

# Presby Letter



March 1, 2010

*Come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation!*  
(Psalm 95:1)

*Let the word of Christ – the Message – have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God!*  
(Colossians 3:16 in The Message)

Dear Church Family,

There's nothing quite like that moment in worship when we lift our voices to God in a song or hymn of faith. Emotion mixes with music, scripture, and theology in a unique way when we sing. Our praying, preaching, and teaching seldom take us to such a place. Our hearts are awakened in praise. While loving God with our minds, God calls us to "make a joyful noise." He commands us to sing praises (whether we like to sing or not, or feel our voice is 'good enough') because He knows how good it is for us to express our love for Him in this way. As we sing, the words of scripture and our theological heritage are also emphasized.

I'm grateful for who and what help us in our singing: choir and praise band members – along with occasional bell accompaniment; a screen and projection system which allow many of us to look up and sing out at the same time; a wonderful organist; even an ailing system that amplifies sound helps; and last but not least, we have our hymnals. All of this supports us as we "make a joyful noise."

As many of you know, we have been using a different hymnal (called *Worship and Rejoice*) in our 8 am service for the last nine months. Our worship planning team enjoys using it as we put together services, and our Worship Team endorsed it as a replacement hymnal for the entire sanctuary. This was discussed further at one of our congregational forums in the fall, with a final recommendation made by the Session in January to come up with a plan to purchase an entire church set (approximately 250). We had used budget money to purchase the first 60 copies, and paid for another 80 using a special gift of \$1,000. We were planning to ask the congregation to step forward for the final 100 hymnals, but a memorial gift for John W. Benson came in recently that would more than cover the cost. Praise God for His many provisions in helping us "make a joyful noise."

The *Worship and Rejoice* hymnals will be in all of the pews on March 7, and we will keep a large enough set of our current Presbyterian hymnals so that we can legally use any hymns which are not in the new one. (We will also make several copies available to other churches in our Presbytery who may need them.) As with any new hymnal, there will be some old hymns left out, and some words (and tunes) that will be different. But we will continue to "Move Forward" and sing the songs and hymns which glorify God and draw us closer to Him. Thank you for your flexibility and openness to change.

Faithfully yours,

P.S. By the way, we have officially changed Kent Bates' title from Director of Music Ministries to Director of Music and Worship Arts to better reflect the scope of his responsibilities and leadership. Thank you, Kent, for helping us make a "joyful noise."

# ShareFest Weekend Coming Soon



Remember last year when there was no snow and the sky was blue and the grass was growing? Well, it's going to be that way soon; and when that happens, we will have the chance to go out into our community and

show Christ's Love in tangible ways. **ShareFest Weekend** is a little less than two months away. The weekend of **April 24 and 25** over 30 churches in the Valley will go out into the community to serve friends, neighbors, and even strangers in practical ways. We will be doing many projects at our adopted school, Orchard Avenue Elementary, as well as our college care packages, a quilting event, cookie making, and decorating tote bags to give to local non-profits. Many of our small groups and in some cases just groups of friends will take on projects such as helping elderly people get ready for spring by turning their mattress, washing their windows, raking their lawns, and weeding their gardens. We will have projects for Saturday, for Sunday, and larger projects for both Saturday and Sunday. Get your kids involved, invite your neighbors to join us, and if the in-laws are in town, bring them along. Beginning March 21 there will be a table in the Lobby where you can look at available projects. Or you can go to the website [www.gisharefest.com](http://www.gisharefest.com) and check out the projects that are currently on the site. Please email Debe at [outreach@firstpresgj.org](mailto:outreach@firstpresgj.org) or call (242-1923) for more information.

## Free Reading Material

The next *Our Daily Bread*, is available on the table next to the Library door. Why not try doing a daily devotion with the short devotions this little book offers. This is free material for all who would like the book, while quantities last.

There are also Bibles and other devotionals available, you are always welcome to take what you need.

## Upcoming Koinonia Retreat



**Looking for an opportunity to relax** and to reflect on your own faith and relationship with God? Then don't miss out on the next Koinonia retreat (Friday, March 12, through Sunday, March 14).

**Must register by March 2.** For more information, please contact Sherry Verdick (245-5725).

"Now about the collection for God's people [*the Church*]... On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income..."

- 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

## Gifted To Serve Class



Gifted  
To Serve

What are your spiritual gifts, talents, and passions? What is your personality style? God gave you all of the above and more. Why? We have been blessed to be a blessing to others. God made each of us unique with our own set of gifts, passions, talents, and quirks. He wants us to use them to love others and to glorify Him by using our own uniqueness, all He made us to be, in serving others. This is good. There is freedom and joy in being who God made you to be!

Taking a *Gifted to Serve Class* is one step you can take to help in understanding what your own unique set of spiritual gifts, talents, passions, and personality style is. Formerly this class was known as the 301 Class, Network Class, or Spiritual Gifts Class. If you've already taken this class and still feel uncertain as to what your spiritual gifts and passions are or how they could be used to serve others, please come to the *Gifted to Serve Class* follow-up/reunion on April 18 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at the church. This reunion will provide us with time to share and discuss our spiritual gifts, watch a video about identifying and putting our strengths to work, and enjoy an afternoon coffee and dessert together. Join us as we continue to explore our God-given gifts and learn how to utilize them to glorify the Body of Christ, both inside and outside our church.

Ministry Team: Equipping

## Sense Of Community



The *Good News Jail & Prison Ministry* is holding its Spring Banquet and Silent Auction on **Friday, March 19**, at the Genesis Christian School in Clifton. The silent auction begins at 5:30 and the dinner is at 6:30. The guest speaker is Dr. Christopher E. Riley. Dr. Riley was once a Sergeant in the U.S. Marines stationed in Iran when the U.S. Embassy was taken. In the 80's, he found himself an inmate in the Fairfax County, VA Jail where Alan Kaiser, our current Mesa County Good News Jail & Prison Ministry Chaplain, was ministering. Since leaving Fairfax County Jail, Dr. Riley has earned numerous degrees from various Universities including Richmond Seminary. First Pres. would like to fill at least one table for this event. Tickets are \$25 each or \$180 for a table of 8. If you would like to attend this event, please contact Debe Colby at 242-1923 ([outreach@firstpresgj.org](mailto:outreach@firstpresgj.org)) or John Young at 242-8290 or [jpy7@bresnan.net](mailto:jpy7@bresnan.net).

# Give Up Or Take Up?

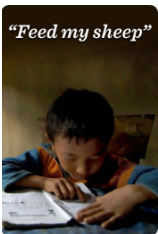


In the years I served in the pastoral ministry, I always marked the church seasons for my congregations. We are currently in the days of Lent: these are forty days set apart for Christians to prepare for the fullness of Easter joy. Many people, as a token of sharing Jesus' agony associated with the cross, give up some pleasurable indulgence. I have a female friend who craves chocolate candy. Every Lent she gives up that delicacy. But come Easter morning keep your eyes on your chocolate bunnies.

It occurs to me that *giving up* some joy may be personally beneficial, but that *taking up* something might be even more appropriate as a Lenten gesture. In the semi-arid land of Galilee, Jesus suggested giving a cup of cold water in His name. In this unusually cold winter in the Grand Valley, a cup of hot soup might be more appreciated. A cup of hot soup may take many forms -- choose one suitable to your situation.

Cy Smith, Parish Associate

## One Great Hour of Sharing



Jesus said "Feed My Sheep." Since 1949, Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through the **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering to share God's love with people experiencing need. Our gifts support ministries of disaster response, refugee assistance and resettlement, and community development that help people find safe refuge, start new lives and work together to strengthen their families and communities. Recognizing that the hope we have in Christ is lived out in our hope for one another, we respond with gifts that help our sisters and brothers around the world find the way to a brighter future. The [Presbyterian Hunger Program](#) receives 36 percent of undesignated One Great Hour of Sharing gifts, while the [Self-Development of People](#) and [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#) each receive 32 percent. This year through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance portion of the One Great Hour of Sharing, the greater Presbyterian Church has sent over **\$200,000** to assist with disaster relief in Haiti. There will be an ongoing need for financial support in that country for many years to come. The One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be taken on Palm Sunday, March 28. During the week of March 22 you will be receiving a letter and an offering envelope in the mail. Please prayerfully consider supporting this mission area. Checks for this offering should be made out to First Presbyterian Church with One Great Hour of Sharing on the memo line.

# Minute for Mission



The Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) is a non-profit, [inter-denominational Christian organization](#) dedicated to assisting the persecuted church worldwide. Their mission is to serve the persecuted church through practical and spiritual assistance while leading Christians in the free world into fellowship with them. VOM was founded in 1967 by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned 14 years in Communist Romania for his faith in Christ. His wife, Sabina, was imprisoned for three years. In the 1960s, Richard, Sabina, and their son, Mihai, were ransomed out of Romania and came to the United States. The Wurmbrands spread the message of the atrocities that Christians face in restricted nations, while establishing a network of offices dedicated to assisting the persecuted church. The Voice of the Martyrs main purposes are: (1) to encourage and empower Christians to fulfill the Great Commission in areas of the world where they are persecuted for their involvement in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ; (2) to give relief to the families of Christian martyrs in these areas of the world; (3) to equip local Christians to love and win to Christ their enemies who are opposed to the gospel in countries where believers are actively persecuted for their Christian witness; (4) to undertake projects of encouragement, helping believers rebuild their lives and Christian witness in countries that have formerly suffered Communist oppression; (5) to emphasize the fellowship of all believers by informing the world of atrocities committed against Christians and by remembering their courage and faith. First Pres. is supporting Voice of the Martyrs in 2010 with mission funds of \$125 per month (\$1,500 for the year).

## Book Group Starting Up



The enthusiasm for various Senior Ministry activities has been contagious! Besides the monthly game days we have several out-to-eat groups. More monthly activities are in the planning stage.

Michael Rogers would like to start a **Book Group**. The books would include novel/fiction. Several have indicated interest, but no formal time has been set up for this activity. A sign-up sheet is available at the Information Desk if you are interested in this group. You will be contacted with the time and location of the first meeting. At the first meeting the group will pick the first book and decide how often to meet. Call Michael Rogers (255-8392) with questions. (It is likely that participants don't have to be seniors for this activity.)