

The Westwind

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Co-Editors: Wanda Garson, Elaine Leiter

Most of you are aware that I am working towards my Doctor of Ministry degree from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Several people have recently asked questions about how that process is going, so I'd like to use this forum to bring everyone up-to-date.

APTS offers two courses each year; one in January and a second in June. Each course requires an intensive, two-week, on-campus residency. We are usually required to read several books before going to Austin and may also be asked to write a paper to be turned in upon arrival. Depending upon the particular class, there may or may not be some follow-up work back home in our churches; what academics call our "context."

Each student who enters the program begins by taking three required courses; one in theology, another in Bible and a third in writing at the doctoral level. After completing the required classes, students must take three elective courses and most opt to take another doctoral writing seminar. Finally, the student is allowed an additional 18-months to develop, conduct and write-up a major, doctoral-level project. With only two classes offered each year, you can see it takes a while to complete the program. 18-months for the first phase, another 24-months for the electives and the 18-months to complete the final project add up to a minimum of five years from start to graduation.

In reality, few doctoral students graduate that quickly, because something almost invariably happens that forces a student to skip one or two courses. In my case, I missed all of 2006. First, I decided not to go in January of 2006, because it was so busy around the church, and my surgery got in the way of the June course.

So where am I in this journey? I have completed the three required courses. This January I took my first elective course. I hope to complete

the additional two electives and the writing seminar by June of 2008. If it takes the full eighteen months to complete the final doctoral project, I will be looking at completing all of the requirements by the end of 2009 and graduating in May of 2010. As you can see, it all takes considerable time.

The January class I just completed was a challenging two weeks of intensive study with ten other students and Professor Allan Cole, which focused on pastoral counseling in times of crisis. I must now take the theory gained and apply it by completing a project here at Westminster. My project was inspired by one of the books we were required to read before going to Austin, *Pray without Ceasing: Revitalizing Pastoral Care* by Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger. In it, the author focuses on how to pray with people in need. My project involves teaching a six-week course on the subject and then writing up the results. I recruited members of the class from our Diaconal Care Shepherds.

I've been asked if other people in the church can take the course. Unfortunately, not this time. The project requirements are that I work with a particular group within the church. If, however, the course goes well, I will be glad to conduct a second class for any interested persons.

One final note, I am pleased that Dr. Fane Downs will be my on-site advisor for the project.

May we all live lives praying without ceasing,

Jim

Dates and Events to Remember!

Mark Your Calendars!

The next Church Potluck Luncheon will be held after worship, Sunday, February 18th and will be followed by the Annual Congregational Meeting.

The *Donation of the Month* for the Presbyterian Food Pantry will be announced later.

Thank you for the continued support of this mission!



Presbyterian Women News

For the meeting on Tuesday, February 13, please bring a Red article of Children's clothing, any size, for donation to Hope Haven in celebration of Valentine's Day. The Bible study, lesson #6 *Perspectives on Sacrifice - Abraham*, will be given by Abby Parham, followed by the business meeting.

Y'all come and bring a friend!

Notice about Westwind

+++ **February 19th** — next due date! +++

In an effort to distribute the newsletter on the last Sunday of each month, we are asking that all articles be submitted to the office at least a week in advance. Please send the items by e-mail to the church office: office@wpcabilene.org or put them in the *Westwind* box. Thank you!

There will be a **SPIRITUAL RENEWAL GATHERING**

on **February 22, 2007**,
from **6:30pm - 8:30pm**,

at **WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**,
4515 So. 14th in **Abilene**, Texas, 325-692-3544.

and **EVERYONE** is **invited** to this
Cursillo ULTREYA!

The hosts will be **Don & Elaine Leiter**

COME yourself. Bring a covered dish to share. Bring a friend!

Enjoy the fellowship, food, music, praise, singing,
inspiration, prayer, renewal, and lots of fun!

Everyone is invited to Ultreyas, whether or **not** they have been to *Cursillo*, or even are Presbyterians.

February Birthdays

- 3 - Mark Diggs
- 4 - Curtis Johnson
- 6 - Betsy Peaton
- 8 - Charlie Parham
- 20 - Carla Vincent
- 24 - Wanda Garson
- 27 - Margaret Gregory
Jim Wallace
- 29 - Leona Armstrong

February Anniversaries

- 5 - Harroll & Barbara Backus
- 6 - Mark & Sheila Smith

Missions/Stewardship/ News

Dear Westminster Presbyterians,

We have received your quarterly pledge and we do love and appreciate you. Your church is the root of our Celebration Scholarship Fund.

Very Sincerely,
Boo Nemir
Celebration Scholarship Board

A Heartfelt Thanks—

To the members of Westminster for their support in last year's "Christmas Tree Gift Giving".

The recipient was Cancer Services Network, a local organization, which will receive a check for \$405.00. Again, thanks for your generous donations.

Budget Financial Summary 12/31/06

Budget Monthly: \$10,350.00
Collected: \$13,412.20
Difference : \$3,062.20

Budget to Date: \$124,200.00
Actual Giving: \$143,767.98
Difference: \$19,567.98

PANTRY NEEDS FOR FEBRUARY

Jelly, canned meats (Spam-type, tuna, chicken, etc.), flour, sugar and money—Thanks!
Your help is very much appreciated!

Please REMEMBER that the FIRST Sunday of every MONTH is PANTRY DAY. Come to worship and bring with you, FOOD (non-perishable items) and/or MONEY (cash or checks) for the PANTRY. The hungry people of Abilene will THANK YOU!!!

WHAT? "A Short Course in Christianity."

NAME? Palo Duro Presbyterian Cursillo #19.

WHERE? Ceta Canyon Camp, Happy, Texas.

WHEN? April 12-15, 2007.

WHY? To be renewed and enriched in YOUR faith.

HOW? Applications forms are in the Narthex.

WHO? YOU !

Thanks to You!

To My Mother's Church Family —

Thank you to all who comforted and supported us through my mom's illness and passing. We appreciate the many kindnesses extended to us in this difficult time. Most of all, Fane, thank you for the absolute peace and calm that washed over me during the Meditation at her Celebration of Life — an affirmation of God's love and watchfulness.

**Sincerely,
Sherrill Adams
(Daughter of Peggy Hawes)**

A late Thank You—

To the many people who prepared the wonderful meal for the family of Peggy Hawes—I say Thank You. The set up in the family room looked beautiful.

Vernon, I know Peggy looked down from her lofty place in heaven and said, "I love those dishes with the garden borders."

Everyone that was called and asked to participate said "Yes"—Sweet Connie Gill was my right hand lady and I thank her for her help.

My life has been so wound around my friendship with Peggy that there is an emptiness in my middle. I do miss her so much.

JoAnn Peterson

To the members of Westminster Presbyterian Church—

My family and I would like to say Thank You for all your love and support in the loss of my sister, Mary Allen. May God's love and grace shine on all of you.

**God Bless,
Rodney Price**

To the wonderful people of Westminster.

Thank you very much for the generous monetary gift you gave to Pat and me this Christmas! We promise to use it wisely...and as my dad always cautioned, "Don't spend it all in one place."

Thanks again, Jim and Pat

Westminster Prayer List for February 2007

Each week we will be praying specifically for several of our WPC families. We invite you to join us as we ask God's blessings upon our sisters and brothers in Christ.

Jan. 28th - Feb. 3rd: Margaret Gregory; and Jerry & Carla Vincent
February 4th - 10th: Mark & Nancy Diggs; and Rick & Debra Winckler
February 11th - 17th: Jim & Jewell Halford; Bob Prentice; David & Carolyn Ainsworth
February 18th - 24th: Michael Kerr; and Russell & Joan Brooks
February 25th - March 3rd: Cecile Manter; Charlie & Abby Parham; and Donnie Cozby



Did you know?

- * Over 38 million Americans, including 13.8 million children, suffer from hunger, or are at risk of hunger.
- * Since 1990, youth across America have raised over \$32 million to help fight hunger and poverty through the **Souper Bowl of Caring**.

The youth of Westminster will participate with thousands of other youth in the **Souper Bowl of Caring** on Sunday, February 4th (Super Bowl Sunday). We ask for your help as we collect donations of cash or soup after the worship service. Our donations will go to the Presbyterian Food Pantry. **Thank you!**

Palo Duro Presbytery's Presbyterian CURSILLO

The hymn *Here I am Lord* defines in many ways what *Cursillo* means to Palo Duro Presbytery of North-West Texas. Many *Cursillo* participants find that the singing of this song in the *Cursillo* setting is not just a perfunctory statement of current location, but truly affirms their sincere and intentional pledge to serve the Lord according to His will for them.

At *Cursillo* special relationships -- based on a common faith and commitment to Jesus Christ -- are created, strengthened, and maintained. At *Cursillo* people learn to care about God, each other, and the world around them. At *Cursillo*: faith is deepened; lives for Christ are invigorated; Christian joy is heightened; and Christians are guided into even closer and more personal relationships with Christ.

Cursillo is a "Short Course in Christianity." During a *Cursillo* weekend there are talks given by clergy and lay people, responses to these talks, worship services, celebrations of Holy Communion, devotional moments, small group participations, and community building events. There also are great people, good food, comfortable accommodations, fun times, inspiring music, and spirited singing. *Cursillo* is a camp-like experience for all adult Presbyterians. It is a wonderful, enjoyable, energizing, and enriching weekend.

As has nothing else in recent memory, *Cursillo* has had a more positive impact on the life of Palo Duro Presbytery than any other activity. *Cursillo* offers many opportunities for spiritual renewal and growth. Participants experience the love that God and other Christians have for them. Staff persons are filled with the love that they have for God and other people.

The "4th Day" is the rest of one's life following a three-day *Cursillo* weekend. The 4th Day Community promotes and supports the *Cursillo* weekends, provides prayers and expressions-of-love for participants and staff, and encourages and reinforces its members, called *Cursillistas*, to live as personal agents of Christ.

Cursillo is part of the life pilgrimage of the participant. It is not the beginning, or the end, of a person's faith journey. Neither is it essential to, nor exclusive of, the other parts of an individual's faith experience. *Cursillo* is one way of growing in faith – one way of being equipped and empowered for Christian action in the church, home, place of work, and community.

Cursillistas have the privilege and pleasure of inviting other Presbyterians to attend *Cursillo* weekends. Palo Duro Presbyterian *Cursillos* are held in April and October of each year. The cost is \$155.00 per person, and scholarships may be available. Singles and married couples are welcome; and married couples are encouraged to attend together.

Cursillo goes beyond the boundaries of local churches, Presbyteries, and even denominations. It brings us all together in Christ – and for Christ. *Cursillo* seeks to increase the participants' awareness of the calls and commands of God, to lead them to encounter Christ as the Living Lord, to give them form, strength and resilience, and to challenge them to shape their world after the Kingdom of Christ.

APPLICATION FORMS for Palo Duro Presbyterian Cursillo #19, April 12-15, 2007, are available in the Narthex, or from the Church Office.

McMurry lecture by Dr. W. Eugene March

The Abilene Interfaith Council will sponsor a lecture to be presented by Dr. W. Eugene March entitled "Being Christian in a Religiously Plural World." The lecture will be delivered at McMurry University, 7:00PM, February 1, 2007, in the Mabee Room.

Dr. March is A.B. Rhodes Professor Emeritus of Old Testament at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, where he taught for some twenty-two years. Before his time in Kentucky Dr. March taught for sixteen years at Austin Presbyterian Seminary where he received his B.D. degree. His doctoral work was done at Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University in New York City. He is an ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A native of Dallas, Texas, March lived in Abilene in 1950-51 and attended Abilene High School as a freshman. He later went on to graduate from Austin College in Sherman, Texas.

From the Presbyterian Medical Care Mission...

To everyone at Westminster,

Wow! Is it cold or what? It is during these months of higher electric bills and increased sickness that we are especially grateful for your involvement here at Medical Care Mission. This is an extremely busy season for the Mission and as you probably know, the couple of months following the Christmas holidays are a very difficult time for many low-income families.

Your gift of \$400.00 will help us provide continued care and comfort to over 14,000 patients in 2007. Without your generosity, most of our patients would simply be without primary care, and it is on their behalf that I want to express our deepest gratitude.

Thank you for this blessing. Your involvement and commitment to this ministry of healing continues to enable the Medical Care Mission to provide the highest level of care to our patients.

Again, thank you for this gift and the impact you've made in the lives of our patients by allowing us to demonstrate God's love every day to the hurting.

Sincerely,
J. Scott Golding
Executive Director