



# The Pelican



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

Aug/Sept 2008

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

Luke 22:26

## Highlights from General Assembly

By Terry Dyer Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk:



George Kimm-FWB, Korean First pictured here with Grady Parsons, new Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

Let me begin by saying that our commissioners and our youth advisory delegate (beginning with the 219th General Assembly that name changes to young adult advisory delegate) represented the Presbytery of Florida very well. George Kimm, moderated the Committee on GA Procedures and did an outstanding job—in fact one of the first things Grady Parsons said to me was, “Thank you for sending us George Kimm”.

Candidates for office are not allowed to scruple against those actions that are inherent in fulfilling their calls (e.g., a minister re: celebrating the sacraments or an elder re: voting for church order). This action reverses a recent GA Permanent Judicial Commission ruling that seemed to allow "cherry picking" (a phrase used by Mark Achtemeier, an overture advocate from John Knox Presbytery and a member of the PUP report Task Force) of some parts of the Book of Order which could be scrupled and some that could not be.

6) The Assembly voted to send to the presbyteries for consideration and vote the replacement of the controversial G-6.0106b "fidelity and chastity" amendment with new language. The new language being sent for consideration is as follows: "Those who are called to ordained service in the church, by their assent to the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003), pledge themselves to live lives obedient to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, striving to follow where he leads through the witness of the scriptures, and to understand the Scriptures through

So, here is a small summary of what occurred at the 218th General Assembly. For more details and a better summary go to [www.pcusa.org/ga218](http://www.pcusa.org/ga218).

1) Bruce Reyes-Chow, a 39-year-old emergent-church pastor, who is a native Californian of Philippine and Hispanic descent, was elected and installed as Moderator of the 218th General Assembly. His choice for vice-moderator, the Rev. Dr. Bryon Wade, an African American pastor from Davie Street Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, NC, was confirmed and installed as well. There were three other candidates for the position.

2) The assembly reaffirmed the definition of marriage in the traditional language of a covenant between a man and a woman.

3) Outgoing Stated Clerk Clifton Kirkpatrick was honored.

4) On Friday the assembly elected the Rev. Grady Parsons as the new Stated Clerk on the first ballot. There were three other candidates for the position.

5) After much discussion and debate the General Assembly approved a new authoritative interpretation of the constitution clarifying that candidates for ordination to the office of deacon, elder or minister of word and sacrament may express "a scruple" against any parts of the Book of Order. It is then up to the ordaining body to determine if the scruple expressed should, through their prayerful decision, be considered "essential" and prevent ordination or installation.

**Highlights from General Assembly continued:**

the instruction of the Confessions.

In so doing, they declare their fidelity to the standards of the church. Each governing body charged with examination for ordination and /or installation (G-14.0240 and G-14.050) establishes the candidate's sincere efforts to adhere to these standards."

7) A series of actions which encourage more balanced positions in relation to Israel and Palestine were passed as were a series of concerns on the war in Iraq, on Colombia, and Zimbabwe.

8) Commissioners reconfirmed per capita as a funding mechanism and later in the assembly per capita was set at \$6.15 for General Assembly in 2009 and 2010.

9) The development of a new youth sexuality resource was approved.

10) The assembly acted to recommend that the PCUSA do evangelism in a way "more wide and deep" than we have been doing. They also voted to develop resources to reach youth and young adults who are unchurched.

11) The assembly voted to disapprove reinstating the former Mission(ary) Offering as a 5th special offering; they approved the remaining four special offerings and the distribution of the funds. They also set a "season of interpretation" of GA mission to assist

congregations in their stewardship efforts.

12) The name of the "General Assembly Council" was changed to "General Assembly MISSION Council" in order to be able to interpret its work more accurately to congregations (This was by action of the assembly)

13) It referred the new Form of Government back to the presbyteries and congregations for study and discernment.

14) Kelli Houpt, a member of First Presbyterian Church, Tallahassee was commissioned as a volunteer in missions for work in Seattle, Washington.

15) Bruce Chapman and four FSU students, who are active at the Presbyterian University Center, worked as volunteers at the General Assembly as did John and Sharon Schuler.

I have copies of the GA NEWS - a daily publication printed during the assembly that contains news on what committees did and then what the assembly did. There is one complete set in the resource center here at the office. I also encourage you to invite any one of our commissioners or me to come and visit with you / your session / congregation if you have questions / concerns.

Blessings and Peace,  
Terry

**A Thank you note:**

Terry,

I just want to thank you and the presbytery for sending me to the General Assembly. What an honor! What a reward! Here are a few pictures of our gang at the assembly.

George



Rev. Sharon Schuler from Monticello, First and her husband John with George and Sunsook Kimm from FWB, Korean First.



Terry Dyer/EP and Sunsook Kimm



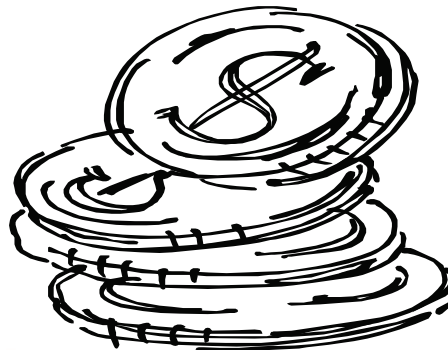
George Kimm,- FWB First, Rev. Joan Wooten - Milton, First, Nesta Cumbie - Havana, First, Joe Silva (YAD) and Rev. Brant Copeland - Tallahassee, First

George Kimm and Frank Adams



**Presbytery Budget versus Actual 1/1/08 - 6/30/08**

	2008 Budget	Actual YTD	% of Annual Budget Used
<b>Income:</b>			
<b>Income from Churches</b>			
Unified Mission Giving	\$570,596.00	\$245,309.51	43%
Per Capita	\$98,553.00	\$86,764.32	88%
<b>Income from Grants</b>			
Partnership Funds/Synod	\$9,395.00	\$4,697.46	50%
Mission Grants/NCD	\$6,666.00	\$3,166.50	48%
HAE Grant	\$4,200.00	\$4,200.00	100%
<b>Other Sources</b>			
D/A Camp	\$90,000.00	\$48,329.80	54%
D/A Other Income		\$0.00	
Hunger Program	\$2,000.00	\$1,167.94	58%
Interest Earned	\$10,000.00	\$4,084.16	41%
Budget Surplus/Deficit	(\$43,725.00)	(\$18,735.22)	43%
<b>Total Income</b>	\$747,685.00	\$378,984.47	51%
<b>Expenses:</b>			
<b>GA &amp; Synod</b>			
Per Capita GA	\$49,064.00	\$40,020.29	82%
Per Capita Synod	\$12,287.00	\$10,183.23	83%
Mission Giving GA	\$66,000.00	\$33,000.00	50%
Synod Giving	\$8,474.00	\$4,236.96	50%
<b>Institutions/Other Missions</b>			
Campus Ministry Cabinet	\$20,000.00	\$10,000.02	50%
Career & Personal Counseling Ctr	\$1,000.00	\$499.98	50%
Villa International	\$1,500.00	\$750.00	50%
<b>Division Expenses</b>			
Mission for Disaster Preparedness & Response	\$12,050.00	\$5,170.58	43%
Mission for Dogwood Acres & Outdoor Ministry	\$126,595.00	\$68,415.73	54%
Mission for Outreach	\$63,600.00	\$35,148.17	55%
Mission for Spiritual Development	\$11,540.00	\$2,609.60	23%
Ministry of Administration	\$326,298.00	\$151,080.59	46%
PC (USA) Ministries	\$11,130.00	\$1,926.13	17%
Governing Body	\$38,147.00	\$15,943.19	42%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$747,685.00	\$378,984.47	51%



## “When Fads Go Bad”

Fall Spiritfest 2008 Sept. 26-28

Middle School youth in the presbytery will converge on Dogwood Acres the last weekend of September to study Romans 12:2 through various rotations:

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is –his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12.2.

For more information, visit the presbytery website at

[www.presbyteryofflorida.com/youthevents](http://www.presbyteryofflorida.com/youthevents) or call Jean Silva at the presbytery office.

★★★★★

## South Korean Youth Visit Florida Presbytery This Summer By, Jean Silva

Our sister presbytery, Yeosu Presbytery in South Korea, is sending a delegation of 14 middle, high school and college age youth and one pastor. They will arrive July 29<sup>th</sup> in Pensacola, and will be here for 3 weeks. The Rev. Tae Ho Cheong from Pensacola Korean Presbyterian Church will host the youth in the Pensacola area. The Youth Committee and the Youth Council of presbytery are planning events in each end of the presbytery during their stay. The hopes and prayers of this visit include a time of cultural exchange, English as a second language training, and Bible study in order that Presbyterians from across the globe may connect as the body of Christ in the world.

If you would like to meet the delegation or host them for a meal or program, please contact the presbytery office at 850-638-2322 and ask for me, Jean Silva.

## Generosity Begets Generosity

By, Jean Silva, Associate Executive  
Presbyter

I don’t know about you, but in Panama City where I live, there’s a quiet and disquiet in the air. It’s as if the economic woes of late have translated into fewer cars on the road, less activity, less noise, less confidence in the world.

While this is not all bad and probably good, I wonder if it also means that people pull back from things Church and voluntary.

While we who are committed to the Church and to Jesus Christ have not given up on things Church or God, we must be honest and ask ourselves, “In times like these, aren’t we likely to pull back from the world that most needs the good news of Jesus Christ? Don’t we tend to start taking care of ourselves first, and then others as an afterthought?”

But this is not the way of Jesus Christ. Are we not called to step out in faith, to pursue the kingdom first, and to worry about ourselves second? Tall order, I know, in the face of \$4/gallon gas, and talk of recession and bank failures, but we are to be generous Christians in difficult times, too, generous with our time and money. This is the way of Jesus, to lose our life in serving others.

Last year, my church, Grace in Panama City, received a hands-on mission grant from presbytery to aid our congregation in involving more people in the church than the usual handful in hands-on mission. As a result, 1/3 of the congregation was engaged in 13 different hands-on mission projects during the month of June 2007, and 8 of those projects continue today.

Meanwhile, our church simultaneously launched a principle debt reduction campaign to pay off our mortgage in excess of \$200,000. This campaign began with the generosity of an anonymous member who gave a \$50,000 matching gift. A year later the mortgage was paid in full. Tully Hunter, pastor of Grace, told me that it was no accident that these 2 amazing things happened. It was because of an individual’s generosity and our willingness to focus not on ourselves but on those in need around us that the congregation’s financial generosity flowed as well as their generosity of time and energy. And it was because of the generosity of you and all the churches in the presbytery that Grace’s hands-on mission grant was made possible.

Generosity begets generosity. Thanks be to our God of infinite abundance!

## Stewardship of Creation Notes

Pam McVety, Stewardship of Creation  
Enabler

## Mandatory Reading: 218<sup>th</sup> GA Statement on Energy and Climate Change

There is terrific news on the church front. After almost four years of deliberation by committees, the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly passed an updated energy policy, entitled “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming”. It is right on the mark calling on all to reduce energy usage dramatically and quickly to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

Unfortunately, the document is longer than most would like to read, but *everyone* should read it. It can be found at [www.pc-biz.org/explorer.aspx](http://www.pc-biz.org/explorer.aspx). Once there select Social Justice Committee, under Assembly Committees, and then item 09-10, as titled above.

It urges individuals, families, churches, presbyteries, synods, seminaries, church affiliated universities and colleges, and central headquarters to reduce energy usage and to go carbon neutral. Very specific steps are suggested, which will be covered in future columns. It also calls on all levels of government to pass comprehensive, mandatory, aggressive emission reductions to limit the temperature increase to 2 degrees centigrade or less, by cutting carbon emissions by 80% by 2050 from 1990 levels.

None of this should be new information, as you have been reading about this in the news and in this column. Many of you have taken steps to reduce your energy usage and go carbon neutral. Congratulations to you and now the rest of us need to catch up and reduce our energy usage. And, could you pretend that reading this GA policy statement is mandatory and read it in its entirety. Please? This is a very serious issue that must have your full understanding and attention.

One more piece of good news from the GA. The Environmental Justice office which was eliminated will now return. Our Presbytery and General Assembly representatives provided the leadership to get this vitally important office re-established. Thanks to all for your work on this.

As always, if you have any questions, please contact me at [mcvety@nettally.com](mailto:mcvety@nettally.com).

## **News Around the Presbytery:**

### **Presbyterian Cursillo By Rev. Walk Jones**

There are many ways for Presbyterians to grow closer to God and one another. Corporate worship, personal study, small groups, and renewal weekends are familiar to all of us.

Another wonderful program for personal and congregational spiritual development is available through the Presbytery of South Alabama's Presbyterian Cursillo Weekends. Cursillo means "A short course in Christian living."

Many members of Northminster, where I am the pastor, and First Presbyterian, Pensacola have attended the weekends. Recently members from Trinity, Shalimar, and Faith, Tallahassee have also attended. Last year half of Northminster's Session were alumni of Cursillo and I think it made a positive impact on our work as a Session.

This intensive, spiritually focused weekend, helps Christians deepen their faith and relationship with Jesus. It is not for non-Christians and is only open to members of Presbyterian churches. I attended my first Cursillo weekend as a high school student in 1981 and have attended or been pastor on six weekends in Alabama and South Carolina.

Cursillo is not the only way to develop a deeper relationship with Christ, but I recommend it to every minister and member in our presbytery, especially elders who feel burned-out on the church.

I invite you to view their web site at [www.alpresbyteriancursillo.com](http://www.alpresbyteriancursillo.com). The next weekend will be held September 25 – 28 at Camp Beckwith near Foley, AL. Please call Cherie Isakson (850-651-0821) or me (850-484-9224) for information. The registrar for Alabama Presbyterian Cursillo is Sissy Crowe 251-344-4011. Register now, weekends fill up fast.

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### **Shalimar Presbyterian to Launch Monthly Healing Service on July 17th**

Shalimar Presbyterian Church, located at 2 Meigs Drive (corner of 4<sup>th</sup> St.), proclaiming itself "the small church with the big heart," wants to reach out with a healing touch to people who are seeking peace, comfort, even honest-to-God healing. "Every single one of us needs healing in some part of our lives," says pastor, the Rev. Cherie Isakson, who came to Shalimar Presbyterian Church in December 2007.

The monthly service, which will launch on Thursday, July 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 P.M. in the church's intimate sanctuary, intends to offer

breathe, to seek spiritual peace, and to approach God to ask for what they truly need to heal their lives. It will provide times for quiet, shared and private prayer, anointing with oil, the lighting of candles, the laying on of hands -- all ancient practices reminiscent of the earliest days of Christian Church.

Isakson sets this new worship service in its context, "The Protestant Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century stripped church communities like the Presbyterians of many of the practices that had previously been part of the Church of the apostles. We're far enough away from those supposedly bad-old-days now to recognize that we want to live in a world of faith that takes seriously not only our minds but our bodies, souls, and spirits." Presbyterian churches all around the country are returning to styles of worship that are more symbolic, making use of ashes, oil, and candles to reconnect some of the lost wholeness of the human spirit. They're also returning to the ancient disciplines with greater intentionality and deeper focus.

Among a new group of authors who are studying and discussing this return to the old ways of "doing church" is Diana Butler Bass, whose book *The Practicing Congregation* has been the subject of a several months' long study for a combined group from Shalimar and First Presbyterian Church of Fort Walton Beach. Bass is also the author of *Christianity for the Rest of Us*, which focuses on developing and strengthening personal disciplines of prayer, study, meditation – and what she calls the "retraditionalization" of worship and the whole life lived in relationship with God.

"There's not going to be any preaching, that's for sure!" says Isakson. "It's absolutely not going to be just another word-heavy service. It'll be distinctly different in feel from any other service we do -- except maybe what we can sometimes approach during Holy Week." There'll be meditative music (some classical, some contemporary), visual- and video-supported meditation, but "mostly a time and place to come into the presence of God to be quietly open to listen for God's word for each of us."

Isakson admits she had often longed for a service like this while serving in her previous pastorates -- a quiet worship experience for healing and a renewal of energy. "Pastors can be the busiest people in God's church, but nobody ever wonders where or when we get to worship even though we're the ones leading the services every time the church doors open. I hope some of my colleagues in ministry – lay and ordained -- will see this as a safe place to come, to be present to God, and to seek God's face."

The worship service is open to all comers, says Isakson. "It just might offer the right kind of experience for folks who have been beaten off by traditional church models; people who identify themselves as 'spiritual but not religious.'" We think that the Jesus we can come to know, the one who greets us with open arms, is the one people will find here at this service." And if it truly proves to meet the need Isakson thinks it will? Well, there are lots of other Thursdays in the month, she says.

For more information, call Shalimar Presbyterian Church at 850-651-0821 or visit their website [www.ShalimarPCUSA.org](http://www.ShalimarPCUSA.org).

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### **Take the Lifestyle Integrity Challenge!**

Beginning Fall 2008 through December 2009, The Compassion Committee of Presbytery encourages churches and members of Presbytery to choose ways to address these 7 areas of life in order to be more faithful stewards and to help fight hunger and its causes:

- 1 - Energy Efficiency**
- 2 - Food & Health**
- 3 - Purchasing**
- 4 - Water Issues & Usage**
- 5 - Transportation**
- 6 - Fiscal Responsibility,  
Debt Reduction &  
Elimination**
- 7 - Recycling**

Practical information will be provided under each of these 7 headings to help you make intentional choices in the Lifestyle Integrity Challenge. Look for more information in the August Pelican Pouch and the next Pelican newsletter. Contact Jean Silva for more information: 850.638.2322, [jean@presbyteryofflorida.com](mailto:jean@presbyteryofflorida.com)

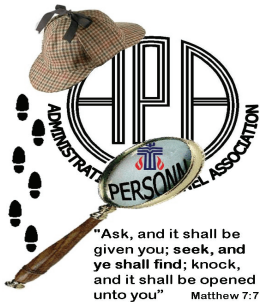


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### National Conference of the Administrative Personnel Association

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:" *Matthew 7:7* is the theme for the 2009 National Conference of the Administrative Personnel Association (APA) of the PC (U.S.A.) July 11 - July 19, 2009 at the Regal Sun Resort in Orlando, Florida.

An estimated 150 administrative assistants, secretaries, office managers, bookkeepers and other administrative support church staff are expected to attend and sharpen their management and technology skills by attending some of the 39 educational courses totaling 50 hours of instructions. Attendees at the end of this week will be able to complete an entire Level of Certification.



The APA is essential for the administrative professional facing expanding roles and responsibilities. Attendees build valuable management, technical and interpersonal skills through courses taught by experts in their fields.

Moreover, pastors, sessions, presbytery execs appreciate how attendees return to work armed with the tools and techniques they need to respond confidently to greater challenges.

The Website [www.floridaapa.org](http://www.floridaapa.org) gives information on the 2009 conference.

Information on the certification program can be viewed on the website [www.pcusa-apa.org](http://www.pcusa-apa.org).



1896-2008

*First Presbyterian Church of Chipley*  
658 N. 5th St.  
Chipley, Florida 32428

You and your families are invited to be our guests on Sunday, November 9, 2008, for Morning Worship Service and lunch immediately following as we celebrate Homecoming in our church's 112th year.

We have chosen this date because it is the weekend of the Chipley High School Homecoming and hope that those of you who live out of town may be coming for those festivities and will enjoy a visit with your former church family while you're here.

Please save the date and plan to join us. We look forward to seeing you.

*Joann Grimes Slay*  
Worship Committee Chairman