

# The News

## of San Fernando Presbytery

Every Church a Mission Center April 2009

### SFP CANDIDATE TRAVELS TO COLOMBIA

The following article is by Sarah Henken, a Candidate under care of the Presbytery of San Fernando.

My name is Sarah Henken, and many of you know me as a candidate from our presbytery, now seeking a call. Something you may not know is that during my years in seminary I became involved with Presbyterian mission in Colombia.

The Colombia Accompaniment Program, now in its fifth year, arose from a request by our partner denomination, the Presbyterian Church of Colombia. Colombia has suffered four decades of violent internal conflict, which has been exacerbated over time by an illicit drug trade. In the midst of this violence, the Presbyterian Church of Colombia speaks out against human rights abuses and stands with the victims—and for this it faces continued harassment. The presence of international accompaniers provides a measure of safety as well as a real solidarity for the Colombian church.

We go with eyes, ears, and hearts that will come to know the story and provide a voice to share the reality that we have witnessed, and decry any abuse that befalls our brothers and sisters. I was forever changed by my first accompaniment experience in Colombia three years ago, and am excited to have the opportunity to return again April 13-May 21 to accompany our brothers and sisters in this courageous and

faithful church.

I will be one of two accompaniers present with them during that time, monitoring the presbytery office and meetings, visiting communities of displaced persons with whom the Colombian church works, and joining for worship and Bible study with various congregations in and around Barranquilla. It will be a privilege for me to walk alongside members of the Presbyterian Church of Colombia in their journey of faith and ministry as they seek peace for the people of their country.

Our presbytery's Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation committee has decided to support me in this effort, for which I am most grateful.

Please remember me and the Presbyterian Church of Colombia in your prayers. If you would like to read weekly accounts of my experience (and that of other accompaniers), visit

[www.presbypeacefellowship.org](http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org)

I look forward to sharing stories with all of you when I return about how God is at work in the midst of the beautiful, conflicted country of Colombia.



Sarah Henken, Candidate under care of San Fernando Presbytery

### North's Notes



### Thoughts from Executive Presbyter Jerry North

Easter! Easter bunnies, Easter eggs, flowers blooming, springtime, the first robin, cocoons soon to bring forth butterflies, resurrection of nature all around us. We say that Jesus is like that, a variation of spring. We liken him to the lowly caterpillar who was wrapped in the cocoon of death on Calvary and on Easter Sunday emerged as a divine butterfly and went on his way to sit at the right hand of God in heaven.

A lovely springtime tableau but it's all pure parody, pure pagan drive! Bill Bausch suggests to us that Easter is about a body that somehow got loose. It's about a dead Jesus, horribly crucified, who came back to harass us. Easter is about a Jesus who while alive was so radical, so counter cultural that the prevailing culture killed him. He was a threat to the world as it was and is more of a threat now that he is footloose after the resurrection. Bunnies and butterflies we can handle, but a risen Christ, just as radical as he ever was, is too much.

It would be great to say something soft and innocuous about Easter, but the fact is, it is not there. He said to seek first the Kingdom of God, being concerned for others. He spoke about forgiving one's enemies as a condition for being forgiven, for being whole. He said that we were to absolutely and without equivocation believe in God and God's wild, wild love of us and that we count far more than the sparrow that falls to the ground. The clincher is - *he actually did those things!*

Jesus is radical, counter cultural, and RISEN! He is a body got loose. That's the Easter message. He has nothing against caterpillars, eggs, butterflies: they belong to Hallmark. He is looking for fellow radicals. They belong to him.

Blessings,  
Jerry North  
Executive Presbyter

## ***WHAT IS FAIR TRADE?***

*Phil Fehrle is an elder at First Presbyterian Church, Burbank. The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee of San Fernando Presbytery has asked him to provide the following information on Fair Trade.*

God created us in his image. He tells us, therefore, that we are precious to him and, likewise, that we should be precious to one another. Yet we don't have to go far to learn that God's notion of the preciousness of all peoples is not reflected in the world's socio-economic makeup. The very rich have abundance beyond the dreams of most people. The very poor live barely sustainable lives. Yet, in God's eyes, they are equally precious. Simply put, Fair Trade empowers farmers and farm workers to lift themselves out of poverty by investing in their farms and communities, protecting the environment and developing the business skills necessary to compete in the global marketplace.

### **What does Fair Trade mean?**

► **Fair Price:** Democratically organized farmer groups receive a guaranteed minimum floor price and an additional premium for certified organic products. ► **Fair Labor Conditions:** Workers on Fair Trade farms enjoy freedom of association, safe working conditions and living wages. Forced child labor is strictly prohibited. ► **Direct Trade:** Importers purchase from Fair Trade producer groups as directly as possible, eliminating unnecessary middlemen. ► **Democratic and Transparent:** Fair Trade farmers and farm workers decide democratically how to invest Fair Trade revenues. ► **Community Development:** Fair Trade farmers and farm workers invest Fair Trade premiums in social and business development projects like scholarship programs, quality improvement training and organic certification. ► **Environmental Sustainability:** Harmful agrochemicals and GMO's are strictly prohibited in favor of environmentally sustainable farming methods.

### **What can you do?**

- **Shop Ethically:** Look for the Sweat Free label on clothing. Look for the Fair Trade label on handicrafts, coffee, chocolate, tea, sugar, wine and other products.
- **Host Fair Trade Events:** The best way to educate your congregation is to host an event (perhaps a Fair Trade coffee tasting at your social hour following church services). Contact Phil Fehrle at [pfehrle@gmail.com](mailto:pfehrle@gmail.com).
- **Participate:** Fair Trade LA sponsors and participates in Fair Trade events. For more information visit FTLA's website at <http://fairtradela.wordpress.com> or email them at [fairtradela@gmail.com](mailto:fairtradela@gmail.com) or call them at (213) 637-7560.
- **Educate Yourself:** Go to these websites: Transfair ([www.transfairusa.org](http://www.transfairusa.org)) and Fair Trade Resource Network ([www.fairtraderesource.org](http://www.fairtraderesource.org)).

Remember God's promise to us in Ephesians II: 8-10: *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. So, just do what you can. That's all God expects.*

## **FAMILY RESCUE CENTER/RESCATE PLANS TO EXPAND SERVICES**

**Family Rescue Center is in its eleventh year of service to the poor and vulnerable. God has blessed FRC with wonderful supporters and volunteers. Many of the readers of this paper are well acquainted with our organization and we thank them for their support. For those who do not yet know us, we'd like to tell you what we do.**

**We are presently serving 1800 families and close to 200 homeless persons by providing food and clothing. We also provide medical screenings and referral services, and we have computer classes to help students and persons who need jobs. Every August we gather and distribute much needed school supplies to those in need. At Thanksgiving we prepare a staggering number of food baskets for the poor. And at Christmas we have a huge food and children's gift program.**

**Our dream is to be able to provide more medical and counseling services. To do this, we need an exam/counseling room and a restroom. (At present there is no running water in the manufactured building housing FRC.)**

**We are thrilled to announce that the local Presbytery grant committee made a site visit, saw the wonderful work we are doing, and committed to making a donation for one-third of the money needed for the project. We are very excited that God is providing a way for FRC to move forward. A special building fund has been established for this purpose.**

**Christ has directed us to help people in need and He tells us, "In as much as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto Me."**

**How can you help? In addition to monetary donations, there is always a need for help at special events and fundraising. If you are able to help us initiate new services, such as tutoring and teaching assimilation skills, please give FRC at call at 818-884-7587.**

## ENHANCING WORSHIP THROUGH THE VISUAL ARTS WORKSHOP

Saturday May 16th  
9:00 am to 4:00 pm  
Kirk o' the Valley Presbyterian Church  
19620 Vanowen Street  
Reseda, CA 91335

Workshop Leader: **Elizabeth (Betsy) Steele Halstead** is Continuing Education Events Manager for the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship and Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, MI. She coordinates the visual arts work of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. Betsy's areas of interest include encouraging life-long learning for leaders and laity of the church, and interdisciplinary studies, with particular focus on the integration of theology and the arts. She is an active lay leader of the church, participating as a liturgist and educational leader. She graduated from Calvin College with degrees in art and psychology and from Fuller Theological Seminary with a Master of Arts degree in theology.

### Workshop Overview:

Art, the Bible, & the Church (*Why*)

Visuals Speak Theologically (*What*)

Elements of Design and Team Structure (*How*)

Application to Your Church: Informal Discussion and Working Groups (*Now*)

Cost: \$10 includes lunch and resources

Contact Kirk office at 818-345-2535 or kirkval@aol.com

## CPIP LOSS PREVENTION SEMINARS

**For those of you who missed the previous loss prevention seminar presented by Carmen Siegel of CPIP, you have three more opportunities to attend. Your church is eligible for a 4% discount if a representative attends all four sessions (one full day).**

**The seminar will be presented on the following dates:**

**April 25  
First PC San Bernardino**

**May 2  
Santa Barbara Presbytery**

**May 30  
San Gabriel Presbytery**

**For more information contact:  
Carmen Siegel, Director of Member Services  
Covenant Presbyterian Insurance Program  
Carmen@cpip.org**

## MOVE INTO THE 21ST CENTURY!

Would you like to receive this newsletter via e-mail? The Communication & Church Support Committee would like to move toward electronic distribution in order to save paper and save money. Not to mention the fact that those who sign up will be able to view The News in glorious color!

If this sounds good to you, send your e-mail address to:

**PJohanson@sfpresby.org**

Does the concept of a "Single Payer" health plan give you the shudders? Or is it something you think is sensible? Either way, you probably don't really understand what it entails. You have an opportunity to hear from a variety of experts in health care financing and service delivery at:

### THE SINGLE PAYER SOLUTION

An Educational Conference  
Saturday, May 9, 2009, 9:00am to 3:30 pm  
Pasadena Presbyterian Church

Register by calling the Rev. Dr. Ray Heer, Chairperson of the Conference Planning Committee at 626-798-0166.

Speakers will include:

Elizabeth Sholes, Director of Public Policy for California CHURCH IMPACT; Former California Sen. Sheila Kuehl; Rev. David Bos, General Assembly of the PC(USA); Sally Seven, Board member of Los Angeles and Claremont League of Women Voters, and others.

*Learn what single payer really means and then decide whether it is worth your support.*

The conference is sponsored by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA); Pasadena Presbyterian Church; the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Task Force of the Synod of Southern CA and Hawaii PC (USA); the JPIC Work Group of the Presbytery of San Fernando, California Church IMPACT; Health Care for All, San Gabriel Chapter; and others.

**The Presbytery of San Fernando  
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14225 Roscoe Blvd.  
Panorama City, CA 91402**

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**Summer 2009 Mission Trip  
July 5-11, 2009  
Port Neches, TX  
Anticipated Cost is \$240/person (plus airfare).**

The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation committees of San Fernando and San Gabriel presbyteries are once again partnering to offer a mission trip opportunity—this year to Galveston County in Texas to help with rebuilding efforts. We have booked space for 30 people—First come, first served with payment of \$240 per person by April 30. (Additional spaces available on a conditional basis.)

**Participant Qualifications:** High school and college students ages 16 and up and adults willing to provide youth leadership. (Youth must be 16 years or older at the time of the trip. No exceptions.) Church youth groups must maintain a 5:1 ratio of youth to adults.

**To secure a spot on the team:** Send checks payable to the Presbytery of San Gabriel by Thursday, April 30.  
*Presbytery of San Gabriel, 630 N. Dalton Ave., Azusa, CA 91702, Attn: Pat Collins*

**Questions about the trip?** Contact: Lisa Patriquin, Glendale Presbyterian Church, 818-242-8873 x 238,  
[lpatriquin@glenpres.org](mailto:lpatriquin@glenpres.org)

*The Presbytery of San Fernando News* is published monthly by the Communication & Church Support Committee of the Presbytery. Contributions are welcomed. Deadline for each issue is the 25th of the preceding month. Dr. Gerald O North, Executive Presbyter; Casey Maddren, Editor. Submissions to: [cmaddren@linkline.com](mailto:cmaddren@linkline.com)