



THE NEWS

Nov.
2011

OF SAN FERNANDO PRESBYTERY

NEWS

NOVEMBER PRESBYTERY TO BE HELD AT WOODLAND HILLS

Woodland Hills Presbyterian Church will host the next meeting of Presbytery, to be held on Tuesday, November 29, at 5:00 pm.

One of the most important items on the agenda will be the adoption of the 2012 budget, which will require some tough decisions due to current economic realities. Commissioners will also recognize Acting Stated Clerk Sara Bauer, who will be stepping down at the end of this year. And Rev. Bob Thomson will be installed as Moderator for 2012.

In order to keep meetings shorter, the Presbytery is implementing a new approach for committee reports. Starting in November, all reports that do not require action will be posted as videos on YouTube rather than being presented during the meeting. The hope is that interested parties will be able to access the reports ahead of time, and so reduce the time needed to conduct business.

WATCH THE PRESBYTERY ON YOUTUBE

The Presbytery of San Fernando now has its own channel on YouTube. In order to disseminate information in a faster, more-user friendly way, the Presbytery has begun posting videos on the net. To check out the content available so far, go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/PresbyofSanFernando>

“BRIDGES” TO CULTIVATE CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITIES

By Erin Dunigan, Presbyterian News Service

“We don’t plant churches. We don’t plant worship services. We plant ourselves.” So says the Rev. Jim Milley, associate pastor for outreach and equipping at [La Cañada Presbyterian Church](#) and founder of [Bridges](#), an organization that seeks to do just that.

Bridges, founded in March 2010, nurtures those who will be leaders in Christ-following communities. Its vision, “100 new Christ-centered communities in the greater Los Angeles area, 1,000 on the West Coast,” might seem daunting to some. But not to Milley. His vision, and the mission for Bridges, is to provide support for leaders wanting to start new worshipping communities, especially among those who would not normally want anything to do with church.



Rev. Jim Milley

“We don’t bring the gospel — we dig for the gospel,” Milley said. He believes that the focus should be uncovering and discovering how God is already at work in a particular community. “We plant ourselves, we dig for the gospel and we water the community. We don’t want our leaders to invite people to come to church — first we want to find a way to bless the community.”

“At times in the past, because the U.S. has been more Christian than not, we could start with a worship service and invite people because they grew up in it and knew what it was,” Milley explains. “But 70 percent of Americans are choosing not to participate in our worship services right now. I think that Presbyterians have a lot to offer. Bridges just provides a channel through which that energy and those resources can be expressed.”

Bridges, an independent non-profit, is the creation of La Cañada Presbyterian Church and is in a covenant relationship with the Presbytery of San Fernando. Rather than follow the traditional formula, which emphasizes planting ‘churches’, the people at Bridges prefer to use the term ‘Christ-following communities’. “At the beginning we used the word church and immediately people would think big money and lots of staff,” Milley said. “When you are dealing with facilities and educated clergy you are talking about a cost structure that most Americans can no longer afford.”

“It is possible to be used by God to start Christ-centered communities without actually getting grants from anybody,” Milley emphasizes. “That is what God is doing all around the world.” His hope is that Bridges may be one of those tools that God is using.

BAKER'S DOZEN

*Some Thoughts from
Interim Executive Presbyter
Rev. Ken Baker*



My Neighbor's Lawn

Here it is November and I realize that I need to fertilize my lawn (ah, steer manure, the smell of LA in the Fall!). I sometimes forget before it is too late in the season, and the lawn shows the difference between my attention or neglect! When I forget I find myself embarrassed when comparing my lawn to that of the guy next door. He's constantly fertilizing and watering and his lawn seems to look great all year. Once I said to someone that the problem wasn't that the other lawns in the neighborhood looked mediocre, but that Jose's lawn always looks so good! Jose is the problem!

It is easy to do the same thing in our spiritual lives and our ministries. When we are being the person God has called us to be and doing what we are called to do, the results will be ones that honor our Creator. When we're focusing our attention elsewhere, comparing ourselves to others and identifying them as the source of our problems, we will quickly lose our focus on the ministry we need to be about.

Right now, our denomination is undergoing significant changes and we don't know where those will lead. It's certainly appropriate to be aware of those changes and how they affect our congregations. But we need to continue to focus our primary attention on the lives Christ calls us to live. We all have our shortcomings, but the more we concentrate on the deficiencies of one another, the more we will be diverted from the ministry to which Christ calls us. During this uncertain time for the world, our country, our denomination and ourselves, the more important it is for us to hold fast to God's leading in our lives. Whatever happens in the world around us, let's remember to *keep the main thing the main thing*.

WELCOMING THE STRANGER

A monthly series by the Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creating Committee (JPIC)

Who of us likes to pay taxes? Warren Buffet, maybe, but most of us make an effort to pay as little as possible. But we are certainly critical of those who don't pay, which leads us to Immigrant Myth #3.

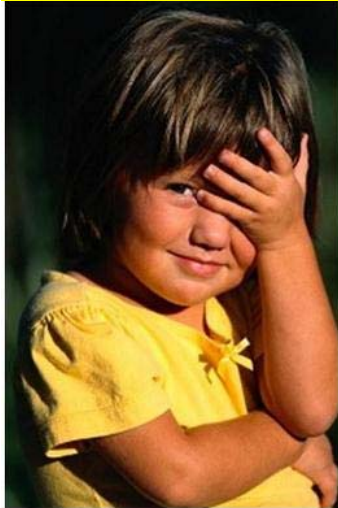
Myth: Immigrants don't pay taxes.

Fact: All immigrants pay taxes, whether income, property, sales, or other. As far as income tax payments go, sources find that immigrants pay between \$90 and \$140 billion a year in federal, state, and local taxes. Even undocumented immigrants pay income taxes, as evidenced by the Social Security Administration's "suspense file" (taxes that cannot be matched to workers' names and social security numbers), which grew \$20 billion between 1990 and 1998.

Source: National Academy of Sciences, Cato Institute, Social Security Administration

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAN YOU HELP?



Consider helping children enjoy Christmas by donating a new toy, in its original box, to the Family Rescue Center. Your support will make a difference to children in our community.

For more details please click on the link below.

<http://rescatefamilycenter.org/>

36th annual San Fernando Valley

CROP WALK

5K Walk, 10K "Fun Run", and Tot Walk

Sunday, November 13, 2011

Registration 12:30 p.m. Walk Starts 1:30 p.m.

Congregational Church of the Chimes

14115 Magnolia Blvd, Sherman Oaks

For more information, contact Carol Hiestand:

818 886-5531

chiestand@socal.rr.com

Last year we raised more that \$20,000 which went to Valley Interfaith Food Pantries and Church World Service to help in the U.S. and internationally.

COME AND JOIN US! YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID!!



Building a Better World, One House at a Time

The **Fuller Center** for Housing is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty housing worldwide. Currently they are looking to fill two vacancies on their Board of Directors with members from the San Fernando Valley. In the long-term, they hope to find an individual who can lead their mission in this area.

If you would like to be involved, please contact Jim Adams at:

sawtooth7@sbcglobal.net

Is your church on facebook? Should it be?



Attend this free webinar and learn
how to keep your congregation
and your church safe!

SOCIAL MEDIA—PLAN, PREPARE, PROTECT!

November 30, 8:00 am and 12:00 noon

To register, click on the link below:

<https://insuranceboard.ilinc.com/perl/ilinc/lms/event.pl>

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

***Friday, Nov. 4, (1:00 pm to approx. 8:00 pm)
Saturday Nov. 5 (9:00 am to approx. 12:00 noon)***

***La Canada Presbyterian Church
626 Foothill Blvd.***

***The Synod Assembly is composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries
and officers elected by the Synod Assembly. All are welcome to attend.***

The News of San Fernando Presbytery is published monthly by the Communication & Church Support Committee, Areta Crowell, Chair. Submissions and comments should be sent to Casey Maddren, Editor. E-Mail: cmaddren@sfpresby.org