

EQUIP & CONNECT

Spring 2014



CEP Christian Education and Publications

WOMEN'S TRANSITION

from Jane Patete to Karen Hodge



A love for God's church and his covenant people characterize the calling Jane Patete

has pursued over the last 12 years as Women's Ministry Coordinator. Yet, her service to CEP Women's Ministry began even earlier in 1996, when she became an able assistant to Susan Hunt. She has left an indelible mark on the ministry because of her relentless commitment to a team-based ministry approach. She valued the gifts of women and sought to find ways to



deploy them in kingdom service. Her coaching and deployment of her team allowed for the expansion of many leadership conferences, as well as several international conferences to equip the church. At the core of Women's

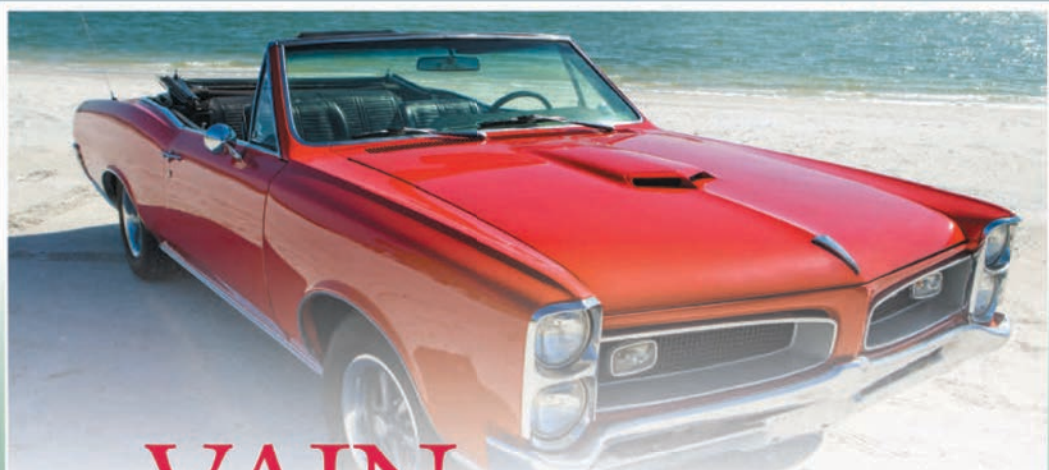
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WOMEN'S MINISTRY 2014 LOVE GIFT

Teach what is Good — Investing in Tomorrow's Voices of Truth



The Women's Ministry Love Gift for 2014 will directly benefit the work of Christian Education and Publications, and in particular, the work of discipleship among women throughout the PCA. The video focuses on the voices of the women around us and emphasizes the need to find ways to speak the truth of God's word into their lives. The proceeds of this gift will be invested in video and web-based training, intergenerational resources for life-on-life discipleship, exegetical Bible study materials, and seed money for regional trainings. Help us reach our goal of \$120,000. To view the video or order your free DVD and handouts for your church, please visit www.pcacep.org/lovegift or call 1.800.283.1357. We also encourage you to share the video with your Facebook friends.



The **VAIN** TEMPTATION of **DIY** PERFECTION

— By Stephen Estock

If my body was a car, this year I would be designated an “pre-antique” by the Classic Car Club of America.



At the half-century mark, the body begins to “go rouge:” unwanted blemishes appear, hair goes wiry and gray. With all these things, the radio commercial caught my attention. According to the ad, I could have a perfect body. I could get rid of unwanted blemishes and hair without redness or irritation. All I had to do was call 1-800-BE-IDEAL. Who wouldn’t want an ideal body, especially if the company was offering a discount?

Easter gives a better hope.

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul explains the powerful implications of the empty tomb. In vv. 20–22, he reaffirms that Christ has been raised from the dead. The Corinthians were beginning to doubt that historical fact, or at the very least, Christ’s resurrection seemed meaningless in their daily lives. Paul proclaims that in Adam all die (and the physical deterioration of the body goes with that), but in Christ all will be made alive. For those who trust in the work of Christ, the Resurrection guarantees the hope of a new body, free from the effects of sin and brokenness—a body that is truly and eternally ideal.

But there is a problem. This new body comes in God’s timing, and my sinful heart grows impatient and discontent. I strive for do-it-yourself perfection. Of course, caring for the current body through proper diet and exercise is a matter of stewardship—a good thing to do. But the sin nature yearns to “be ideal” apart from Christ.

The resurrection frees us from the vain pursuit of perfection apart from the redemptive plan of God. The Spirit of the Resurrected Christ is at work in all who believe, preparing them for the glories of the New Heavens and New Earth. The struggles of a “pre-antique” body must deepen my yearning for the hope Christ has secured for me. Following Christ (i.e., discipleship) means I live every day with the hope that one day **he**—not some laser treatment—will give me an ideal body; a body prepared to bring him glory forever.

Stephen



2014 is almost here!



This summer there are three YXL conferences for high school students going on around the country. **YXL East at Covenant College takes place from July 7-12.**

YXL HornCreek will happen July 5-12 at Horn Creek CO.

YXL Northeast will be held at Refreshing Mountain, PA from July 6-11.

Check out CEP's website www.ppacep.org/yxl-2014 to find out the details of each conference.

The simplest way to describe a YXL conference is that they are Christian leadership development conferences built on the premise that within depth biblical teaching, intentional relational interaction, and challenging leadership activities high school students can become leaders within the church and the Kingdom. During the week, at any given conference, a high school student can find themselves rafting down a river, climbing a wall, assessing their spiritual gifts, wrestling with theological truths, and worshipping with young believers from around the country. We set the bar high, and YXL conferences are not for every student, but we hear over and over again from those who take the YXL leap, that this one week moved them further in their faith journey than they ever thought possible.

If you are looking for a great summer conference for high school students in your church then make sure to check out one of the YXL conferences. Visit www.ppacep.org/yxl-2014.

WOMEN'S TRANSITION CONTINUED FROM COVER

Ministry is a strong foundation to the Titus 2 model of older women investing in younger women.

The transition of leadership in the PCA Women's Ministry serves as a validating picture of what we teach. Jane and her leadership have had a profound impact on Karen Hodge's life and ministry. Karen has volunteered in various roles, including Women's Ministry Trainer, over the last 17 years. Over those years Jane has encouraged her to step out in faith and develop her gifts. Karen reports being humbled by

the prospect of building on the solid foundation that has already been laid in Women's Ministry. Her goal is for every woman in our denomination regardless of their marital status, ethnicity or geographic region to feel vitally connected to Women's Ministry and most importantly to God. Karen's years in church planting and working with single and college-aged women have cultivated a passion for reaching the next generation of women as well as women who are outside the church.

Jane has invested in the lives of so many women and men by pointing them to Jesus, encouraging them to live for His glory and love the church, and stretching them to serve Him. There is rarely a conversation where she doesn't stop mid-stream and say, "Let's pray!"

— Kathy Wargo

2014 WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP TRAINING CONFERENCE



*"Called to Serve...
Equipped to
Lead—Leading
with Truth."*

Women gathered to be renewed and refreshed to serve in their local women's ministries across the PCA.



Women's Ministry Leadership Training brought over 260 women to Atlanta from as close

as the neighboring suburbs to from the far reaches of Anchorage, Alaska. Women gathered to be renewed and refreshed to serve in their local ministries across the PCA. The overarching theme of our time together was "Called to Serve. Equipped to Lead. Leading with Truth." These ideas were splendidly unpacked over three days with keynote speakers such as Nancy Guthrie, Tara Barthel, Ellen Dykas, Melanie Cogdill, and Sarah Ivill. The truth of this rich teaching was hemmed together by worship that was led by "Captive Thought" the worship team from Rocky Mountain Community Church (PCA) from Billings, Montana. During our time together the women had the opportunity to participate in workshops that covered topics such as The Marvelous Mission of Mentoring, Biblical Peacemaking, Leadership in the Gospel of Grace, Women's Ministry 101, and What the Bible says regarding Homosexuality.

Throughout the conference women were able to build relationships with women from their region of the country in breakout sessions led by our Women's Ministry Regional Advisors and our Women's Ministry Trainers. These women comprise our Women's Ministry Leadership Team and serve as a resource to the women of the PCA throughout the year by connecting women to resources, training, and relationships with other churches.

The Friday evening denominational dinner is always a highlight of the conference. The Coordinators from all the PCA committees and agencies gather together to give the women a picture of denominational connectionalism. To express their gratitude for these committees and agencies, the Women's Ministry of the PCA designates one of them as the recipient of the annual love gift. The proceeds of the 2013 Love Gift were designated to go to

Ridge Haven for expansion of their dining hall. Women gathered over \$62,000 from across our denomination.

Another high point in the evening was the “passing of the mantle of leadership” between Jane Patete and Karen Hodge. Susan Hunt and many of the team members from throughout the years gathered to praise God for His grace in this smooth transition. The women were especially excited to premiere the 2014 Women’s Ministry Love Gift video as the recipient will be Christian Education and Publications for the development of resources and training to reach the next generation of women. Our prayers coming out of Leadership are that women were trained and equipped in all areas of life, have a new passion to take what they have learned back to their churches, and that their investment will yield great kingdom fruit in the years to come.



QUOTES FROM THE CONFERENCE:

“I came alone this year from my church and was afraid I might feel isolated but I made regional and local connections and felt more connected to denominational resources and leadership in a way I never had before.”

“Timely and Practical”

“I have a renewed desire to immerse myself in the Word and sound doctrine.”

“I loved the interconnectedness... to see the big picture of Women’s Ministries in the PCA...the ripple effect going out from our local church, into the region, and to the entire PCA.”

“Convicting, yet encouraging”

“The content was authentic and helpful and especially relevant to on-the-ground current culture issues.”



INTERVIEW WITH **MEN'S DISCIPLESHIP LEADER,** DAVE ENSLOW



Dave is a PCA deacon, leader of the men's ministry at Covenant Life PCA in Sarasota, Florida, founder of *Next Steps for Men*, and host of the *Iron Sharpens Iron Conference in Sarasota, Florida*.



1. What happened in your life as a believer that made you realize that you needed what men's ministry had to offer?

I came to a place in my life where I was repeating behavior patterns, struggling with sin and had no one to be accountable to. I realized my salvation was secure but I did not have the connection with men I needed in order to know what a Biblical man is.

2. What is the single most important thing you've learned about ministry to men as you have served as the men's discipleship point man at Covenant Life?

I have learned that men are very different. There is no "one size fits all method for discipling men." A strategy to reach men where they are is essential and churches big and small need a variety of methods for men to enter into discipleship. As I interact with men it has been most helpful to remember that when Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. There are hurting men everywhere.

3. Why did you step out in faith to start **Next Steps For Men?**

During a short term mission trip to Ukraine, a number of years ago. I saw a culture of sober women who had experienced six to eight abortions in their lifetimes, married to men who were totally irresponsible and often intoxicated. I asked at that time "Where are the men?" Arriving in the states, I had a clear vision that men are generally disengaged in every culture, even ours—just at differing degrees.

Next Steps for Men offers a strategy for reaching men in our region; one tool we use is training we call the M.A.P. the ministry action plan. We guide churches to see where they miss meeting the men and help them develop a plan to reach the largest lost people group in the world—men.



MINISTRY TO CHILDREN THROUGH MINISTRY **BY** CHILDREN



In the vicinity of Macon, GA, are two PCA churches that are committed to putting covenant theology into practice by equipping the saints to do the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12)—even if those saints are below the age of 18.

Mary Sanchez of First PC in Macon encourages staff and volunteers to nurture a heart of service in the children by finding ways to meet the practical needs of members of the church and community:

- On Sunday mornings, older children are encouraged to join their parents in teaching Sunday school or children’s church. As part of their worship service, younger boys are trained to join their fathers in taking the morning offering.
- On Wednesday nights, students make cookies, cards, or arrange flowers to deliver to members who are homebound, suffering from illness, or simply in need of encouragement. These simple acts of mercy help covenant children understand how the Church functions as a community and develop a heart to love others in practical ways.
- A small group of Tween girls can learn the art of knitting, which often nurtures multigenerational relationships within the congregation. The finished projects (e.g., blankets, scarves, headbands and washcloths) can be given to local ministries, such as those serving adoptive parents and newborn babies, birth mothers, patients going through chemotherapy, and local homes for foster children.
- Another good opportunity is to serve together at a local food bank. Children can bring supplies to donate and help distribute the items to families. This type of service often nurtures a heart of gratitude in those who participate, even as they meet a very real need for families in the community.



Often the participants do not see how they have blessed others through these simple acts of kind service in the name of Christ. As Jesus explained on the night before he gave himself on the Cross, **“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.” (John 13:15)** A heart of service reflects the heart of the Savior, and disciples of any age can be equipped to be a blessing.

Glenn Jakes serves at Perry PC in Perry, GA, and longs to unleash covenant children in ministry. One of the *best* ministries to the next generation is to equip them to do the work of ministry... then let them do it! But how does this *practically* happen? He provides a few suggestions:

1. **Circle the wagons**—pray and ask God to make his will clear regarding equipping children for ministry; and ask others to pray with you. Recruit one adult for every child involved to pray for him/her by name as they serve their Master

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CEP PARTNERS WITH THE SEMINARY to serve the PCA Community

Last September, the staff of CEP and Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS) discussed ways the PCA

Bookstore could better serve the students of the PCA seminary. After the closure of the Seminary Bookstore, CTS developed an online bookstore through Amazon and partnered with the PCA

Bookstore (a ministry of CEP) to obtain titles that were too expensive to obtain through Amazon (yes, Amazon does not always have the cheapest price). Due to some changes in Amazon's policy, CEP and CTS are working to expand the partnership in order to better serve the Seminary community and provide a way to inform the students about the ministry

CEP and Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS) discussed ways the PCA Bookstore could better serve the students of the PCA seminary.

of CEP. In the coming months, we hope to create an extension of the PCA Bookstore through Amazon that is designed to serve

the Seminary community. CTS staff will manage the book lists based on class requirements; Amazon will handle order fulfillment and shipping; and the PCA Bookstore will fill unique orders. The Seminary

extension of the PCA Bookstore will be accessed through the CTS website.

This partnership reflects the shared commitment of CEP and CTS to find ways to work together in order to meet the needs of the PCA community. This new agreement fits CEP's vision to serve as a "hub" for discipleship resources in the PCA.

MINISTRY TO CHILDREN continued from page 7

2. **Don't start a new program!**—look for simple ways to include kids in ministry that is already happening. Let them sharpen pew pencils, hand out bulletins, clean up after the church supper, or join you to visit shut-in's.
3. **Consider each child's gifts, interests and temperaments**—each one has been wired up to serve God in his/her unique way. Don't put the shy child up front to sing or the people-person child in a job with no human interaction. Don't be afraid to ask them what needs to be done.
4. **Carry out gracious evaluation & follow-up**—Socrates observed that "the unexamined life is not worth living"... could it be that the unexamined ministry is not worth doing! Scripture is full of illustrations of the Lord providing gracious and instructive feedback to his people. Kids need to hear encouragement and guidance regarding their ministry... even giving them freedom to fail, and maybe try something different.