

One in the Spirit

A monthly email from Linda Valentine strengthening community between the General Assembly Mission Council and Middle Governing Bodies

What's coming up?



PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

[Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#) rushes help to Haiti - Thanks to the prayers, actions and gifts of compassionate Presbyterians, we are on the ground responding in Haiti. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has already sent funds and is working in cooperation with our ecumenical partners to provide emergency support to earthquake survivors, including food, water, sanitation equipment, shelter and medical supplies. Because the recovery will be long, we invite you to continue to [pray for those affected](#) and give to the ongoing relief through [PDA account number DR000064](#). Gifts can also be made by phone at (800) 872-3283, and checks can be mailed to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. "Haiti has been devastated," said Randy Ackley, PDA coordinator. "The people there need help now and we are rushing in assistance. However, they will also need help for many months and years to come. Recovery from a disaster such as this is not rapid or easy. We want to be there to help over the long term."



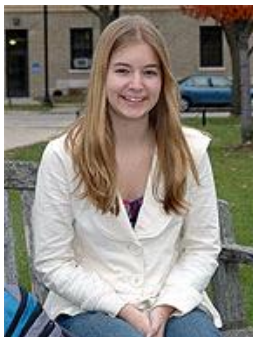
[Register Now](#) for 2010 Ecumenical Advocacy Days, A Place to Call Home: Immigrants, Refugees, and Displaced Peoples, March 19-22, 2010, Washington, D.C. Jesus had no place to lay his head. Neither do tens of millions of migrants, refugees and displaced persons. Ecumenical Advocacy Days is an action weekend that will address this reality. Join hundreds of faith-based advocates in taking action on U.S. legislation that will welcome immigrants, protect refugees and prevent displacement of millions. Participants will worship, study and dialog together. There will be special events for Presbyterians as well as times for people to meet and plan in state groups. On Monday, participants will visit Capitol Hill to advocate for our members of Congress to remedy these global injustices. [Learn more](#) and [register now](#) for this important faith-in-action event.



[The Racial Ethnic Torch](#), a newsletter published by [Racial Ethnic Ministries](#), offers news, events and issues of concern to racial ethnic Presbyterians and is now available as an [e-newsletter](#). The [Torch](#) serves as a tool to connect you to new resources and upcoming events, to equip you with information that will bolster your faith life and ministry and to inspire you as we share stories of racial ethnic Presbyterians in the church, such as the [Barbershop Raps Ministry](#) highlighted in this issue. [Sign up](#) for the bi-monthly e-newsletter.



What Does It Mean to Be Church - Most of the time we don't need to be too precise about what we mean when we say "church." There are times, however, when this fuzziness becomes problematic. We end up fuzzy in our thinking, which leads us to be fuzzy in our conversation about the church and, ultimately, in our living. John Burgess urges us to do better. He points to places where thinking theologically about the church can reshape our attitudes and practices, turning us toward the world by turning us toward Jesus Christ. His essay, [Thinking Theologically About the Church](#), [pdf] is the latest in the Re-Forming Ministry Occasional Paper Series. Read the paper and then join the [online discussion](#).



[The National Presbyterian College Scholarship Program](#), administered through [Financial Aid for Studies](#), a ministry of the [Office of Vocation](#), offers need-based scholarship assistance to full-time students entering their first year of college at [one of the participating colleges related to the Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\)](#). Applicants must be confirmed members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and carry a 3.0 cumulative GPA from high school. Applications for the 2010-2011 academic year are due by January 31. [Download an application](#) today.



[Presbyterian World Mission](#) launched a monthly podcast on January 15 titled **God's Mission Matters**. The podcast, which can be heard [here](#), is aimed at helping Presbyterians engage more faithfully and effectively in God's mission. The podcast features stories from mission workers that illustrate guiding principles for mission involvement, a Scripturally-based reflection based on the "mission tip of the month," an opportunity for listeners to share their best mission practices and a "tool kit" for deeper study and reflection. The inaugural podcast focuses on listening to and learning from global partners and includes a story by [Cobbie Palm](#), a long-time mission worker in the Philippines.

Lives Transformed

Stories of how an individual's life has been impacted by the programs, initiatives and activities of the General Assembly Mission Council

Tamara Pridgen

A missional spirit



Louisville, Ky. (January 21, 2010) - Ten years ago, 22-year old Tamara Pridgen never would have imagined she would be back in her old middle school as a long-term substitute teacher and behavioral interventionist, working with students in the same classrooms where she herself once sat.

Pridgen – who lives in Wilmington, Del., with her grandmother, Edythe – spends each full day assisting the school's librarian, teaching sixth graders, working with students to prepare them for the state exam and mentoring students with behavioral problems in the in-school suspension room.

When Pridgen talks about where she is now, what she is doing, and how she got there, she speaks with genuine excitement about her faith and her vocation. She gratefully acknowledges that because she was awarded a [Student Opportunity Scholarship](#) from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), she was able to graduate from Wilmington University in New Castle, Del., with a degree in Behavioral Science in 2009. The Student Opportunity Scholarship serves PC(USA) college students in select majors – education, health service/science, religious studies, sacred music, social service/science – by providing financial aid for the third and fourth years of an undergraduate program. [[Read more](#)]