



Agape Herald

The Newsletter of the Presbytery of Huntingdon
 Mission: Loved by Jesus Christ, called to love all others.

www.huntingdonpresbytery.com

February/March
 2007

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Because I Am A Christian

Huntingdon Presbytery Mission Trip to New Orleans

Background on the mission trip to New Orleans :

On January 6, 2007, 33 members and friends from Huntingdon Presbytery descended upon the Faith Presbyterian Church in Harvey LA (Just across the River from New Orleans). We stayed there for a week where we got to know the small congregation, slept on air mattresses on the church floor, cooked in their kitchen and showered in two showers which had been converted from closets.

While we were there we worked on 5 projects. Three projects involved emptying out houses and tearing them down to the studs so that mold remediation could be done and reconstruction could begin. One project worked closely with a home owner to begin rebuilding floors and walls. The last project was for the Gentilly Presbyterian Church where we removed equipment so that the roof could be repaired and showers installed for work teams.

The group represented over 8 churches and ranged in age from 11 years old to 80. Despite differences in age, skills, and morning schedules- the group worked tirelessly, snored loudly, relaxed joyfully, and grew spiritually.



"The group represented over 8 churches and ranged in age from 11 to 80 years old."

[Because I Am A Christian](#)
 Submitted By: [Connie Hunt](#)
[Bedford Presbyterian Church](#)

We landed in New Orleans with aspirations of healing a wounded city. We were going to make a difference by rebuilding, painting, making it beautiful again.... but it didn't take long to discover that the city that was devastated last year is still devastated. Many neighborhoods looked like the hurricane had happened only a few weeks ago instead of 16 1/2 months ago. House after house stood empty, the stench of standing water and mold permeated the air as we walked along sidewalks.

As we looked out the windows of touring vans, we saw what looked like areas that had been bombed out in a war zone. As we drove into the Ninth Ward, we saw what used to be a neighborhood of

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RETREAT

At a Presbytery retreat on Celtic Spirituality held at Hartman Center several years ago, one minister said, "It was like coming home." Many of our Presbyterians have ancient roots in Scotland and Ireland.

For those of us who have visited Iona, the impact is often life changing. New vistas open, and new ways of listening and seeing God in the common activities of life appear. One begins to see the sacred in the ordinary. It has been said that Iona is a "thin place" between this world and the next.

Using Iona resources for worship, Alice Meloy will share the resources of Philip Newell (who recently presented a workshop at Princeton Theological Semi-

nary), David Adam, Esther de Waal, John O'Donohue, and a host of others, building an awareness of ways in which God speaks. Hopefully, the winds, or at least the breezes, of the Holy Spirit will blow through our group as we meditate, journal, gather around the fireplace and eat the excellent food prepared by the Shade Gap Presbyterian Church which is hosting the event.

Of further interest is the fact that Oasis Ministries (oasismin@oasismin.org or 717-737-8222) has planned a pilgrimage to Iona with Philip Newell on October 7-17, 2007. This will also include other sites. On April 3, the program, "Book Days" will explore "Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom" by John O'Donohue, an excellent book

for an introduction to Celtic Spirituality. Check out www.oasismin.org.

The Ladies Retreat at Lane's Pine Lodge is scheduled for March 2nd-4th. Accommodations are limited and were filled quickly



last year. Please contact Mary Frances Jaymes for further information:

**Ladies Retreat
March 2nd-4th**

- 814-259-3256
 - mfjaymes@yahoo.com
 - 19332 Shade Valley Rd., Shade Gap, Pa.
- Alice Meloy ammrem75@innernet.net

CHURCHES AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Saving energy is a way to love God and our neighbors," said Episcopalian Steve MacAusland. Unfortunately, we as churches cannot cloister ourselves in denial. There is global warming and there are conflicts over oil. Catholics, Protestants, and Jewish groups are searching for answers through "The Interfaith Coalition on Energy."

While we worry about budgets, perhaps it is time to look at our church buildings. It has been said that "Houses of worship are some of the biggest wasters of energy on a per capita, per hour-off use

basis." St. Stephen's Episcopal Cathedral and School on 221 North Front Street in Harrisburg has gone "Green." Recently, a workshop was held in Harrisburg by the Interfaith Coalition on Energy for churches of the area. It reviewed a number of issues, ways of improvement, and opened opportunities to explore this subject in other areas of our Commonwealth. There are people who are available for workshops. The question is this. Are there enough churches in Huntingdon Presbytery to organize, set up a workshop, and raise the money to pay for a consultant? Is this an important issue?

For further information consult the following:

The Interfaith Coalition on Energy
7217 Oak Avenue,
Melrose Park, Pa.
19027-3222

Telephone: 215 -635-1903 or andrewrudin@earthlink.net.

Alice and Dick Meloy
ammrem75@innernet.net

BETHANY PARISH

The Christmas season in Bethany Parish could be characterized as the arts in service of the Word. Transformation of the human soul was the message embodied in Dickens' "Christmas Carol" on Christmas Eve. In an adaptation, members of the three churches threw their dramatic energies into the play. Costumes and lighting enhanced the setting. The Men's' Chorus and Parish Choir added music.

The Upper Tuscarora Presbyterian Church has received a Steinway

Grand Piano through Dr. Tim Blair of West Chester University and his wife, Sally.

Dr. Blair is Dean of Music and originally from the area.

Through a program of outreach, performing artists who travel the world will perform at the Upper Tus-



carora Presbyter-

As one new family who moved to the area from Lancaster said, "To have music of this quality presented near home is such a gift!"

ian Church once each quarter. Included for 2007 are a Greek pianist, a string quartet from Romania, a pianist and soprano from West Chester, and Dr. Blair who recently traveled and performed in China where there is a great hunger for music. These concerts will be advertised so members from other communities can attend. Watch the news!

Alice Meloy
ammrem75@innernet.net

A NEW YEAR

As we move into the New Year and think of where this year will lead us or what is in store for us, we all subconsciously or consciously develop goals or set "New Year's Resolutions" for ourselves. Whether those goals or plans are personal, professional, or spiritual in nature does not necessarily matter, it's the thoughtful reflection that counts. I do believe that part of the process of looking ahead really requires a look back (an assessment) of the last 12 months. I truly believe this helps us to clearly identify the areas that may require change or a complete new path or commitment in our lives. We can then plan accordingly.

As one of the individuals responsible for fund raising for the Presbyterian

Homes in the Presbytery of Huntingdon, I must look back at the organization's charitable care costs to remind me and others of the needs of our residents and plan effectively so that those needs are met – regardless of the residents' ability to pay for the care they so deservedly receive. In 2006 the Homes charitable care figures will surpass 2 million dollars reminding me, as a fund raiser and supporter of the Homes mission, that God's older children deserve to get the care they need at this most important time in their lives.

I graciously thank those who support the mission of the Homes and ask that others consider supporting the needs of our elderly in 2007 by lending a volunteering hand through visits to our residents, serv-

ing as a volunteer on one of our auxiliaries or by monetary gifts to offset the cost of charitable care.

May you have a prosperous new year.



" In 2006 the Homes charitable care figures will surpass 2 million dollars "

Submitted by Becky Young
Presbyterian Homes
In the Presbytery of Huntingdon

HUNTERS BREAKFAST

Upper Spruce Creek held a Hunters Breakfast on November 27th, the first day of deer season. Breakfast was served from 4:00 a.m. to noon. From 4:15 am to 6:00 am we served about 50 hunters a breakfast of sausage, potatoes, eggs and pancakes with a table of various breads and muffins, coffee and juice. Other hunters, members and friends came and went throughout the

morning. The final two came about 11:45 am. Total people served was 94. We are now committed to an annual event.

Peggy Kendall pkendall@penn.com

Upper Spruce Creek makes Hunters Breakfast an annual event.

THANK YOU

"I wish to express my gratitude to the Committee on Ministry and the Presbytery of Huntingdon for recognizing the fifty year anniversary of my ordination, and for the gifts presented to me at the November 14 meeting of Presbytery. Also I wish to recognize the incalculable love and support of my wife (of 53 years), Carol, without whom my ministry could not have been fulfilled."

Rev. Robert Zorn aframemess@yahoo.com

MOUNTAIN TOP LARGER PARISH CELEBRATED 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The Mountain Top Larger Parish of the Presbyterian Church (USA) celebrated 50 years of ministry and mission in 2006. The Parish consists of the Fruit Hill Presbyterian Church of New Millport, near Ansonville, the Glen Richey Presbyterian Church of Glen Richey and the Pine Grove Bethel Presbyterian Church of Clearfield. The Rev. Duncan H. Nichol serves as the pastor.

The Mountain Top Larger Parish was formed on January 24, 1956 by the action of the Presbytery of Huntingdon which united five Presbyterian Churches together as one church fam-



50 Years of Ministry and Mission

ily. The five Presbyterian Churches were at Fruit Hill, Glen Richey, Pine Grove Bethel, Boardman and Berwindale. The Boardman Church was dissolved by the presbytery in 1966 and the same fate met the Berwindale Church in 1970. The Parish's anniversary included: an opening worship service at its corporation meeting in January, a pancake breakfast in February, a photo directory of the members and friends of the parish in April, an early Easter sunrise service led by the youth of the parish, the hosting of the 619th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Huntingdon in June featuring the Rev. Richard C. Austin of

Dungannon, VA, who was installed as the parish's first pastor in January 1959, a "Grand Celebration Weekend" in mid-July, featuring worship led by the parish's third pastor Rev. Bill Olson of Black Mountain, NC, dancing and a history night, a corn boil in August for all ages featuring Heaven Bound, a Christian praise band, a spaghetti dinner in October, a Christmas dinner with singing by Psalm 151, a Lutheran church choir, and an anniversary worship service in December to close the anniversary year. The Mountain Top Larger Parish also sold anniversary t-shirts and sweatshirts during the year.

Rev. Duncan Nichol
Duncnjean@aol.com

Presbytery Calendar

February

- Feb. 2-15 (Fujji) US Missionary who serves in Thailand to visit Presbytery
Feb. 7-8 Noon- EP Forum in Carlisle
Feb. 8-9 Noon – Synod meeting in Carlisle
Feb. 10 7:00pm - Valentine Dance at Krislund
Feb. 13 5:00pm – Joint Camp & Conference Committee at Krislund
Feb. 17 9:00am-CLP training on Church History at Presbytery Offices
Feb. 18 3:00pm- Annual Ecumenical Service at the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Altoona (Joy is preaching)
Feb. 19 **Presbytery Offices closed for Presidents' Day**
Feb. 20 1:00pm- COM meeting at Presbytery Offices
Feb. 21 9:30am- Staff meeting at Presbytery Offices
Feb. 22 9:30am – Discipleship Umbrella Team at Pine Grove Mills Church
Feb. 25 4:00pm– Stanley Bkasker's installation as pastor of Huntingdon Presbyterian Church
Feb. 27 1:30am- Administrative Umbrella Team at Presbytery Offices
Feb. 28 10:00am- Committee on Representation at Presbytery Offices

March

- Mar. 1 1:00pm - Leadership Umbrella Team at Presbytery Offices
Mar. 6 1:00pm -Council meeting at Presbytery Offices
Mar. 13 5:00pm – Joint Camp & Conference Committee at Krislund
Mar. 15 10:00am- Judicatory Heads meeting at Mt. Aloysius
Mar. 19 Agape Herald articles deadline for April/May issue
Mar. 21 9:30am- Quarterly Staff meeting at Presbytery Offices
Mar. 27 9:00am – Presbytery Meeting at Huntingdon Church

April

- Apr. 6 **Presbytery Offices closed for Good Friday**
Apr. 10 5:00pm – Joint Camp and Conference Committee at Krislund
Apr. 18 9:30am – Staff meeting at Presbytery Offices
Apr. 21 10:00am – Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering at Highland Park Church

Lay Pastor Training

February 17, 2007
9:00 am
Presbytery Office,
Bellwood
"Church History"
Ginny Rainey &
Rev. Charles Curley

An Invitation....

Annual Ecumenical Service

Reverend Joy Kaufmann has been invited to deliver the sermon at the Annual Ecumenical Service in Altoona on Sunday, February 18, 2007 at 3:00 pm. The service is being held at the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament and her sermon is titled: "Open Our Ears and Loosen Our Tongues".

There will be a reception following the service and all are invited to attend.

Prayer Request Calendar

FEB. 2007

February 4

Presbytery Council

Rev. Daniel T. Ledford, Moderator
Elder Ted Kiffer, Vice Moderator

February 11

Alexandria Congregation

Rev. Earnest Walls, Pastor

Allensville Congregation

Rev. Geoffery A. Huish, Pastor

February 18

Altoona Broad First Congregation

Rev. Carol Evans LeBlanc, Designated Pastor

Altoona Ward Avenue Congregation

Rev. Doug McGaffin, Pastor

February 25

Altoona Juniata Congregation

Altoona Third Congregation

Richard L. Ginter, CLP

Bedford Congregation

Rev. Douglas J. Friant, Pastor

March 2007

March 4

Bellefonte Congregation

Rev. Douglas S. Elder Sr., Pastor

Belleville West Kish. Congregation

Rev. Samuel G. Strohm, Pastor

March 11

Bellwood Logan Valley Congregation

Rev. Kathy D. Colebank, Pastor

Birmingham Congregation

March 18

Blairs Mills Upper Tuscarora

Congregation

Neelyton Pine Grove Congregation

Congregation

Shade Gap Congregation

Rev. Geoffery A. Huish, Moderator

March 25

The Churches and Members of Pahl 5 Nan, Thailand

(our mission partners)

Krislund Korner

Valentines Banquet

February 10th

7 pm until ?

Cost: \$80/ couple

Deposit: \$20

Elegant dinner, dancing,
and games



Upcoming Events:

Valentines Supper/Dance:

February 10th

Mothers Retreat:

March 16-18th

Fishing Rodeo:

April 14th

Krislund's Senior High Retreat

February 23rd-25th



This is it... the time of the year, when you are **faced with a dilemma**... what do I do with this stuff I got that I don't want?

Well... here is your answer, bring it along for a re-gift exchange. Not only are we going to have a re-gift exchange, but we are

going to challenge you in a new and exciting ways.

Come and make new friends and meet old ones, this is going to be a retreat that will get you (hopefully) into high gear with God!

Come prepared to learn, grow and have fun!

Bring a present that you received that you wish was something else, wrap it and put it under our re-gift a tree and wait for the re-gift a thon. The cost for the weekend is \$65.00 per person. Please RSVP by Feb. 16th

2007 Summer

Brochures Available

Churches and former campers have received theirs, but maybe you need one for a grandchild or for a neighbor. Contact the camp office (814.422.8878 / info@krislund.org) and tell us how many you would like. Sign up early to get your first choice. Before filling your summer, choose a camp that will fill **YOU** up. Camps are for K-12th grades, June 24-Aug. 11.

Be part of the **FUN!**

YOUTH WORKER RETREAT

KRISLUND
CAMP &
CONFERENCE
CENTER
PRESENTS:



APRIL 18TH - 20TH '07

Keep an eye out
for more details!

Family Camp: You Asked For It & It's Back

Lengthened for more fun and renewal, the '07 Family Camp will be held August 19-25 at Krislund Camp. With or without children, this popular fellowship and faith-building experience is for everyone. Exciting activities, age-specific Bible studies, great food, moving worship, and lots of time to roam and relax fill each day. Options to attend a portion of the camp or to bring your RV or personal tent are also available. Mark your calendars now for Family Camp '07; costs will be posted on the website (www.krislund.org) by New Year. For more information call the office.

BECAUSE I AM A CHRISTIAN

Continued from Page 1

lower middleclass homes but few houses still sat in their original locations. Empty slabs denoted either dwelling removal or houses that were physically moved by the water when the levies broke. Individual houses still had the mark- a large X with a date showing when, and the initial of who had inspected the premises. They also indicated numbers for how many people they found alive or dead. Occasional notes were added when pets were found.

We could not help, even after all this time, feeling a lump in our throats, a reluctant tear on our cheeks. Then there were the little asides of children's toys in the yard, a muddy doll baby, a half buried pack of crayons. These had been real people with real lives...this was our own third world tsunami----this was a whole society, completely wiped out, gone.

While on the tour we would be asked by locals if we were "Christians". We responded at first by looking at each other hesitantly and then replying, "Well, yes." We finally pieced together the explanation of the oft-asked question. These people had waited and waited for the government to come to their aid. When it did not happen they had become despondent, feeling that they had been forgotten. Then the help started to arrive in the shape of small or large trucks full of blankets, clothes, food and water from church families all over the country. Groups from those churches showed up as

volunteers to help clean out houses, reconstruct, offer help in getting families together. They told us that the Christian volunteers who came into the city offered them hope.... out of chaos, hope.... that's what it said on our T-shirts.

Slowly we started to understand that this is what it's all about to be a Christian...to offer love through service, to accept each person as a brother or sister in Christ. No matter what your skin color, the language you speak, your education or your demeanor, you are a child of God and I will serve you.

We visited a Korean Presbyterian Church that had been destroyed and was being rebuilt by volunteers from Korea. We stopped and talked with them and prayed with them. We complimented them on the wonderful job they were doing and they humbly accepted the words but continued with their tasks. A church elder, his name was John, said that they would not find it necessary to accept a handout from the government when they had a community that would offer labor and tools and supplies. One building at a time...that was the philosophy. Community helping community. Christian helping Christian.

The first house to which our team was assigned was the worst. We arrived at a row of townhouses that had stood untouched since Katrina. We put on our Tyvek suits, our masks and gloves and walked through the front door into a world that few of us had ever experienced. The odor of rot and mold was overwhelming.

The mold reached up the walls from floor to ceiling. It was dark and damp, like being in a coal mine. You could hear your own breath in your mask, but otherwise there was no sound, no life. Could this possibly have been someone's home? That question was answered by the clothes in the closets, the food in the refrigerator, the

"Could this possibly have been someone's home?"

That question was answered by the clothes in the closets, the food in the refrigerator, the clothes in the dryer, shoes lined up on the closet floors, jewelry on the tops of dressers. It was as if the occupants had just disappeared."



BECAUSE I AM A CHRISTIAN

Continued from Page 6

clothes in the dryer, shoes lined up on the closet floors, jewelry on the tops of dressers. It was as if the occupants had just disappeared. We found out later that the couple had been separated and just recently reunited. They were so grateful that someone else was sorting through their belongings...can you imagine having to sort through your life's possessions, everything destroyed, laying it out by the curb as garbage?

We heard a story from an elderly black lady who trustingly had paid \$41,000 in advance to a so-called contractor to repair her ravaged house and ended up with a minimal couple days work. Both the contractor and the money disappeared. She was counting on family volunteers to finish reclaiming her home since her insurance money is now gone.

We heard about people who no longer had a job because their place of employment was no longer in business. I talked to a mother and son who were sleeping in their car because their home was no longer safe. When we returned, tired and dirty each day from our worksite to the church, we saw row upon row of loan shark businesses that took advantage of the desperate situation of families.

Here are just a few of the experiences of our crew of volunteers:

"This guy came up to me and thanked me as a Christian and wanted to tell me his testimony, his experience. And then he asked that we pray together. It was such a moving experience."

"Tommy, a 73-year-old man whose home we had worked on, before lunch asked if he could offer a prayer and then proceeded to sing his prayer of thanksgiving...there wasn't a dry eye in the place."

"The lady in the French Quarter who asked if I was a Christian and said that the entire city offered their prayer of thanks that there were so many caring people in this country and then she hugged me."

On our last day we went to the French Quarter and relaxed and enjoyed the Mimes, the Acrobats, the Artists, and the Musicians. Such a wonderful zest for life! Even when they had to bury so many of their own, they made a celebration of their lives. This city has such a unique mixture of cultures.

On our last workday, I stood by a group that was discussing what we had experienced during the week. One lady looked at me and gently asked, "I see you have a touch of Parkinson's." "Well, not just a touch", was my reply.

And she asked, "Why did you come on this trip? It had to be physically challenging for you."

The answer came quickly and easily.

"Because I'm a Christian."

NEW ORLEANS MISSION TRIP

Jim Wehling, Bedford Presbyterian Church

January 6-13, 2007

This trip was the second mission trip I have made to the area affected by Hurricane Katrina. I felt mixed emotions after my first trip to Pascagoula, MS, which is on the eastern end of the storm damaged area. It just seemed to me that people affected by the storm could do more to help themselves, even though it was obvious that neighborhoods were sparsely populated and the local economy destroyed. I felt much differently after this trip to New Orleans where the social and psychological effects of Katrina were more obvious. I was more aware that the storm not only destroyed neighborhoods and local economies, but it also destroyed many people's optimism for their futures and left them with an overwhelming sense of despair.



"..these mission trips bring hope in addition to help"

Thus, these mission trips bring hope in addition to help. They give personal and pervasive meaning to why we are Christians, and the importance of Christianity to people who are beaten down by their personal circumstances. It is Christians who are making a huge difference in the recovery effort. It made me proud to call myself a Christian and participate in some small way.

Plus, the Cajun cuisine was exceptional!

A Note from The Media/Communications Committee



With deep appreciation the Media/Communications committee welcomes Jill Sajeski, a member of our committee, as temporary editor of Agape Herald. Jill is a member of Petersburg/Bethel Presbyterian Church and also serves as the presbytery's Assistant Treasurer. The

committee continues to search for a volunteer to take on this responsibility for at least a year or two and will eagerly receive any suggestions of a candidate. All suggestions or inquiries should be submitted to the committee chairperson, Al Wilson, alwwilson@verizon.net or call 814-861-6647.

Please note the schedule for the 2007 Agape Herald:

2007 Publication Schedule:

Submission deadline:	Publication:
Jan. 15	Feb/March
March 19	April/May
May 21	June/July
July 16	Aug./Sept.
Sept. 17	Oct./Nov.
Nov. 19	Dec./Jan.

AGAPE HERALD EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION TEAM

Please send all information and potential articles or photos to Al Wilson at alwilson@verizon.net or 1449 Curtin St., State College, PA 16803 by the submission deadline. We also need additional persons to serve on the Editorial Team which gathers information on congregational events, ministries and missions to share through the newsletter. Please contact Al if interested.

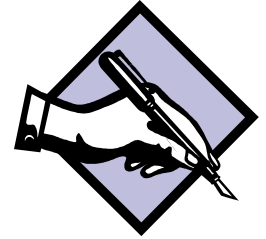


We need volunteers to join our Editorial Team!

Agape Herald is published by the Presbytery of Huntingdon. It is the responsibility of the Communications Subcommittee of the Administrative Umbrella Team.

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