new and existing African American congregations and communities of faith.”

The group also recommends that the GAMC train and deploy five regional coaches to collaborate with mid councils and congregations to implement the African American Church Growth Strategy.

The task force determined it was important to recruit local African American leaders who demonstrated skill and passion for growing churches to more effectively collaborate on approaches for evangelism and church growth.

Task Force to Study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth

Growing a Diverse Church: A Call for Unity and Reconciliation

The task force to study Racial Ethnic and New Immigrant Church Growth was formed at the 219th General Assembly (2010) to ascertain why the PC(USA) had not met its goal to reach 20 percent racial ethnic membership by 2010. The task force determined that the PC(USA) did not realize its vision for a diverse body because of the lack of a “cohesive, coordinated strategy; adequate financial and human resources for doing the work; and mechanisms for deploying resources where they are most needed.”

Many of the presbyteries and congregational representatives surveyed perceived that it was a top-down initiative where grassroots involvement and commitment were needed. In addition, the task force determined that with some presbyteries being 90 percent white, the goals were unrealistic for certain areas; that the work was left up to the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women’s ministry area to accomplish; and that it was not a shared effort of the entire PC(USA), including the GAMC, OGA, and mid councils.

The task force recommends a national consultation to develop strategies and policies to support racial ethnic, multicultural, and new immigrant church growth. The consultation would assess the effectiveness of church growth and evangelism programs at all levels, create measurable goals and a cohesive, coordinated strategy, designate a monitoring group to assess progress, and include strategies to encourage presbyteries to recognize and receive ministers of new immigrant faith communities.

Share Abundantly: The Report of the Special Offerings Task Force

Commission on Mid Councils

The General Assembly Commission on Mid Councils recommends the 220th General Assembly eliminate the synod as a council or ecclesiastical entity.

According to the report, the intent of the commission was to take a “step toward ‘flattening’ the church’s organization” to reduce redundancy in process and the bureaucratic layers between the congregation and the national church.

Historically, African American and other racial ethnic Presbyterians have looked to the synods as places for community, training, leadership development, and assistance with vocational placement, and places where they could address concerns for their faith communities within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

In an attempt to address that need, the commission recommends the Moderator of the 220th GA (2012) be empowered to appoint a National Racial Ethnic Ministries Task Force to review, assess, and explore the call to, responsibility in, and vision for racial ethnic ministry within the PC(USA). Its findings would be reported to the 221st GA (2014).

In response to the commission’s report, the GAMC recommends that a consultation be held across the denomination within the first year following the decision. It would be jointly sponsored by existing synods and the GAMC, specifically the Office of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries, including representation from the Advocacy Committee on Racial Ethnic Concerns. The purpose of this consultation would be to talk directly with racial ethnic and new immigrant leaders about what they believe would be most needed and helpful.

If the synod is eliminated as a council, the Office of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries of the GAMC will work to ensure the needs of racial ethnic leaders and members are not overlooked.

The Special Offerings task force was approved by the 218th General Assembly (2008) to identify what Special Offerings can do best and what steps need to be taken to improve them, by reviewing both the role and function of Special Offerings within the PC(USA). Based on dialogue with leaders and members of small, midsized, and large congregations, and four years of prayer and thoughtful research, the task force members believe the Special Offerings’ decline can be reversed.

The report states, “We do believe that we can do more together through Special Offerings than we can separately, pursuing our own disparate calls.” To do so, the task force made a series of recommendations—some directly to the GAMC and others meant for the General Assembly (GA).

The task force recommends that the GAMC & GA set a shared goal of \$20 million raised by 2020, referred to as “20 by 20.” The task force believes this is possible because today Presbyterians are embracing giving and a direct connection to transformational ministries. As part of this effort, the task force recommends the GAMC engage churches and individuals directly using technology such as credit card subscriptions, social networks, and texting.

Other recommendations to the GAMC include hiring a director of Special Offerings to provide focused leadership in marketing, communications, and infrastructure; establishing a pilot program that offers a Special Offerings catalog so Presbyterians have the option to give to a special impact area; and clarifying the reporting relationships among One Great Hour of Sharing-related committees. The final item was suggested because One Great Hour of Sharing has not been reviewed since the restructuring of General Assembly agencies in 2003.

The task force is also recommending a new set of operating guidelines, revised criteria, and that representatives from all six agencies of the PC(USA) develop and oversee a comprehensive, consistent policy on collaborative funds development strategies for Special Offerings.

Hispanic/Latino-a Leadership Conversation Group Report

GA to consider measures to be more responsive to Hispanic/Latino-a population

When GA convenes in Pittsburgh this summer, commissioners will vote on a number of recommendations intended to make the church more responsive to the country's growing Hispanic/Latino-a population.

The recommendations from the denomination's Hispanic/Latino-a Leadership Conversation Group include

- encouraging presbyteries and the GAMC's ministry areas to provide more training and other resources to enable Hispanic/Latino-a pastors, seminary students, and others to get involved in new church development;



- directing the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) to compile data regarding the racial, ethnic, denominational-affiliation, and gender composition of faculty, board members, and students at PC(USA)-affiliated seminaries and to submit a comparative annual report to each seminary;
- providing more Spanish-language versions of PC(USA) websites and publications;



- asking the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations, along with COTE, to assess whether the language or cultural assumptions in ordination exams put minority candidates for ordination at a disadvantage; and
- urging presbyteries to offer congregational training to combat racism, bigotry toward immigrants, and other discriminatory attitudes and practices.

The leadership group that developed the recommendations included representatives of the National Presbyterian Hispanic/Latino-a Caucus, the PC(USA) office of Vocation, the PC(USA) office of RE&WM/PW, the church's Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, COTE, and the General Assembly Mission Council.

Members of the Conversation Group reflected various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The Conversation Group invited several at-large members to help it draw up the recommendations, which evolved in a series of meetings over the past 18 months.

The Conversation Group was authorized by the 219th General Assembly (2010) in response to a recommendation from COTE that grew out of concerns raised by the National Presbyterian Hispanic/Latino-a Caucus and echoed by the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, including

- the loss of two Hispanic/Latino-a professors at Presbyterian seminaries;

To read this article in Spanish, please go to www.pcusa.org/news/2012/4/25/growing-pcusa-deep-wide-and-diverse

Para leer este artículo en inglés, por favor vaya a www.pcusa.org/news/2012/4/25/growing-pcusa-deep-wide-and-diverse

- the need to focus on recruiting diverse faculty at PC(USA) seminaries; and
- the preparation of seminary students to minister cross-culturally, given the demographic and cultural shifts in the United States.

The Assembly asked the Conversation Group to bring its recommendations to this year's Assembly.

"These recommendations offer the PC(USA) national, local, and educational opportunities to more clearly respond to the cultural, linguistic, and social realities changing right before our eyes all across the U.S.," said Tony Aja, convener of the Conversation Group.

U.S. Census data project that the U.S. Hispanic/Latino-a population will be a major factor in U.S. population growth through 2050. By then, the Census Bureau projects, whites will constitute only about half of the country's population, and the Hispanic/Latino-a population—the largest minority group in the U.S.—will make up an estimated 23 percent of the population.

"We want to help the PC(USA) 'grow the church deep and wide,' start 1,001 new worshiping communities, form transformational leaders, and reach out to young adults in some richly diverse ways," said Aja, noting the General Assembly Mission Council's current mission priorities.

Nature of the Church in the 21st-Century Report

The 219th General Assembly (2010) formed the Nature of the Church in the 21st Century Committee to "help to increase understanding of the church from a Reformed and Presbyterian perspective and assist current and new members in forming faithful plans for our common future."

The committee's report includes an extensive list of resources about the church—namely, "its context, conditions, dreams, and visions." As a result of their work, the committee is bringing 10 recommendations to this summer's General Assembly. These 10 touch on key aspects of the PC(USA)'s work and witness in the 21st century:

- Discerning new ministries
- Bivocational and tentmaking ministries
- Education and support for developing new churches and ministries in a new day
- New immigrant communities

- Multilingual communications and resource development
- Supporting and equipping pastoral leaders
- Christian vocation
- Understanding privilege
- Ongoing resources
- Living out our faith publicly

Climate for Change Task Force Report

Privilege, Power, and Policy: The Church as an Employer

The Climate for Change task force reviewed the denomination's EEO, Affirmative Action, Supplier Diversity, and Cultural Proficiency policies for the six agencies of the General Assembly. The report noted that one of the greatest challenges of the PC(USA) is to become a truly diverse and an inclusive community of faith.

After reviewing existing policies, meeting with leaders of all six GA agencies, and talking with stakeholders such as the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns (ACREC) and the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP), the task force recommends that the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) review and revise affirmative-action goals for employment and purchasing, including the receipt of biennial status reports on the representation of women and persons of color in employment and the use of women and minority-owned businesses in purchasing.

If the GA approves the recommendation for an expanded role for the GA Committee on Representation, then the GAMC requests that clarification be given to GA agencies regarding the overlapping mandates and multiple reporting structures in these areas.

Currently the GAMC and the other Assembly agencies already report employment and supplier diversity information to ACREC and to the General Assembly. ACREC reports to the General Assembly regarding its findings from each agency. This recommendation adds another reporting mechanism.

The GAMC believes that a streamlined reporting process will produce the best results and the least distraction from the GA's mission directions. The GAMC currently exceeds the denomination's Equal Employment Opportunity goals of 40% women and 20% racial ethnic persons, with 71% female and 26% racial ethnic persons on staff.

Women of Color Consultation Committee Report

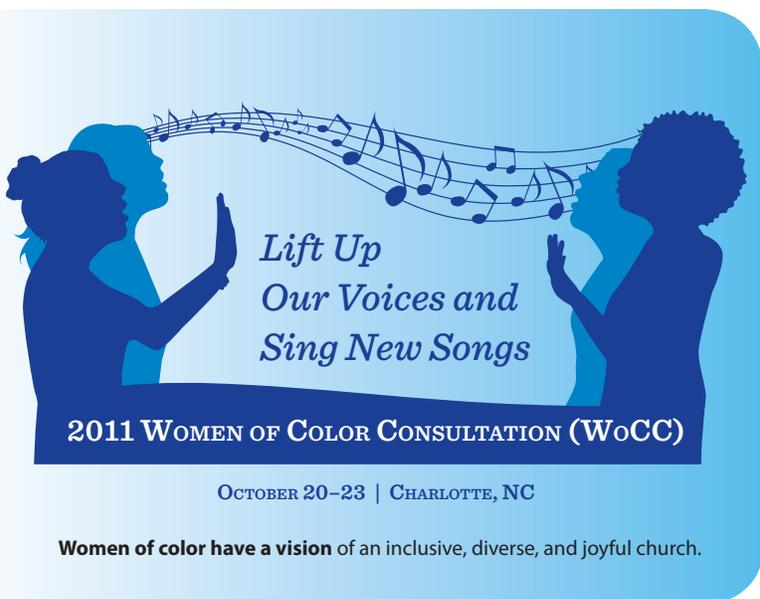
Hearing and Singing New Songs to God: *Shunning Old Discord and Sharing New Harmonies*

“**W**omen of color have a vision of an inclusive, diverse, and joyful church, but all too often their voices are not heard, their gifts are not recognized and celebrated, and their desire for full participation in the church is ignored.”

That was the conclusion following the Women of Color Consultation in October 2011. The consultation included women from 16 synods and one international participant. To create a more inclusive church, the committee is making the following recommendations to the 220th GA:

The report recommends that PC(USA) governing bodies, especially mid councils, should recommit to welcoming and embracing the leadership of women of color and encourage the church to identify, train, and equip young racial ethnic women. The committee also recommends that new venues within presbyteries be created that encourage and support the building of relationships, and that curriculum and theological resources for women of color be developed through Theology, Worship and Education.

In addition, the committee recommends that the office of Vocation do an annual review of guidelines and handbooks to ensure gender and racial equity, and that it—in consultation with congregations, presbyteries, and seminaries—identify and encourage prospective racial ethnic young women to consider pastoral ministry. The report also calls for another Women of Color Consultation before the 221st GA (2014), to focus on leadership and decision making in presbyteries.



*Lift Up
Our Voices and
Sing New Songs*

2011 WOMEN OF COLOR CONSULTATION (WoCC)

OCTOBER 20-23 | CHARLOTTE, NC

Women of color have a vision of an inclusive, diverse, and joyful church.

A Plan to Grow 1,001 New Worshiping Communities

“They praised God and demonstrated God’s goodness to everyone. God added daily to community those who were being saved.”—Acts 2:47

Presbyterians want to grow 1,001 new worshiping communities in the next 10 years. This initiative is part of the Mission Work Plan of the General Assembly Mission Council, which will be sent to the 220th General Assembly (2012) for approval. The GAMC’s new mission statement is “to inspire, equip, and connect the PC(USA) in its many expressions to serve Christ in the world through new and existing communities of faith, hope, love, and witness.” One of the directional goals in the Mission Work Plan, 2013–2016, is *to ignite a movement within the PC(USA) that results in the creation of 1,001 new worshiping communities.*

1001
WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES

Acts 2:47 describes life among the new community of Christ’s followers. Day after day they prayed together, ate together, and shared in community with one another. They shared their possessions and were generous in giving. And each day God added to their group others who were being saved.

In Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries, we seek to embody some of the characteristics of the new community of faith as seen in the Acts passage. We also embrace the Pentecost moment described at the beginning of Acts 2, where there were Africans, Asians, Middle Easterners, and others who crossed cultures and, though they spoke different languages, understood each other, as they were all talking God’s language and giving witness to the great things that God had done.



GAMC staff is tasked with igniting a movement to create 1,001 New Worshiping Communities.

In our ministry area, we are blessed to see people of many different nations in the work we do every day, all speaking together the language of God and giving witness to the great things that God has done. We share the good news of Jesus Christ with others, and they in turn share good news with us. We are crossing cultures and engaging in partnership with European American congregations seeking to invite persons of various races and ethnicities into existing worshipping communities and creating new worshipping communities in partnership with mid councils.

The racial ethnic membership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has increased, but we still have work to do to grow new, diverse communities of faith, keeping in mind our calls to social justice and antiracism. The whole church is called to this ministry as we welcome the stranger, invite diverse peoples to church, share good news, and work to become the beloved community of God.



The choir at Pyung An Presbyterian Church in Auburn, WA



A community meal at the Camino de Vida Worshipping Community in Albuquerque, NM

GAMC Mission Work Plan, 2013–2016

The General Assembly Mission Council will present its strategic plan at the upcoming GA for approval. In it, the GAMC will propose a new vision statement for 2013–2016: *Presbyterians joyfully engaging in God’s mission for the transformation of the world.*

If approved, staff would be guided in their work by the new mission statement to “inspire, equip, and connect the PC(USA) in its many expressions to serve Christ in the world through new and existing communities of faith, hope, love, and witness.”

As part of this effort, the focus would be on six “directional goals” that would guide all programs within the GAMC:

- Cultivating, nurturing, and sustaining diverse, transformational leaders for Christ’s mission.
- Encouraging compassionate and prophetic discipleship by making, receiving, and sending disciples who demonstrate and proclaim God’s justice, peace, and love in an increasingly globalized world.
- Igniting a movement within the PC(USA) that results in the creation of 1,001 new worshipping communities.
- Engaging and joining with young adults in reforming the church for Christ’s mission.
- Engaging with, responding to, resourcing, and representing the General Assembly in alignment with the vision and mission for the General Assembly Mission Council.
- Ensuring organizational integrity by building confidence, trust, and engagement in all that the GAMC does by being Collaborative, Accountable, Responsive, and Excellent (C.A.R.E.).



The youngest members of Top Stone Church in Englewood, NJ, take part in worship services.

GA Events Sponsored by, or of Interest to, Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/ Presbyterian Women:

Friday, June 29

4:00–6:00 p.m.

African American Commissioners Orientation

Saturday, June 30

7:00–9:00 a.m.

Women's Orientation Breakfast

9:00 a.m.–noon

Riverside Conversation: *Equipping the Church for Ministry with God's Diverse Family*

Antiracism training for commissioners

10:00 p.m.–midnight

Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries Reception for the Moderator of the 220th General Assembly (2012)

Come and greet the newly elected GA Moderator!

Sunday, July 1

7:30–9:15 a.m.—Ticket-\$33

Women of Faith Awards Breakfast. We recognize three women who have served the church as "Courageous Women Transforming Communities of Faith, Hope, Love, and Witness."

Monday, July 2

5:30–7:00 p.m.

National Racial Ethnic Caucuses and Councils Dinner

By invitation only. This dinner is an opportunity for the presidents and vice presidents (or appointed representative) of each racial ethnic caucus or council to gather together.

8:00–10:00 p.m.

Hospitality for Women at General Assembly

Tuesday, July 3

5:00–7:00 p.m.

National Council of Korean Presbyterian Churches (NCKPC) Dinner

7:30–9:30 p.m.

Celebration of the Centennial General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea. Join us for a worship service to celebrate the centennial of the PCK.

5:30–8:00 p.m.

National Black Presbyterian Caucus Dinner

6:00–8:00 p.m.

Native American Consulting Committee Dinner

6:00–8:30 p.m.

National Asian Presbyterian Council (NAPC) Banquet

6:00–9:00 p.m.

National Hispanic/Latino-a Presbyterian Caucus Dinner

Speaker: Rick Ufford-Chase, Moderator of the 216 GA (2004)

7:00–10:00 p.m.

National Middle Eastern Presbyterian Caucus Banquet

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Kenneth Bailey, Presbyterian author and lecturer in Middle Eastern New Testament Studies.

Thursday, July 5

5:30–7:30 p.m.

Multicultural Dinner and Celebration

Meet the PC(USA)'s Women of Faith in an Inspiring Book

Get *Women of Faith of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 1997–2010*. In 1986, the first Women of Faith honorees were presented with awards for promoting equality, development, and peace. The awards have been presented to deserving women in the church ever since, in recognition of their passion, dedication, and faithfulness.

In 1996, the stories of the first Women of Faith were collected and published in the volume *Women of Faith of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 1986–1996*. The second volume contains the "stories of women who courageously work and witness in their communities in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and in the larger ecumenical community" (*Women of Faith of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) 1997–2010*, p. 2) and

includes the stories of the 2010

honorees: Margaret E. Howland, Elizabeth B. Knott, Elona Street-Stewart, and Joyce Uyeda. The book is available for \$10 from Presbyterian Distribution Service, www.pcusa.org/store, or (800) 524-2612.



Women of Faith Awards Breakfast at GA

Three courageous women who are transforming their communities through faith, hope, love, and witness

By Jessica Reid

Communications Specialist

Church member Judith Henry, Commissioned Ruling Elder Rosemary Rice McMahan, and Rev. Ann Rhee Menzie live in different parts of the country and lead very different lives. Each woman lives out God's call in a different way, and each one represents a distinct area of diversity in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

But they do have something in common. They're all courageous women who are transforming their communities through faith, hope, love, and witness.

For that, they'll be honored as the 2012 Women of Faith Awards recipients at a special breakfast during the 220th General Assembly of the PC(USA) in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Meet the 2012 Honorees

Judith Henry is a member of the Presbyterian Church of St. Albans in Queens, N.Y. Henry, a Jamaican American, immigrated to the United States as a child and is a member of the Esther Circle of Presbyterian Women. She has a bachelor of science in nursing and is a care manager in diabetes education.

Using her knowledge in nursing in her volunteer work at St. Albans, she leads an annual HIV/AIDS concert at the church to benefit organizations that assist children with the disease. Judith Henry is an active member in the AIDS Institute of Faith, which raises community awareness about HIV/AIDS.

"I feel I needed to do God's work by helping others," Henry said. "It used to puzzle me, and I'd ask, 'Why doesn't God help those who are suffering?'" Then I realized God put us here to help each other. God is inside of us, and we must show others that God is alive through our actions."

Henry is also involved in New York City's Community Emergency Response Team, which prepares people to respond to emergencies. She leads Black History Month event planning and plans community health fairs, blood drives, and organized donation efforts for Haiti disaster relief.

Commissioned Ruling Elder Rosemary Rice McMahan serves at Big Cove Presbyterian Church in Owens Crossroads, Ala. In 2003, McMahan became a commissioned ruling elder at Big Cove Church. She and the congregation have grown Big Cove membership from 18 to 95.

McMahan tripled the congregation's fundraising and adopted a style of community outreach within the church that included adding a second service with a different worship style.

"I just had this powerful feeling that this church should not die," McMahan said. "All the members were eager to grow and serve the community in better ways. So we thought of new approaches to reaching people and, for a time, had two locations. One was in a storefront. It was unorthodox, but it worked."

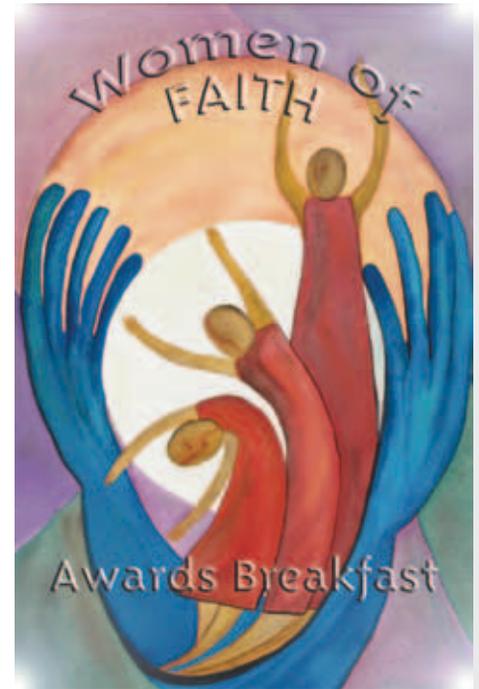
The congregation, with the help of the presbytery, recently moved out of the 100-year-old church into a new building and continues to follow the vision "to be disciples who make disciples."

Rev. Ann Rhee Menzie is a Korean American minister-at-large in Redwoods Presbytery in San Francisco. She is a founding member and director of Shimtuh, a program that addresses domestic violence within the Korean American community, including providing linguistically and culturally sensitive services for survivors of domestic violence and their children.

"As followers of a loving Christ, we should have no violence," Menzie said. "It's all about mutual respect, mutual love, and mutual submission. All of that will eventually bring the change in our culture."

Menzie works at the Korean Community Center (KCCEB) and is in dialogue with communities of faith to support the work of Shimtuh and KCCEB. She promotes gender justice and healthy family relationships, works with both domestic violence survivors and their abusers, and has sparked an initiative to write a Bible study on domestic violence.

Menzie served as racial ethnic liaison from 1999 until 2002 for the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen and currently serves on the Board of Korean American Presbyterian Clergywomen.



Native American Ministries Consultation

Transforming into partners in mission

Through our unique Native American perspective, we can bring a lot to the non-Indian churches,” Elder Aaron King said during a small group discussion at the 2012 Native American Ministries consultation in Phoenix, Arizona.

The consultation took place from January 24 through January 26. It was organized by the Native American Consulting Committee (NACC) and the General Assembly Mission Council’s office of Native American Congregational Support.

The group invited Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pastors, elders, and leaders from across the country to discuss the challenges and opportunities Native American Presbyterians have in connection with their own congregations and the larger church.

“I want you to know that we are a better church because of Native American Presbyterians,” Rev. Rhashell Hunter, director of Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women, told the gathering. Rev. Hunter spoke and met with attendees on the last day of the consultation.

During the three-day event, the group of about 40 people was asked by NACC members to break into smaller discussion groups and focus on obstacles and solutions in three key areas: leadership development, denominational relationships, and financial realities.

The group shared how their individual congregations are creatively raising funds and making their dollars last longer. “Native people can teach the whole church something about doing more with less,” Rev. Hunter said, referring to the financial strain being felt by much of the country. Some organized craft days; others offered more transparency so donors can see why their donations are important.

“We are able to open ourselves up and say, ‘See, these are our books and why you are helping us reach more people through

God,’” King told his discussion group. “We also encourage pledge giving so people can give quarterly, and it usually means many of them will give more than they usually would.”

The attendees spent several hours discussing how to encourage and empower leaders within Native churches while providing materials and resources that are relevant in the Native American context.

“I don’t think we have encouraged our Native people to believe in their leadership capabilities,” Rev. Buddy Monahan said during one group session. “We have committed Presbyterians in our pews, and they can become committed leaders.”

“I agree. We need to transform ourselves from objects of mission to partners in mission,” Elder June Lorenzo said. “Leadership training also means training for our treasurers and staff. Their roles are important, so we have to have those fundamental skills to become self-supporting.”

“We also have to remember to stay positive. No one wants to take on leadership if there’s no positive reinforcement,” Elder Madeline Terry added. “As an elder, I would like to see good and wonderful things happen in our church.”

“The ‘how’ is one of our challenges,” Lorenzo continued. “We must look at how to adapt materials to our own needs, foster cultural competency among church leaders, and make them relevant to our youth.”

Many of the attendees also discussed how to strengthen partnerships with other congregations throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), how to encourage youth by being “positive examples of change” within communities, and how to improve communication with the larger church. Most in attendance felt the need for both non-Native and Native worshipping communities at all levels of the PC(USA) to do their part. It’s a point Rev. Hunter agreed was important.

“We recognize that communication is needed. We must look at how we all can communicate better with each other, and I’m excited about what’s happening here,” she told the crowd during her comments on the final day.

The group listed its top priorities for Native American congregations in 2012 and beyond. The consulting committee, with the help of Rev. Martha Sadongei, the Church Specialist for Native American Congregational Support within Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries, is compiling all the information and will submit recommendations for Native American ministries to the General Assembly Mission Council.

The hope is to focus on the future and help Native American Presbyterians become an even more integrated part of the PC(USA) and to share the gifts of native people with all Presbyterians.

“If you tell Native Americans there is a need, they respond,” Rev. Irvin Porter, President of the Native American Consulting Committee, said. “That’s something we do really well as a culture. We help our own.”



Martha Sadongei (left), Church Specialist for RE&WM/PW’s Office of Native American Congregational Support, visits with Gloria Sutcha (middle) and Velma Parker, both elders at Gila Crossing Presbyterian Church on the Gila River Indian Community Reservation, following the Native American Consultation.

Agents of Reconciliation

PC(USA) apologizes to Alaska Natives for “assimilation” policy

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Presbytery of Yukon has formally apologized to the Native residents of Gambell, Alaska—a Yu’pik village on St. Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea—for a mission policy that sought to stamp out Native language and culture as part of the church’s evangelization efforts in Alaska.

The purpose of the March 9–10 gathering of village and church leaders in Gambell was to “seek reconciliation,” said the Rev. Curtis Karns, executive presbyter.

Plans for the event, called “A New Beginning,” were laid over two years. Clan elders, Alaska Native Regional Corporation leadership, city government officials, and village leaders were all consulted.

Speakers at the event included Edna Apatiki, a lifelong resident and educator in Gambell; Father Michael Oleksa, a Russian Orthodox priest and cross-cultural educator; and Dorothy Bekoalak, a teacher on issues surrounding the healing of historical trauma.

PC(USA) participants included Ruling Elder Lee Jordan, moderator of the presbytery; the Rev. Henry Woodall, the presbytery’s Leadership Team moderator; Karns; the Rev. Mary Ann Warden, moderator of the denomination’s Native American Consulting Committee; Ruling Elder Clayton Antioquia, from the General Assembly Mission Council; and Ruling Elder Marjorie Poggas, from Gambell Presbyterian’s sister church, Jewel Lake Parish in Anchorage.

Presbyterians arrived on St. Lawrence Island late in the 1800s and ran a mission school on Gambell for four decades, beginning in 1900. The few elders who are still alive remember suffering physical punishment—such as swats with a yardstick—for speaking their own language, said Lucy Apatiki, who is now the Commissioned Ruling Elder in Gambell.

“We were told our drum and dance were evil, and it was almost a prerequisite to become Western to be a Christian,” Apatiki told the *Alaska Dispatch*.

“That does a lot of damage in a culture,” Karns added. “We were operating under the worldview of the day” that encouraged efforts to Westernize ‘heathens’ and to eliminate customs thought to be ‘evil.’”

“The last students from the Presbyterian schools are now the clan elders. The time for reconciliation had clearly come,” the presbytery wrote of the gathering.

The importance of engaging in acts of reconciliation became

apparent when the session of Gambell Presbyterian Church and the Aywaan Parish—created in 1976 by Community United Methodist Church of Nome and the Presbyterian churches of Gambell, Nome, and Savoonga—sent a formal request to the Presbytery of Yukon. The session noted that there was a lingering barrier from the early days of the church-operated school until the 1940s.

At the gathering, Edna Apatiki spoke of the experience of assimilation. She said villagers felt great respect for some of the missionaries but also experienced the shame and pain that an attitude of assimilation brought to the people. “This pain contributes to many of the more difficult issues of village life, like



Father Michael Oleksa, Elders Lee Jordan, Clay Antioquia, and Marjorie Poggas, and the Reverends Mary Ann Warden and Henry Woodall

substance abuse, domestic violence, and suicide,” she said.

Oleksa acknowledged that teachers and religious leaders had good intentions but also a false belief that assimilation was a good thing. “Previous policies had included extermination and removal, both of which were disastrous to the Native peoples of America. Assimilation seemed a kinder and more enlightened approach,” he said. “Since then, however, the damage that comes by consistently denigrating a culture has become clear.”

Presenting the formal apology, the Rev. Henry Woodall, moderator of the Leadership Team for the Presbytery of Yukon, said that reconciliation is required for Christians. It begins, he said, “with awareness of a wrong, confession on the part of the wrongdoer, repentance by charting a different path, and reconciliation in the form of forgiveness offered by the one who has been wronged and an agreement on a new way of moving forward together.”

New Directions—Adapting to a Changing Environment in the National Black Presbyterian Caucus

The recently elected president of the National Black Presbyterian Caucus (NBPC), Rev. Dr. Arlene Gordon, and the board of NBPC are moving in new directions, seeking to adapt to a changing environment in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The newly reconfigured NBPC website (www.nationalnbpc.org) is updated regularly so that NBPC members are able to access information and news on the present and future directions of the organization.

NBPC represents the historic legacy and continuing existence in the PC(USA) of a black caucus first organized by African American clergy in 1856 at Shiloh Presbyterian Church of New York City. NBPC's purpose is to promote church growth and spiritual development among African American congregations and individuals in the PC(USA), to focus continually on concerns stemming from African American religious and cultural traditions as well as political and economic issues, to speak and act on those issues that adversely affect the lives of people of African descent, to achieve full participation of its members in the whole church and in society, and to combat racism and injustice.

On its website, NBPC states, "We are committed to Jesus Christ, working to ensure that the witness of Presbyterians of African descent is healthy, growing, dynamic and empowering; that racial justice is integral in the church's self-understanding and lived out in every aspect of ministry within the Presbyterian Church."

NBPC has initiated a 2012 membership campaign to encourage individual membership and chapters' and regions' dues and has set a goal to increase its annual membership by 20 percent.

Membership forms can be downloaded on the NBPC website, handled by Wanda McNeill, or received by contacting NBPC's national office.

Gordon was elected president of NBPC at its biennial meeting held at Big Tent in Indianapolis, Ind., in 2011. One of her first initiatives was to retire a debt due to Stillman College that was carried over from expenses from the biennial meeting held there in 2009. NBPC initiated a fundraising campaign and retired the debt in December 2011.

Another goal of Gordon and NBPC's board is financial strength and transparency within the organization. To this end, Rosy M. Latimore, a member of the Detroit chapter of NBPC, has agreed to serve as volunteer financial administrator. The board members have expressed gratitude that she is willing to share her gifts and serve in this capacity.

NBPC works in programmatic partnership with the office of African American Congregational Support of the GAMC and with the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns of the General Assembly. NBPC also has an Africa Connection program that includes mission partnership with churches in Africa and promotes the Home-Based AIDS Kits program among Presbyterian churches. In addition, NBPC is encouraging and supporting three missionary workers: Rev. Otis and Earline Smith, in Malawi; Rev. Dr. Kenneth and Carline White, in Haiti; and Revs. Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather, in Sudan.

Prior to Gordon's term as president of NBPC, she served as the executive presbyter of the Presbytery of Tropical Florida. She is honorably retired as of 2010. In her first letter to NBPC members, Gordon wrote, "There is much



Rev. Dr. Arlene Gordon is moving in new directions, seeking to adapt to a changing environment.

challenging work ahead ... I believe this organization is more vital now than ever before as we continue to faithfully serve our beloved church. The work that was begun by faithful and concerned black Presbyterians to call the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to accountability is still just as necessary in these current times. It is therefore incumbent upon each one of us to continue the important work that the National Black Presbyterian Caucus has done over the years to address the concerns and aspirations of black Presbyterians and to keep our concerns and issues before the church at large."

African Americans, with 468 communities, are the largest racial ethnic group in the PC(USA):

- 463 congregations
- 3 new church developments
- 2 Bible study fellowships

**Source: Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW Statistics*

UN Commission on the Status of Women Has No Agreed-Upon Conclusions This Year

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) took place at United Nations headquarters in New York City in February and March of this year. Women from Presbyterian Women, Racial Ethnic Young Women Together (REYWT), and National Network of Presbyterian College Women (NNPCW), as well as other Presbyterian and ecumenical women, attended CSW.

Madame Michelle Bachelet, the executive director of UN Women, expressed her disappointment when the session ended without the adoption of any agreed-upon conclusions on the priority theme of the “empowerment of women living in rural areas and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development, and current challenges.” Failure to adopt agreed conclusions may now open a space to reevaluate the process and see how things can be done differently and more inclusively for greater results in the future.

Even so, for the many young adult and senior Presbyterian and ecumenical women who attended CSW from around the world, experiencing this global policymaking body dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of women was a thoroughly exhilarating and memorable experience.

YWLD

YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

From among the young women from all over the country who had applied, nine were selected to participate as members of the YWLD delegation. Varying in age (19–27) and background, they came together as a group and went through months of orientation to prepare for their week in New York City.

The young women were sponsored by the YWLD office. Staff members worked in close collaboration with the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, Presbyterian Women, and Ecumenical Women at the United Nations to develop a meaningful and intentional leadership program for these young women.

Who We Are

The Ministries of Racial Ethnic & Women's Ministries/PW:

Historically Racial Ethnic Congregational Support Offices

- African American Congregational Support
- Asian Congregational Support
- Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support, including Brazilian/Portuguese Congregational Support
- Native American Congregational Support

New Immigrant & Emerging Communities Offices

- African Emerging Ministries
- Korean Emerging Ministries, including Korean English Ministries (EM)
- New Immigrant & Emerging Ministries, including Middle Eastern Ministries

Cross Cultural & Multicultural Ministries Offices

- Cross Cultural Ministries
- Multicultural Congregational Support
- Racial Ethnic Leadership Development supporting Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges

Women's Leadership Development & Justice Ministries

- Gender & Racial Justice
- Women's Leadership Development
- Young Women's Leadership Development

Presbyterian Women, Inc.



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Twelve New Dynamic Faith Communities

Racial Ethnic and New immigrant ministries are the fastest growing communities of faith in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We invite you to explore and share the stories of 12 dynamic new racial ethnic and new immigrant communities of faith. This resource is available at www.pcusa.org/12churches, or call (800) 728-7228, x5062 to get your FREE copy today!





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