



# Good News for the Pews

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A Quarterly for the English-Speaking Worshipping Community

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## Contemplative Action, from John 21: 1-14

The English Commission has been studying the Presbyterian training tool for elders. The second workbook is subtitled 'transformation' and its focus is on how to be transformational leaders in churches that seek to make a difference in the world, rather than just maintain the status quo.

The most recent chapter we studied together was entitled 'Transformational Leaders Practice Spiritual Discernment' and it included a reflection on the difference between a technical fix and an adaptive response. This language (technical versus adaptive solutions) is being used throughout many different kinds of organizations today, including churches. A technical fix usually includes a short term, straight forward solution. If there is a hole in the roof, you fix it. An adaptive challenge, however, is usually more complicated, takes more time, and requires more thoughtful reflection, prayer, discussion and spiritual discernment.



“Technical challenges require little discussion or research. Individuals or groups have the expertise to solve technical challenges. For example, if the carpet in the sanctuary is dirty, then cleaning the carpet is a technical decision. On the other hand, adaptive challenges require significant time, energy and discernment. Stepping up to adaptive challenges requires that we evaluate and often alter our values, beliefs, or behaviors. Both responses can be appropriate, depending on the situation. However, moving too quickly to a technical response can hinder the session’s ability to seek more innovative and Spirit-led solutions”. (*Being Reformed*, Workbook Two, page 12).

I am struck by the fact that even though this particular language (technical verses adaptive) may be a modern notion, this same balancing act between contemplative discernment and action was true in the days of Jesus as well.

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## Contemplative Action, from John 21: 1-14 (continued from page 1)



It is illustrated in this story we have from John 21. Jesus has already appeared to the disciples twice after his resurrection, but for some reason on this particular day, while they are fishing and Jesus is standing on the shore, they do not recognize Jesus. The text says that they did not *know* him. After he gives guidance on a new approach to fishing, they catch so many fish they can hardly haul them in. In that moment, it is John who first recognizes Jesus. He is known as ‘the beloved disciple’, or the disciple that the text often refers to as ‘the one Jesus loved.’ He also becomes known through the Christian tradition as the contemplative disciple, for it was he who was ‘reclining next to Jesus’ during the last Passover supper. There is a belief that he was able to rest his head against Jesus’ chest and therefore hear his heartbeat. This led to a contemplative tradition that guides people to ‘listen for the heartbeat of God’ in all our daily activities.

Peter, in contrast, was always a bit of a zealot. He often spoke without thinking, and would sometimes rush in to a situation to try and fix it. After John discerns that the man on the shore is Jesus, Peter impulsively jumps off the boat into the water and swims to shore to see Jesus. He jumps right in to immediately take action.

While reflecting on this passage, several commentators have pointed out that these two responses of John and Peter represent two streams that run through the Christian tradition: contemplative discernment and action. This could be likened to a technical solution (we rush in and fix it) and an adaptive response (one that also requires reflection, discernment and listening for the voice and will of God before taking action). Depending upon the situation, both are needed and both can flow together in balance.

In our fast paced society, however, it is often true that we may not have the patience for the adaptive responses. We may view entering into the stillness to listen for God’s voice as a waste of time. Theologian Gary Jones writes about this in the *Feasting On the Word* commentary for John 21. “Could it be that ‘reclining with Jesus’, spending tender time with the Lord in prayer, resting our mind at his heart . . . could it be that such quiet immersions of ourselves in the presence of God are the key to recognizing God in our daily lives and ordinary routines? Could it be that our more impetuous inclinations – that follow the inclinations of Peter – waiting to build three booths on the mount of transfiguration or needing to go fishing just to keep busy – could it be that our need to stay on the move and remain productive, instead of “wasting time with God” in prayer, is the thing that often keeps us from recognizing the presence of the Lord in our lives?”

We may not all view prayer as a ‘waste of time’, but the author makes a good point. In our fast paced world, we often value action over contemplation. But in order to discern God’s actions and what it is that God wants us to do, that usually requires that we also engage in listening – which ultimately could save us time by leading us to a more productive path.

(continued on page 3)

**Contemplative Action, from John 21: 1-14** (continued from page 2)

The Elder training handbook puts it this way, “Spiritual discernment is not for the impatient, headstrong, or weak of spirit. It requires a total surrender of ego and expectations, and a complete openness to the Spirit’s movement. Spiritual discernment is the most faithful way to make adaptive decisions, whether as an individual or as a group. When we sincerely seek the will of God, the Spirit opens the door to creativity, innovation, diversity and transformation.”

How might we actively seek God’s loving guidance in our lives, incorporating responses that are both technical and adaptive? As we do so, may we be fed by the Spirit of God, just as Jesus fed the disciples on the lakeshore not only with fish, but also with the life-giving sustenance of his resurrected presence.

*Pastor Kimberly*

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**John 21: 1-14**

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. <sup>2</sup>Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin,\* Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples.<sup>3</sup>Simon Peter said to them, ‘I am going fishing.’ They said to him, ‘We will go with you.’ They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them, ‘Children, you have no fish, have you?’ They answered him, ‘No.’ <sup>6</sup>He said to them, ‘Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.’ So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish.<sup>7</sup>That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, ‘It is the Lord!’ When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake. <sup>8</sup>But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards\* off.

<sup>9</sup> When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to them, ‘Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.’ <sup>11</sup>So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. <sup>12</sup>Jesus said to them, ‘Come and have breakfast.’ Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ because they knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup>Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. <sup>14</sup>This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

## Another Long Term Relationship

by Josh Chuck

Ten years ago, I told anyone who would listen, that I was *never* going to get married. I didn't see the value in it.

Why put a label on something that was perfectly fine?

Then, I entered into a committed relationship, which was itself quite the miracle. I hadn't been in one of those for 10 years! It turned out to be great, but I still didn't feel the need to get married.

Then, it happened. Jik and I were married. But to the casual observer, nothing had changed. We still hung out with our friends, ate at the same restaurants, and followed our favorite sports teams. And yes, we still lived at my Mom's house.



But inside of me, that's a different story. I felt a peace that I had never felt before. Instead of wondering if I was with the right person, I could fully focus on supporting my wife, while she lifted me up through good and tough times. The possibility that a big argument might mean the end of our relationship didn't exist. We were in this thing and it was going to work out. And the sense that no matter what happened, we would be by each other's side? Wow, what a feeling! And now, as a team, I am constantly thankful for and amazed at what we can contribute to others and create for ourselves.

So it goes with the church. After many, many years of reflection and discernment (even more than 10!), I feel very committed to this community at PCC and Christians everywhere. I've been so inspired by church members who have maintained their commitment to Christian values, and show it through their actions. I've watched a community of people support each other unconditionally, for decades. The impact that support has had on everyone involved is a truly incredible thing. And I think that's something I'm ready to officially be a part of, through the ups and downs of all of our lives.

So, I don't know how much will change. I believe that expressing my faith is about much more than showing up on Sundays, although I know that's part of it. It's mostly about my everyday actions, decisions, where I place my priorities. And so I thank the members of this community who have supported me and my family, and feel great that no matter what happens, we will be by each other's side.

## Worship and Nurture Committee

by Diane Go

Greetings from your English Worshipping Community Worship and Nurture Committee. The current Committee members are Elder Linda Lee (Chair), Elder Nancy Chee, Elder Diane Go, Elder Eddie Kam, Dave Miller, Norma Chan, Laurene Chan and Pastor Kimberly Elliot. We meet regularly on the first Tuesday of the month at church.

In the Worship and Nurture Committee Annual Report for 2012, Eddie Kam wrote of the youth and young adults who participated during that year: "They are the continuum of the many saints who preceded us, many saints who have served and are serving elsewhere as well as many of you who serve this church day in and day out. To all youth and young adults, you are the next group of 'saints' responding to God's call." We continue to keep this perspective in mind in all that we endeavor.

Along with planning for worship, our Committee is currently focusing on activities to engage youth and young adults in the life of our community. As we head into summer, there are many opportunities for outreach. Our summer Chinese Christian Union (CCU) sports teams are forming now for men's basketball, coed basketball and volleyball with Christopher Chan as coordinator. Spiritual leaders, coaches, and point persons for each team are important role models and facilitators for our players as they participate in a summer filled with competition, spiritual growth opportunities and relationship building with their team mates and support people from our congregation. League basketball and volleyball play begins Monday, June 6<sup>th</sup>; schedule and locations to be announced in the Weekly Rag and website.

Our congregation will have youth representing us at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium at Purdue University July 19-23. We hope to have at least 3 representatives from our church and Cameron House attending this year. This is a wonderful opportunity for youth and adult youth leaders

from all across our country to gather together and deepen their discipleship in Jesus Christ while being equipped to be Christian leaders.

Memorial Day is also just around the corner, and so is the annual Memorial Day Weekend Retreat at Westminster Woods from May 27<sup>th</sup> to May 30<sup>th</sup>. This year's theme is "Come and Play: Listening for the Heartbeat of God". Amy Shoemaker, Spiritual Director and InterPlay Life Practice Leader, will be facilitating the retreat with Pastor Kimberly Elliot as we form community through creative activities. We are fortunate to have Josh Chuck coordinating sessions for young adults along with Nancy Chee, Dave Chan, Clarence Chan, Marie Chin and Wayne Eng working with our youth. Remember, all are welcome. See the PCC website under "What's New" for details and brochure. Sign up deadline is May 6<sup>th</sup>.

Other notes: Those who attended were privileged to experience the wonders of our February 10<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday labyrinth so lovingly and beautifully created by Terry and Lianne Leong in our sanctuary. Then, to highlight the end of our Lenten spiritual journey, we headed to San Francisco Theological Seminary on March 23<sup>rd</sup> for an evening labyrinth walk and service under the blessing of a full moon. A shout out to those who added to our worship and prayer experiences during Lent—Joanne Woo (Jojo), Liane Chan, Rachel Wong for the prayer weaving; Nancy Chee for her "sunrise" behind the sanctuary cross; Richard Jann and the ushers who helped pass out materials for our alternative prayer practices.



I was born and raised in Hong Kong; married Adam Lam, a native San Franciscan. We lived in Hong Kong together for 5 years and in 2013 moved to San Francisco with my 1-year-old daughter, Ginger. She is now 3.5-years old; we also have Irving, our 16-month-old son.

Jesus gives me peace. I went to a Catholic primary school and a Buddhist middle and high school. My Mom worships all kinds of Chinese God. When I was 25, I felt lost in my career and relationships, curious about what my future would be. My Mom took me to a Prophet who believed that Chinese God gave him power to see the future. He looked at my Chinese name, calculated the number of strokes in each Chinese character and was able to tell the past and the future of my life. As time went by, most of his predictions came true, but that didn't give me any peace, nor direction in life.

God opens my heart through Adam; his calm personality compensates me. He encouraged me to go to church and I came to Christ in an Alpha Course in 2010 when an elder prayed over me. I felt a warmth upon me from my feet to my head which released me, yes, just like the lyrics "My chains are gone, I'm now set free".

Immigrating to San Francisco was not easy, I was pregnant with my second child. Three months after I settled down, I was depressed and did not want to talk to any of my friends in Hong Kong. At the same time, I felt like I was getting further away from God. Adam grew up in PCC, but I also wanted to check out other churches where both of us would have a new start. When we decided PCC should be our home church, every sermon, every contact and relationship meant more to us. I also had an urge to get baptized. I thank Pastor Kimberly for her teaching and preparation before the baptism ceremony which forms a solid base of what PCC means to me. I also appreciate PCC members embracing me and walking me through the tunnel towards the light.

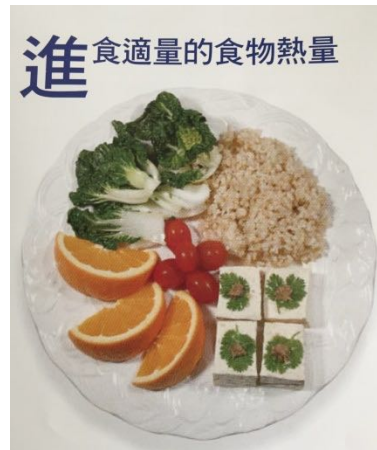
On Easter Sunday, March 27, 2016:

Fanny Lam joined our church through the sacrament of baptism.

Josh Chuck joined our church through confirmation.

The Cantonese Worshipping Community hosted the “Healthy Eating Workshop” at our church on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The event was to bring family and friends to this workshop to learn about healthy eating. Forty seven people participated in this event. The guest speaker was one of the dietitians from the Chinatown Public Health Center and the San Francisco Department of Public Health. The event’s flyers were distributed upon the act of local evangelism when we passed out the Gospel Tract in the Chinatown area on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

First we tasted a cup of bean soup, which was fresh cooked by the dietitian, using several different kinds of dried beans: black-eyed bean, red bean, mung bean, and black soy bean. Added were peanut, coix, chestnut, lotus root, glace date and dried citrus peel without salt and sugar. The soup was tasty, sweet and healthy. The dietitian introduced the new dietary guideline using MyPlate instead of the Food Pyramid.



MyPlate is a reminder to find and build a healthy eating style throughout our lifetime. The right mix can help us be healthier now and in the future. We have to choose healthy food and beverage from all five food groups with the right amount of calories. The five food groups include fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods and dairy as shown in the MyPlate diagram.

每天需要2000卡路里(熱量)的人士,宜採用下列進食量。請到www.ChooseMyPlate.gov找出適合個人的進食量。				
穀類	蔬菜類	水果類	奶類	蛋白質
每天6安士	每天2杯半	每天2杯	每天3杯	每天5安士半
<p><b>穀類</b> 餐碟的四分之一應是穀類,而其中一半的穀類應是全穀類。</p> <p>穀類分為兩種:加工穀類和全穀類。加工穀類包括白麵粉、白麵包、白米飯等,但是全穀類是更好的選擇,因為它們含有豐富的膳食纖維。例如:全麥麵粉、全麥五穀片、燕麥片和糙米。</p> <p>1安士大約是:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1片麵包</li> <li>1杯煮熟的米飯、麵食或麥片</li> <li>1杯早餐五穀片</li> <li>1個大麵包(Bagel)</li> <li>1/2個英式鬆餅</li> </ul>	<p><b>蔬菜類</b> 餐碟的一半應是水果和蔬菜。</p> <p>根據其營養成份,蔬菜類分為五種:深綠色蔬菜、紅色和橙色蔬菜、豆類及豌豆和薯粉類蔬菜等。記住要吃不同顏色的蔬菜!</p> <p>1杯大約是:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1杯煮熟的蔬菜或2杯生的綠葉蔬菜</li> <li>2杯芹菜莖</li> <li>1條大玉米</li> <li>1個中型的馬鈴薯</li> </ul>	<p><b>水果類</b> 餐碟的一半應是水果和蔬菜。</p> <p>選擇新鮮、罐裝、冷凍水果或沒有添加糖的乾果。</p> <p>1杯大約是:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>32粒鮮好葡萄</li> <li>2個大李子</li> <li>1條大香蕉</li> <li>1/2杯葡萄乾或杏脯</li> </ul>	<p><b>奶類</b> 一份完整的餐飲應包括相等於一杯的奶類,選擇脫脂或低脂(1%)牛奶。</p> <p>如果您不能食用牛奶,選擇無乳糖產品或其他加鈣食品 and 飲品。</p> <p>1杯是:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1杯酸乳酪</li> <li>1杯牛奶</li> <li>1/4安士硬芝士或1/2杯芝士碎(脫脂或低脂)</li> <li>1杯加鈣豆奶</li> </ul>	<p><b>蛋白質</b> 餐碟的四分之一應是蛋白質。</p> <p>包含所有肉類、家禽、海鮮、豆類、豌豆、雞蛋、加工黃豆製品、堅果和果仁。每週至少購買6安士海鮮,並選擇欄的向,可選擇焗、烤或燒烤的烹調方法。</p> <p>1安士大約是:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1個雞蛋</li> <li>1個雞蛋</li> <li>1湯匙花生醬</li> <li>1/2杯熟的豆類</li> <li>1/4杯豆腐</li> <li>1/2安士堅果(12顆杏仁、24顆開心果)</li> <li>1片3吋焗火雞肉</li> </ul>

The dietitian explained to us what kinds of foods are in each of the five groups, how much of each is needed daily, why it is important to eat each kind of food and gave us food tips. We should build a healthier eating style, food low in saturated fat and sodium, and no added sugars. The healthy eating style can help us avoid overweight and obesity and reduce our risk of heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

She also gave us some information brochures in Chinese, which are easy for new immigrants to understand and remember.

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## Good Health Can Change Our Life *(continued from page 7)*



All of us were very interested in this topic and participated in discussion. A few misunderstandings about breakfast was clarified, such as not eating breakfast helps lose weight, eating one bun is good enough for breakfast, not eating breakfast does not affect children's learning ability. From this workshop, we learned how important healthy eating was and how to create a healthy eating style. We all believe good health can change our life.

Praise God!

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### A Significant Resource

by Irene Young Ng

A significant resource for our church friends and members is Christopher Chua's Doctor of Philosophy dissertation In Ethnic Studies in the Graduate Division of the University of California, Berkeley, 2014. The title: *The Sacredness of Being There: Race, Religion, and Place-Making at San Francisco's Presbyterian Church in Chinatown.*

I was baptized in our church when I was a junior in high school in 1952. I was active in the church until I moved to Mendocino with my family in 1962. When I returned to San Francisco in 2003 I missed all the action. This book fills in those gap years.

The book is a repository of history; we are the oldest Asian church in the North American continent and we are still growing strong. The chapter titles give a glimpse of the content: Religion and Race as Praxis, The Earliest Locations, Anchoring Memory, The Neo-Gothic Building, Institutionalizing a Community, The Post-Earthquake Building, Reimagining a Chinese American Church.

Chris writes: "The story I explore here is a perspective on this journey of 'coming to belong' that takes into consideration the oft-neglected variable of geographic place. The question that animates this study asks how the church community came to be a distinctly Chinese *American* institution and an *Asian American religious* institution through negotiations over the meaning of its physical presence."

You can access the dissertation through the UC Berkeley library system: [www.library.berkeley.edu](http://www.library.berkeley.edu). Entering the title or his name in the search function on the site will call up the entry easily. The UCB library provides online access, an e-book option, as well as purchasable hardcopies, so there're lots of options for anyone interested.

I heartily recommend reading this resource. May it add to your vision in the reimagining of our church.



## **ABOUT PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN**      **by Mildred Hall**

Presbyterian Women is the name of the churchwide organization of PC(USA), and at PCC we are known as Women's Fellowship (WF).

Presbyterian Women (PW) allows women's circles or groups to meet together, organize and exist within the PW Purpose\*. Many will have moderators and other officers. In our PW, we have a moderator and treasurer and the other individuals are participants/members who share in the fellowship and planning.

We are loyal and faithful women coming together for dinner and fellowship as well as programs each month. During the year we encourage participation and we enjoy the fellowship of a larger group interested in attending our annual all-day retreat and at our annual Christmas Potluck Dinner. We open all our meetings to women and friends.

Not only do we have capable leadership in WF, but these women also volunteer in other areas of church life. Many are elders and deacons of the church. Several have served PW on the different levels of the church (PW in the S. F. Presbytery, PW in the Synod of the Pacific and PW Churchwide). Bible studies have been led by Linda Lee during the year, and we enjoy well-led programs that include mission projects, health issues, emergency preparedness, travels, learning self defense, to name some.

An annual budget is formed in which we pledge to PW Mission work, PW per capita and allow for scholarships to women who attend conferences and are willing to report back their experiences. There are two separate and special PW offerings during the year: Birthday Offering in June and Thank Offering in December.

Mary Wong Leong, our Treasurer, reports that we have pledged \$860.00 to PW Mission and \$26 each to PWS and PWP per capita. This totals \$912.00. Our women gave generously last year to the Birthday Offering (\$275.00) and the Thank Offering (\$470.00).

Women who attend PW conferences, including the PW Churchwide Gathering every three years, and need financial assistance can benefit from our scholarship money upon request. The budget also includes honorariums for special speakers when they are invited. Therefore, in order to fulfill our budget goals each year, we encourage each woman to pledge \$35.00 or more a year. There are many who give more than \$35.00, and this has helped to fulfill our goals.

On Sunday, April 10, 2016, at our worship service to Celebrate the Gifts of Women, a special presentation was made by Doreen Der-McLeod on behalf of the Mission & Evangelism Committee of the English congregation. It was a surprise and an honor for me to receive the honorary life membership certificate and pin for service to Presbyterian Women. It is with humble gratitude that I have received this honor. The special pin has a lot of symbolism and I will wear it proudly.

This worship service is celebrated annually and is planned by the members of Women's Fellowship. Our guest preacher was Yung Me Suh Morris, a Korean American who lives in Pleasant Hill with her family.

For current news of WF events, read the weekly Ragsheet and check our church bulletin boards and the PCC website ([www.pccsf.org](http://www.pccsf.org)). Go to "Worship" and find Women's Fellowship there.

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## About Presbyterian Women *(continued from page 9)*

For more information about PW check the website [www.presbyterianwomen.org](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org).

Also another resource for many things you want to know about PW is the *Horizons* magazine, published by PW. (see [www.pcusa.org/horizons](http://www.pcusa.org/horizons))



Photo taken at our Christmas Potluck Dinner December 2015 in the home of Jean Chin.

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- ***PW Purpose:*** Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves—
    - To nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
    - To support the mission of the church worldwide,
    - To work for justice and peace, and
    - To build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

## Presbyterian Women Mission Trip to Little Rock, Arkansas

by Pat Chan

I spent my Spring Break at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center at Little Rock, Arkansas, March 28-April 1.

Here's a little background about Ferncliff. It is owned by the Presbyterian Foundation of Arkansas and is governed by the board approved by the Presbytery of Arkansas. Ferncliff has 1,200 acres and houses a 10,000 square foot warehouse called DAC (Disaster Assistance Center). DAC works with Church World Service and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA).

I stayed at the ECO center which is a 5600 square foot straw bale building which houses 25 people. I was one of twenty women from the United States, including one from Broadmoor and one from the Stockton area. Others were from Michigan, Ohio, Alabama, Arizona, Mississippi, and Wisconsin.



On Tuesday afternoon we rechecked school kits that were donated by other churches throughout the United States. We make sure we have the correct items for each cloth bag. Each bag includes 3 notebooks, a ruler, a pair of scissors, a pencil sharpener, an eraser, 6 pencils and a box of 24 crayons. The bags cannot have any religious symbols on the outside because not all the requests for the school kits are for Christian groups. All extra donated items that do not go inside the school kits are stored away and will be given to other agencies. Since DAC receives a lot of items that needs to be rechecked, sorted and repackaged, volunteer groups do this when they go to Ferncliff. Two Young Adult Volunteers (YAV), college agers taking a leave from school for a year, help at this warehouse.

We were given a tour of the Ferncliff camp grounds. It's a great place for kids. Nice bunk beds, bathrooms and shower room inside the cabin and a huge swimming pool. Sorry Westminster, this place is not so

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## Presbyterian Women Mission Trip to Little Rock, Arkansas *(continued from page 11)*

rustic. A tree house, hammocks and chair swings. A huge dining room. Food is not as good as Westminster. There are two rustic type cabins that holds nine campers.

Wednesday afternoon we helped with the Hygiene Kit which includes a hand towel, wash cloth, wide tooth comb, a nail clipper, a wrapped/boxed bar of soap, wrapped toothbrush and six standard size band aids. We folded up the items inside the hand towel and it goes inside a gallon size zipper lock bag. They ship 40 kits in a huge box. One of my tasks was to count out the band aids, which was the hardest job. I had to tear them out from a sheet of 5 in a box. Many of the items were stored in this warehouse and we put it all together. Making an assembly line, I prepared all the items and another woman folded. Once you get the hang of it all it was pretty easy to do.

Wednesday morning we were given a three hour PDA Disaster Preparation and Response Training. Liz Branch, from the PDA National Response Team, spoke and provided us with handouts for us to take back home. She pointed out that a disaster overwhelms local resources. Emergency is an event the community can manage by itself.

The biggest question is: Does your congregation have a disaster plan? Do you have a phone tree, video inventory of your church? Need to create a task force. Church officers need to be train to exit the members. Does our church need to work on this? I can share the information that I took from this training.

Thursday was our field trip day. One group went to the Heifer International Ranch which is located in Perryville, Arkansas. The group went on a guided tour of the Ranch which gave them an introduction to Heifer's work around the world and an example of sustainable agriculture in action. They got to see the animals, saw the garden and see how people live in other parts of the world via Heifer's Global Village sites. I went on the Downtown Tour. Our first stop was at the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site. This is the 1957 Desegregation with 9 Black High School students. The Governor closed school for the school year of 1958-1959. This museum was well done. Our next stop was the tour of the Heifer International Headquarter/Museum. After lunch we went on a tour to the Clinton Library and Museum. We went through the Early Years, Life in the White House and the Oval Office. It is done nicely.

It was a good week to get away from city life. I was amazed how well the DAC warehouse is run; very well organized with the volunteers help. There is another opportunity for another group of twenty PW to go to Ferncliff at the end of October. PW Thank Offering and Birthday Offering helps Ferncliff with their projects!



### Upcoming Events

- |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Sunday, May 1     | Communion, Sabbath Sunday Lunch  |
| Saturday, May 7   | Cameron Carnival                 |
| Saturday, May 14  | All church clean up              |
| Sunday, May 15    | Pentecost                        |
| Friday, May 27-30 | PCC Retreat at Westminster Woods |
| Sunday, June 5    | Communion, Sabbath Sunday Lunch  |



## Celebration of the Restaurant Worker Ministry's the 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

By Sabrina Cheng, Mandarin Commission

Initiated by Rev. Paul Cheng and coordinated by Rev. David Pan, the Restaurant Workers Fellowship was started on March 7, 2004.



This year, we are celebrating its 12th Anniversary in a service of worship with our Mandarin congregation on March 13. The members of the Fellowship were dressed in white tops and black pants, singing a hymn titled *Lord, I Want To Follow You* conducted by Ms. Hilda Tsoi, and accompanied by Ms. Maggie Chen on the piano.

The sermon was delivered by Mr. Chester Cheung, who is a dedicated supporter of the ministry. After the service of worship, the members served lunch. All the food was prepared on our own, except the cake! On that day, we also had prizes to give out to the lucky ones. The crochet crosses and mats with the word God in it were made by Ms. Helen Li.



The Restaurant Workers Fellowship is also named Ling Huo Fellowship which means Spirit of Fire or Spiritual Enthusiasm. It is held in the evening every Sunday from 6:45 pm to 9 pm for the community people to come to church. The door of our church is open to welcome new people who want to know Christ. They feel more comfortable coming to the fellowship. Members enjoy a different program every week, singing, devotion time, DVD time, health talk, exercise, testimony sharing, fellowship during dinner, and helping one another.



See the photo in which Kay Wang is cutting hair for Qing Zhong Cheung. *(continued on page 14)*



The main focus of the fellowship is evangelism. For the past 12 years, 16 people have accepted Christ and were baptized by our Church. We always encourage the members to join the Commission's worship service, picnic and other church activities. In fact, all Commission programs, including church retreats, were well attended by the Restaurant Workers Fellowship members. The Commission is very supportive of the Fellowship. Since Rev. David Pan has left for his retirement, the Commission agreed to continue spiritual leadership for the fellowship. We are grateful to have Rev. Arnold Chan helping us now. He is strong in leading Bible studies, and is caring and helpful in many ways.

Come on and be a partner with us in carrying out God's mission amidst our Chinatown!

**AFTER READING SOME CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGIANS**

The Bible is a collection of oral stories passed down from generation to generation based on memories of the living conditions/experiences of that particular time and place in their covenant relationship with YAHWEH (God). It was translated/written by scribes and scholars (MEN) by hand before the invention of the printing press, centuries later.

1. The Bible IS NOT the inerrant or infallible word(s) of God, NOT dictated by God and should not be idolized and/or taken literally.
2. God is a loving and compassionate NOT an angry and vengeful God.
3. God sent Jesus to show us the way to live peacefully with love, compassion and social justice for all God's creation.
4. God DID NOT send Jesus to die to save us from our sins.
5. Jesus was crucified by the Roman authorities that saw him as a threat to the peace and sovereignty of the Empire.
6. The resurrection of Jesus is God's assurance to us that even death cannot stop God's continuing love for all creation/humanity (neither Greek nor Gentile, LBGT, earth).
7. The Roman emperor Constantine "hijacked" Christianity to ensure peace and stability in the Empire by creating the unification of religion and state.
8. This system created the religious creeds that have been practiced in Christianity for centuries—original sin, fall/redemption.

**Some food for thought - -**



How does one deal with the belief/faith issues that were taught and absorbed in one's formative years but are no longer meaningful anymore?

Conservative, evangelical, liberal, or progressive labels describe many Christian churches. Is the Religious Right or the Liberal Left speaking for us?

What is the Presbyterian denomination doing about its fleeing churches?

Today many churches are challenged by "wrinkling and shrinking" of membership and offerings.

The church "alumni or I'm done-ers" are out the door, discouraged and in search of how to be Christians in this changing world. How are we doing?