

**REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE
E-NEWSLETTER
December 2009**

"News from the Board of Pensions"

Note: This newsletter offers highlights and news from the Board of Pension. Please feel free to share this piece with your communications director or webmaster.

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Stewardship of Self Holiday Wellness Tip:

During this busy time of year, take a break to get more done. If you want to be more productive, try taking a break every 90 minutes. In the course of a day, we operate on several types of cycles, called ultradian rhythms. One of these cycles is the need to take a physical and mental break from a task about every 90 minutes. Ignoring this natural cycle can make us irritable or more prone to making mistakes. Taking advantage of it, on the other hand, lets you return to your work focused and refreshed.

For more wellness tips, visit the [Get Inspired](#) page on the Stewardship of Self section of Pensions.org. We'd also like to hear about your wellness [success stories](#) and [statements](#), so if you have one to share, please [contact us](#).

Submit Salary Changes and Confirm Salaries Online

Church treasurers and business administrators can now submit salary changes or confirm salaries online through a new feature on Benefits Connect, the Board's secure benefits Web site.

Once a church treasurer or business administrator registers for Benefits Connect, he or she will be granted access to this new feature. Changing or confirming salaries will be completed through an easy-to-follow online process.

To register, go to the Pensions.org [homepage](#). Under the Benefits Connect logo, click "Register." Then follow the step-by-step instructions for creating your user profile and establishing your password.

If you have questions about registering for Benefits Connect or the new online salary change and confirmation feature, please contact the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

New Health Management Service Provider Starts January 1

Effective January 1, 2010, ActiveHealth Management will replace – and expand upon – the services currently provided by CareAllies. These services include:

- **Pre-certification** – You or your doctor must call ActiveHealth to pre-certify tests and procedures that require advance approval.
- **Informed Care Management** – ActiveHealth will provide support services to help you take control of chronic conditions, such as diabetes.
- **Personal Health Record** – This confidential online tool will help you collect and organize your health records. Look for this tool in spring 2010.

- **Case Management** – This program will be available to provide assistance in coordinating medical care and treatment for a serious injury or long-term illness.
- **24-Hour Nurse Line** – 24/7, registered nurses will be available to answer your health questions.

If you have questions about the transition from CareAllies to ActiveHealth Management, please call the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

Reminder: Medical Plan Changes Effective January 1

At the June Board of Directors meeting, several modifications to the Medical Plan were approved. Some of these are effective January 1, 2010:

- changes to deductibles and out-of-pocket costs
- a new health management service provider (see previous article)
- expanded coverage for children with congenital developmental disabilities
- an increase in the maximum lifetime benefit

The modifications were first reported in the summer 2009 issue of [The Board Bulletin](#). In addition to an email announcement, the Board has developed several communication tools to help you understand the changes:

- [Medical Plan Changes mailing](#)
- [2010 Medical Plan at a Glance flyer](#)
- [Medical Plan Changes for Active Benefits Plan Members e-learning module](#)
- [Medicare Supplement Program Changes for Retired Benefits Plan Members e-learning module](#)

If you have questions about the changes, please contact the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

New Dues Schedule Available

The [2010 dues schedule](#) is now available on Pensions.org. The schedule includes:

- Traditional Program dues
- seminary student medical dues
- Medical Continuation Program dues
- Medicare Supplement Plan dues
- Affiliated Benefits Program dues
- optional benefits subscription costs

If you have questions related to 2010 dues, please call the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

Give to the Christmas Joy Offering

This time of year, Presbyterians express their faith, hope, and gratitude through the Christmas Joy Offering. This offering provides a wonderful opportunity to support the [Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions](#) and Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education.

The Assistance Program depends entirely on gifts and bequests, including half of the Christmas Joy Offering, to make possible the grants it provides to Presbyterian clergy, missionaries, other church workers, and their families.

You may contribute through gifts to your congregation's offering or, if this is not convenient, you may [give online](#).

For additional information about the Christmas Joy Offering, including an educational video, please visit the [Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\)'s Web site](#).

Access to Your Benefits Information Online through Benefits Connect

Benefits Connect, the Board's secure Web site, provides active and retired members and surviving spouses with online access to their personal and Plan benefits information, as well as useful tools.

To register, visit the Board's Web site at [Pensions.org](#) and select "Register" under the Benefits Connect logo. If you have questions, you may complete the [Contact Us](#) form or call the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

As your Regional Representative I am available to work with presbytery leadership by offering:

- Retiree Luncheons,
- Church Treasurers Workshops
- Clergy Terms of Call seminars
- CPM Consultations, and
- Benefits Overview Workshops for Presbytery Leadership Events and for a cluster of congregations within a geographical area that have several staff members enrolled in the Benefits Plan.

Generally many of these workshops and presentations could be done in one hour or so, and may well save hours in the years to come. Let me know if you would like me to hold such an event or workshop in your presbytery.

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"There is nothing so secular that it cannot be sacred, and that is one of the deepest messages of the Incarnation."

- Madeleine L'Engle, *Walking in Water*, 50

Regards,

Helen Locklear

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