



The newsletter of  
**Presbyterian Elders In Prayer**

# PRAYERPOWER

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James 5:14-15

Aug.-Oct. 2008

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Letter from Executive Director....

*“And I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment, so that you can determine what really matters and can be pure and blameless in the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.” Philippians 1:9-11*

Dear Praying Friends:

I'm finding this letter particularly hard to write. Part of it is because the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly just ended a few days ago...and I am still processing what did and didn't happen there. It's also hard because you won't be reading this until August 1<sup>st</sup>, and a great deal of reaction to the Assembly will come forth by that time. At this point, there seems to be much watching and waiting.

I feel led to begin with words of thanksgiving. I am thankful to God for the wonderful experiences we had at the PEP booth in the Exhibition Hall. I was blessed to serve there with Fred and Merrilyn Slack-Schinkel, Joe Pallikkathayil and Margaret Hoogsteen. Joe, Margaret, Fred and Merrilyn have served in PEP's behalf at many General Assemblies, and they brought a spirit of warmth, compassion, and graciousness to this one. I am also thankful for the many, many people who stopped by the booth for prayer...for those who were so grateful and excited about the prayer resources we provided, for those who signed up to receive our emails, for those who shared their excitement about the importance of prayer in their congregations, and for those who shared their longing for more prayer in their Sessions and congregations. I'm also thankful to God for all of those folks who stopped at the booth saying, "Oh! This is the group that sends out those prayer guides we've been using! Thanks!" I left the Assembly knowing that Presbyterian Elders in Prayer provides much needed ministry within the Presbyterian Church, and we need to continue.

I also feel drawn to the text from Philippians 1:9-11. No matter where one stands on the various hot-button issues within the PCUSA, there is no doubt that we are in a time of brokenness and trial. It is a time when our church needs elders who will pray for growth in knowledge and discernment (the kind of genuine discernment the Holy Spirit brings) within themselves and at every level of church life. We need leaders across the board who can determine what really matters and can be pure and blameless in the day

of Christ. The fruit of righteousness seems to be in short supply in the PCUSA, and we need to be praying for it...for the glory and praise of God. In short, this is not a time to give up, to back away from prayer for the whole church. This is a time to recommit to prayer, and there is no better place to start than with our elders. Can Jesus count on you?

In our Savior's service,  
Melany Hamilton  
Executive Director, Presbyterian Elders in Prayer

**PEP NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT** – The presence of Presbyterian Elders in Prayer was needed and appreciated at the recent General Assembly. Unfortunately, it was an expensive GA...the costs for booth space, materials, travel, etc. were much higher for San Jose than for other recent Assemblies. PEP's treasury was greatly depleted. We need to rebuild so that we can faithfully prepare and share our newsletters and website...as well as prepare for future church gatherings. We are so grateful for all your financial support in the past...and with that gratitude and humility, we ask for your financial support now. Gifts can be sent to our treasurer, Fred Schinkel, at 5100 159<sup>th</sup> Terrace, Overland Park, KS, 66085. Thank you!!

### **A NEW WEBSITE FOR PRESBYTERIAN ELDERS IN PRAYER!!**

Just in time for the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the website for Presbyterian Elders in Prayer was up and running. Not many people know about it, but that is changing. Our website is [www.presbypray.org](http://www.presbypray.org)

The website features PEP's history, key Scriptures, prayer guides, latest news, and contact information. Since our "Prayer Power" newsletter will be published just 4 times per year, the website will help our readers to receive up-to-date information and items for prayer. For example, check the website for prayer ideas for the New Wilmington Missionary Conference, the Presbyterian Global Fellowship gathering, names of Presbyterian chaplains serving in our military forces, Presbyterian colleges and seminaries, other renewal groups, etc. We will also post written prayers and suggestions from various PEP board members.

Visit [www.presbypray.org](http://www.presbypray.org) regularly!

### **PRAY FOR NEWLY ELECTED LEADERS**

All of us long for faithful, spiritually mature leaders in our denomination. How will that happen if we are not praying for them? We urge all elders to pray daily for our new Moderator, Bruce Reyes-Chow, and our new Stated Clerk, Gradye Parsons. Pray for their physical and spiritual health, and the health and well-being of their families. Pray for their walk with Christ. Pray that they will be filled with the Holy Spirit, and will grow in the Spirit's fruit and gifts. Also, continue to pray for other leaders, such as Linda Valentine, Tom Taylor, and Hunter Farrel. Look in your church calendar or on our website for more names.

## **A PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH — 2008\***

*Lord, Your church, the one called Presbyterian, is broken and bleeding, fractured and flailing. Like a ship without a rudder we are lost at sea, uncertain of our direction. Embroiled in our internal battles, we have forgotten who we are and whose we are.*

*Forgive us Lord.*

*Forgive us for blind spots and biases that blind us to your truth...for focusing more on winning than loving, on arguments than people...for letting anger overrule compassion, certitude overrule humility.*

*Forgive us for summoning Jesus to be on our side rather than by our side...for using Scripture rather than letting it shape us...for sacrificing obedience at the altar of impulse, truth at the altar of feeling and sacrificial living at the altar of entitlement.*

*Forgive us when the world can see little difference between “Sex in the City” and sex in the Presbyterian Church (USA).*

*Most of all, forgive us for letting our battles in the church continue to shrink our vision for our church.*

*Oh yes, and forgive us...forgive me...for our pride.*

*Lord, in our differences help us to see our oneness in Christ. In our battles help us to love like Jesus. In our arguing help us to listen, really listen. In our frustration help us to trust in Your power. In our setbacks help us to live only in Your hope, the hope of the risen and living Christ. In our church—Your church—help us to define ourselves not by what we are against, but what we are for.*

*Help us, in other words, to see our church and our future with a Kingdom vision, our eyes scanning more and more the length and width, height and depth of Your love. As we seek that Kingdom vision, help us to follow.*

*Oh yes, and always keep us humble.*

*In Your Son’s name, Amen.*

*By Rev. Dr. John G. Hamilton*

*\*Written after the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. This prayer is a psalm-like prayer, not pretty or pure but honest. It is not only a prayer for the church, but for the PRAYER.*

### **Metanoieite**

**“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness.”**

Apostates and schismatics are shredding the fabric of faith’s call to peace, unity, and purity by thinking their righteousness exceeds everybody else’s.

“My Word is bigger than their favorite parts.”

“These are the ones who are like dangerous reefs at your love feasts.”

*Prayer Calendar for August, September and October, 2008*  
*(Prayers inspired by lectionary readings; all prayers are prayed in Jesus' name)*

**Aug. 1-4:** Read Psalm 85 this week. *"Faithful love and truth will join together; righteousness and peace will embrace."* Righteous and loving God, we pray for an outpouring of Your Holy Spirit on every level of church government, from local sessions and presbyteries to Synod and General Assembly councils. Without You, Lord, we cannot join truth and love, or live with both righteousness and peace.

**Aug. 5-11:** Read Hosea 11:1-11 this week. *"I led them with human cords, with ropes of kindness."* Jesus, we are grateful for the ways You have reached out to us with "human cords", guiding us with "ropes" or spiritual fruit of kindness. We pray a special blessing on each one who comes to mind. We offer ourselves to live and serve You as a faithful cord of kindness this day...including at home and in church.

**Aug. 12-18:** Read Hebrews 11 this week. *"Now faith is the assurance of what is hoped for, the conviction of things unseen."* Lord God, we pray for greater faith in Jesus Christ...and we pray for ourselves, for our local congregation, our presbytery, our synod, all the councils and offices of the General Assembly, and our mission stations around the world. Lord, we believe, help thou are unbelief.

**Aug. 19-25:** Read Psalm 80 this week. *"Restore us, God; look on us with favor, and we shall be saved."* All-knowing God, You see clearly the deep wounds within Your church, including that part of it called the PCUSA. Our wounds are greatly painful. Jesus, our Healer, we pray for Your healing and restoring power among us...for Your sake, for Your glory.

**Aug. 26-31:** Read Jeremiah 1 this week. *"I chose you before I formed you in the womb; I set you apart before you were born."* Heavenly Father, many of our children and grandchildren will enter colleges, universities, seminaries and a wide variety of schools this week. Help each young adult to know how much they are loved by their families, including their church families. Help them to know Your love as it surrounds them daily. Help them to seek more than knowledge and job skills, as important as they are. Help them to seek wisdom to know how You, Lord God, have called them and set them apart for faithful service.

**Sept. 2-8:** Read Hebrews 13. *"Don't neglect to do good and to share, for God is pleased with such sacrifices."* Gracious God, we are so thankful for work...our own and the work of those around us. We are especially thankful for those who are alert to using their daily work as an opportunity to do good and share with others. Lord, help all of us to do more than what is "required"...help us to serve and honor You at our workplace, wherever it may be.

**Sept. 9-15:** Read Psalm 139 this week. *"Lord, You have searched me and known me...You have encircled me; You have placed Your hand upon me."* Jesus, so often called "Rabbi" — Teacher, we pray Your blessing and guidance upon the Christian Education ministries of our congregations. May our education go far beyond facts, reaching every one of Your children and leading them into a joyful and ever-deepening personal relationship with the Savior who already knows them and loves them so well.

**Sept. 16-22:** Read Psalm 14 this week. *“The Lord looks down from heaven on the human race to see if there is one who is wise, one who seeks God.”* God of wisdom, look down from heaven to see our theological schools, faculty, staff and students. We pray that You will find many who are wise...many who daily seek You and teach and encourage others to seek You. We rejoice in the promise that they will seek You and find You, when they seek You with their whole heart.

**Sept. 23-29:** Read First Timothy 2:1-7. Lord God, so much of prayer is a mystery. But You have clearly called us to pray, and pray with intercessions and thanksgivings. You have called us to pray for leaders and all those in authority—including those in civil and church governments. We desire to be obedient in this...please send Your Holy Spirit to teach us to pray as You’ve directed. Hear our prayers for leaders and those in authority.

**Sept. 30-Oct. 6:** Read Psalm 91 this week. *“Because he is lovingly devoted to Me, I will deliver him...when he calls out to Me, I will answer him.”* Lord Jesus, You have commanded each of us to be evangelists, to make disciples. Help us to remember that our best tool for evangelism is our own loving relationship with You, and our testimony of Your work of deliverance in our lives. Forgive us for hiding Your light under our baskets.

**Oct. 7-13:** Read Lamentations 3 this week. *“Because of the Lord’s faithful love we do not perish, for His mercies never end. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness!”* Gracious and faithful Savior, we fall to our knees in gratitude for Your daily mercy. Help us to wake up each day ready to see Your mercy and love at work in our local congregation...and in Your churches far and wide. We especially pray for Your mercy on the PCUSA.

**Oct. 14-20:** Read Psalm 66 this week. *“He rules forever by His might; He keeps His eye on the nations.”* Lord of all, in a few weeks we will go to the polls for a major election. We pray that You will keep Your eye on our nation. We pray for Your wisdom. And in the midst of this intense campaign season, remind us that YOU rule forever. Lord God, rule in our lives, our congregations, Your church worldwide, our nation, and throughout the world You love.

**Oct. 21-27:** Read Jeremiah 31 this week. *“I will place My law within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people.”* Jesus, we ask You to write Your law within us, on our hearts. We pray this for ourselves, for our families, our churches, the PCUSA, and Your beloved people around the world. Head knowledge is good, but never enough. Lord, write your law of love and faithfulness upon our hearts.

**Oct. 28-31:** Read 2 Timothy 4:16-18. *“But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me...”* Our Lord, our Shepherd, we thank You for all the times You have stood with us and strengthened us. Today we look beyond our own personal lives, and cry out to YOU to stand with and strengthen Your churches far and wide, including the PCUSA. Rescue us from any evil work and bring us safely into Your heavenly kingdom. May we show forth YOUR glory, now and forever.