

EQUIP & CONNECT

Summer 2013



Christian Education and Publications

NEW CEP Website (pcacep.org) UNDER RENOVATION

In June, CEP began making changes to the web site in order to provide a new look and convey our renewed purpose to connect and equip those who serve the church in discipleship ministry. The old site had a great amount of material, but much of it was dated and hard to find. We are working to reorganize the new site to better serve as a “hub” to connect PCA members and leaders with resources to help them serve in the local church. As they travel around the denomination, CEP staff members are asking local church leaders to describe what tools and resources would be most helpful to those who serve

in their context. In an upcoming issue of *Equip & Connect*, we will highlight some of the specific changes that have been made and how CEP hopes those changes will help you in your ministry.



PCA Bookstore Sells Publications on Amazon

Over the years, the PCA Bookstore has primarily served the PCA community. In order to broaden the reach of the Bookstore beyond the denomination, we have begun placing resources that have been published by CEP on Amazon. This way, people who are not aware of the PCA Bookstore (or even the PCA) can find quality Reformed Bible studies and resources. Since we started this in April, most of those who have ordered this way have been new customers. For those in the denomination, the PCA Bookstore continues to be the best way to purchase books, **especially** if you are buying more than one copy for a class or small group, as our bulk discounts usually beat the Amazon price. Check it out at www.pcabookstore.com or www.cepbookstore.com.



TRANSITIONS



Transitions are tough. Last May, while my son was graduating from high school, my younger children were finishing the school year, and we were in the process of moving the family from St. Louis to Atlanta, I woke one day and struggled to remember what city I was in. Physically I was in one place, but emotionally I was somewhere else. I felt a deep longing to be settled in a “home.”

As I contemplated the trials of transition, I realized that the “home” I longed for that morning was only a waypoint on a much longer path. Yet, the yearning to unpack my suitcase now overshadowed my desire to rest forever in the home Christ has prepared. Like other sons of fallen Adam, I most readily seek comfort in the here and now. The longing for temporal rest is not evil in itself; but, my sin nature distracts me to think more of the temporal and less of the eternal.

In Hebrews 11:8–10, the author points us to Abraham, who lived by faith as a foreigner in a Promised Land because he was looking forward to a greater place built for him by God. Abraham was faithful to pursue a temporal home (a “lesser” goal), but he kept his eyes fixed on God’s greater goal of a permanent home.

As I continue in the transition of serving as Coordinator for CEP, there is always the temptation to be distracted by lesser goals. I have many ideas and dreams, and people are giving good suggestions and advice. Please pray for wise discernment to prioritize well—and for faith to seek what is best now only in the light of the future hope to come. As you read through the newly formatted edition of *Equip & Connect*, may God encourage you regarding the discipleship ministry in the PCA. For those who have partnered with CEP, I hope you are affirmed that we are seeking to serve the Church well. For those who have yet to support us financially, I hope God will stir your heart to join with us to connect and equip the members and discipleship ministries of the PCA for the glory of God.

In the grace and peace of the Father,



2012 Women’s Ministry Love Gift GA Report



At the **41st General Assembly**, CEP reported that **over \$72,000 had been given to MTW** for the 2012 Love Gift designated for the Haitian Children’s Home. We praise the Lord for his provision and thank all of those who participated through their gifts.



Be Sure to Support 2013 Women’s Ministry Love Gift For RIDGE HAVEN

The 2013 Love Gift will benefit the ministry of Ridge Haven Conference Center. To date, over \$10,000 has been received for the purpose of remodeling the dining hall at Ridge Haven. If you would like more information, go to our website at www.pacep.org/wic-love-gift/.

The *Ministry* to WOMEN

AT THE 41ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY



The Assembly convened in Greenville, SC on June 18-21. Along with doing the business of the church, commissioners and their families had opportunity for rich times of worship, fellowship, and seminars on a range of topics.

The women started the week with a seminar sponsored jointly by Retirement and Benefits, Inc. (RBI) and CEP on planning for the financial future. Pam Pugh of Women Doing Well provided valuable information and led the 85 attendees through interactive discussion and personal reflection to evaluate financial readiness. Pulling from a survey of PCA ruling and teaching elders' wives, Pam addressed the most pressing concerns of family financial resources:

“Will we have adequate resources for the future (retirement)?”

“Am I financially organized if my husband precedes me in death?”

“Am I being a wise steward?”

Another highlight of the seminar was the ‘peer panel’ that featured four women representing a diversity of ages and stages of life and their stories of being God’s stewards. Attendees left with valuable resources to help “begin the financial stewardship conversation” with spouses and families and equip others to do so as well. One attendee noted, “This is one of the best things I have ever attended at GA.”

In another seminar, facilitator Kathy Cheely led a panel of five spiritual mothers of the PCA—wives of Teaching and Ruling Elders who



led the formation of the PCA in December 1973. They reflected on the history of the PCA, recounting the trials experienced in forming a new denomination and the blessings God provided as they lived this great adventure.

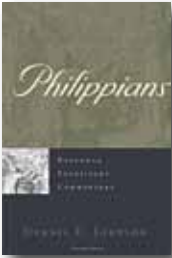
Paula Miles, CEP Women’s Trainer and Bible study leader, taught the seminar “We Do Not Lose Heart,” encouraging women through 2 Corinthians 4 as they partner in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

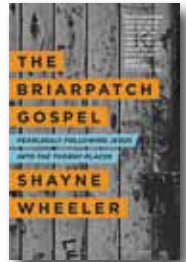
POPULAR BOOKS AT THE 41ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Here are the **TOP 10 TITLES** sold at the PCA Bookstore during General Assembly in Greenville, SC.



1. **Philippians.** Dennis E. Johnson. Reformed Expository Series (P&R)
2. **Revelation: Let the One Who is Thirsty Come.** Sarah Ivill (P&R)
3. **Your Baby's Baptism.** W. Wilson Benton, Jr. (CEP)
4. **2013 PCA Yearbook** (2 volume set). PCA Office of the Stated Clerk
5. **Insourcing: Bringing Discipleship Back to the Local Church.** Randy Pope (Zondervan)
6. **Christianity and World Religions: An Introduction to the World's Major Faiths.** Derek Cooper (P&R)
7. **Briarpatch Gospel: Fearlessly Following Jesus into the Thorny Places.** Shayne Wheeler (Tyndale Momentum)
8. **Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry.** Paul David Tripp (Crossway)
9. **When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor and Yourself.** Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (Moody)
10. **An Inquirer's Guide to the PCA.** Ed. by Dennis Bennett (CEP)



Ministry to WOMEN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

ministry with their husbands. She faithfully took the women to Paul's words, reminding them that God is at work in us (2 Cor 3:17-18); God is at work through us (2 Cor 4:7-16); and God has promised to us a future hope (2 Cor 4:16-5:9).

A highlight of the week's program for women was the presentation on Wednesday by Rod and Debbe Mays, who are involved in ministry both nationally and in the local church. The women rounded out their week's events on Thursday with a special concert given by Laura Story. The Mitchell Road PCA family proved to



be wonderful hosts for both of these programs, which included two food events that were filled with warm hospitality.

We are grateful for the work of the local host committee to help

make these seminars and programs come together to further encourage, connect, and equip PCA women.

If you were unable to attend the Assembly, you can still be enriched by the seminars and the Wednesday program! Audio recordings are available from www.barkerproductions.net. Follow links with the GA 41 logo.

TRAINING FOR WOMEN



With the encouraging comments about the 2013 Leadership Training

Conference still ringing in our hearts, CEP's Women's Ministry Team is already deep into planning for Leadership 2014! Here are the basics:

This annual conference connects and equips women for ministry in the local church and beyond. Women who serve as Bible study leaders, ministry directors, staff personnel, and members of local and regional leadership teams are invited to spend an intensive weekend of networking, encouragement, and equipping.

Thus far, our plans include Nancy Guthrie, gifted Bible teacher and author, as one of our keynote speakers, along with Ellen Dykas, Coordinator for Women's Ministries for Harvest USA.

2014 Women in the Church Leadership Training Conference
February 20–22, 2014

Holiday Inn & Suites
 Atlanta Airport-North

A NOTE TO PCA PASTORS:

This conference provides an intentional opportunity to train up kingdom disciples who know, understand, and apply the Gospel. Value and encourage the gifts of women in your local church by investing in this training in loving and serving The Bride of Christ.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAMS:

Is your team healthy and united? Are you serving the women of your church/presbytery with clear vision and goals? Do you desire to be further equipped to plan and serve strategically? *Come strengthen your serve.*

BIBLE STUDY LEADERS:

Do you desire to grow in Christ? Do you desire to sharpen your teaching skills, and build community with your women around the Word? Do you need help in making

wise curricula choices? Come learn from leading PCA Bible teachers who bring great love for the Word of God and desire to fill hungry hearts and lives with its Truth.

Here's what people have said about previous conferences and what you can expect:

- *An excellent faculty of godly women whose teaching, both formally and informally, will encourage, bless, and equip you for ministry.*
- *An experience that connects sisters in Christ. One attendee wrote: "Being with so many women who love Christ is a beautiful picture. I am thankful to be a member of the family of God and the PCA."*
- *Well planned, outstanding and transferable resources—notebook, flash drive, seminar and session notes. "A clear view of direction and purpose for ministry."*
- *"An opportunity to explore ministry in a new way while being renewed and recharged in heart and ministry."*

SAVE THE DATE

now and stay connected to the conference through our website (www.pacep.org/women) in order to view the list of faculty and seminars as plans continue to develop. The site is also the place to find cost and registration information.





YXL – West at Horn Creek, CO



In early July, about 100 youth and leaders, primarily from PCA churches in the West, gathered at Horn Creek camp near Westcliffe, CO, for the YXL (Youth eXcelling in Leadership) conference. The purpose went beyond an ordinary youth camp, as the students experienced a rigorous schedule designed to test and sharpen their leadership skills it also provided counselors with many opportunities to assess the students in their leadership development. YXL-West is one of a network of camps that are under the oversight of CEP. Consider these comments made by students as they closed the week with testimonies and prayer:

“The greatest amount of my [spiritual] growth over the last few years has been from this camp.”

“After the death of my aunt, YXL really refreshed me. I think I am now able to accept the story God has set out for me, rather than resisting it.”

“Last year was hard. I’ve had healing, but there are still scars. This week at YXL, I have been at peace. I’m at peace because Jesus has already won the race for me. Please pray that I will remember that throughout the year. I can face the trials [of life] because I can look to Jesus, the author and perfecter of my faith.”

“During the prayer time on Thursday morning, God worked in my heart. In the devotion time that followed, I was reading in the Psalms and I began to pour out my heart to God for a half hour.”



The theme of this year’s YXL-West was “The Amazing Race.” TE Ryan Hughs, RUF Campus Minister at Colorado State University, taught every night from Hebrews 11, and other PCA pastors conducted seminars designed to help students better understand how to lead well in context of home, school, and church. Other YXL camps have been conducted in Ephrata, PA and at Covenant College.

A Focus on the Children



Meet Scott Barber. Scott is pastor of Redeemer PCA in Florence, AL, and a member of the CEP Permanent Committee.

Early in his pastorate at Redeemer, Scott asked each member of the session to give oversight to one particular ministry of the church. This was nothing new for most of the elders, as they were used to dividing responsibility for the various

Louis, Stephen Estock asked him to fill an open ruling elder spot on the CEP committee. Stephen was overseeing Scott's internship on behalf of Central Georgia Presbytery, where Scott was still a member and ruling elder. The General Assembly elected Scott to a term on the committee. Having been an attorney for many years, Scott brought great gifts and experiences to the CEP committee.

Though others may see children's ministry as less important, Scott was convinced that no ministry was more strategic.



programs of the church. However, Scott surprised them when he named the ministry that he wanted to oversee—*children's ministry*. The response was predictable: "Scott, anyone can do that. We need you to take over more important ministry projects." But Scott remained firm. Though others may see children's ministry as less important, Scott was convinced that no ministry was more strategic. For the health and growth of the church, children's ministry was the area to which he wanted to give special attention. Four years later, Scott does not regret that decision.

CEP played an important part in leading Pastor Barber to focus on children in his first pastorate out of seminary. While Scott was a seminary student at Covenant and an intern at Kirk of the Hills PCA in St.

What he was not expecting was what he would begin to learn about Christian Education in the PCA.

Scott became the consummate committee member—attending training for children's ministers, women's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN?

A Conference for Those Who Serve with the Future in View

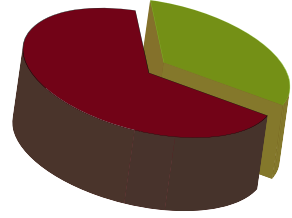
On October 26, 2013, Westminster PCA in Atlanta, GA is joining with CEP to host an inexpensive, one-day conference. The Saturday conference will feature speakers and seminars designed to connect and equip those who work with children. For those who arrive Friday evening, there will be an opportunity to gather with the conference speakers for an informal time of discussion. For more information and to register, go to www.pacep.org/children.



PLEASE PARTNER WITH US IN THE MINISTRY OF CEP



As CEP opens a new chapter under the leadership of Coordinator Stephen Estock, an important goal is to see growth in the number of PCA churches who contribute to the ministry. In 2012, 32% of PCA congregations contributed in some way to sustain the work of CEP. Our hope is to see over 50% of PCA churches express in a tangible way the connectional nature of our Presbyterian polity. Some churches are able to give much (e.g., above the “ministry ask” of \$7/member), while others are only able to give a portion of their share (e.g., \$100, \$500, etc.). Whenever a congregation provides a gift (of any amount), it is a physical expression of encouragement and support. If your church is part of the 32%, we thank you for your partnership with us. If you are part of the 68% that has yet to contribute, we prayerfully ask you to join with us as we seek to connect and equip those who serve the local church in the area of discipleship ministries. If you don’t know if your church support CEP- ask your session.



Giving from PCA Churches

- Supporting
- Non Supporting

Focus on the Children continued from page 7

leadership events, and other church leadership conferences. Pastor Barber caught the vision for discipleship in the local church and was eager to take that vision into his first pastorate. In his few years of ministry at Redeemer, the congregation has become a fellowship that loves children. The members joined together to design and build an area for the nursery and children’s classes. The ministry has grown to the point where they are now looking to hire a children’s ministry director. As he got to know the members of Redeemer, Pastor Barber saw the need for parental training and held a weekend parenting conference led by [now] CEP Coordinator, Stephen Estock, and Children’s Ministry Coordinator, Sue Jakes. The response from his congregation was so encouraging that Scott is now planning a CEP training conference in coordination with all of the Northwest Alabama PCA churches. Additionally, Scott has helped other church leaders through several CEP training events. His workshop on Gospel Parenting is a favorite of conference attendees, as Scott shares

his story and the lessons he has learned from life and ministry.

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Montgomery, AL
Permit No. 312



Presbyterian Church in America • 1700 North Brown Road, Suite 102 • Lawrenceville, Georgia 30043

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED