

January 6, 2012

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### What's Happening in Salem Presbytery

#### Presbytery Meeting & Deadlines

The next Presbytery Meeting will be held at First Presbyterian in Winston-Salem on Tuesday, February 7th. The deadlines for the meeting are now posted online—[click here for the deadlines](#). Note that the first deadline is this Monday, January 9th, to request time on the docket.

#### Have a new Clerk of Session or Treasurer in 2012?

Please help us update our records by sending us the contact information for your Church's new Clerk of Session or Church Treasurer. Email the new contact information to Bre at [bvandorpe@salem-presbytery.org](mailto:bvandorpe@salem-presbytery.org). Thank you everyone who has already emailed in that information!

#### 2011 Contributions Deadline-FINAL NOTICE

This is a reminder that the **absolute deadline** for receiving all 2011 contributions is **Tuesday, January 10, 2012**. **\*NOTE: All contributions checks for December 2011 must be dated December 2011.** Checks dated January 2012 will post to January 2012. You may mail them to Wanda Daubenmeyer at the Salem Presbytery address: P.O. Box 1763, Clemmons, NC 27012. You may also hand deliver your contributions to the office at 3950 Clemmons Road, Clemmons, NC. Thank you for your church contributions to the mission of Salem Presbytery and the PC(USA).

Contribution/Benevolence Forms are available on our website under [Resources>Forms](#).

### Opportunities

#### Job Opening

Memorial Presbyterian Church, in Greensboro, NC, is looking for a **part-time choir director/pianist** for our choir and worship services. One hour weekly choir rehearsal, and one Sunday service each week. Please contact the church office at 336-621-3220 for more details.

#### 2012 Mullin Forum with Kenda Creasy Dean



February 12-13  
Greensboro, NC

#### Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church

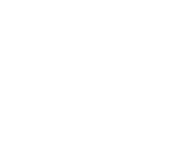
This year's Mullin Preaching and Teaching Forum on **Feb. 12 and 13** is proud to welcome Kenda Creasy Dean, Professor of Youth, Church and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary, where she works closely with the Institute for Youth Ministry.

Visit our [website](#) to view the schedule of events and to register for the workshop.

#### PYC High School Retreat

March 3-4

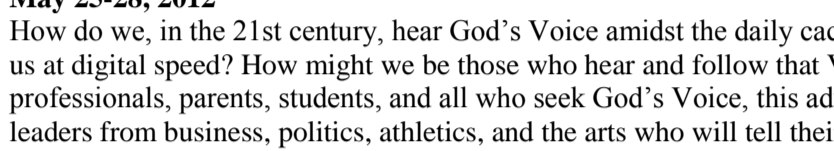
Theme: "I Am" from the Gospel of John  
Keynote: Rev. David Ealy, Hawfields PC



**Are your high-schoolers going to the retreat this year? Register Now.** You can expect them to have a great experience filled with fun recreational events, insightful keynotes, uplifting music, and energizers.

All youth participants will be in small groups for group activities and some theme related discussions. They will have the opportunity to meet new friends and be a part of the community of Christ—eating together, worshipping together, and fellowshiping together. Also, they will have the opportunity to share in Communion at the closing worship on Sunday Morning.

[Click here for more information and registration.](#)



#### 365 Great Reasons to Visit Montreat Conference Center

When you're away, a day doesn't go by that we don't wish you were here!

And when you *are* here - for a conference, a church retreat, a meeting of colleagues, summer worship, or maybe even for your own personal Sabbath retreat - we'll do everything possible to make your visits to Montreat Conference Center in 2012 the best ever.

Every day - 365 days a year - is a great day in Montreat. We thank you in advance for letting us be a part of your new year, and we invite you to take a look now at our [2012 conference schedule](#).

#### Adult Conference Highlights

This past year, the Center for Faith and Life introduced two exciting new adult conferences, the **Montreat Signature Conference** (Being Spiritual in a CrazyBusy World), and the **Montreat Institute for Church Leadership** (Getting Unstuck). In 2012, these conferences return, once again offering timely topics and excellent leadership. We strongly commend these events:

#### VOICE, the Montreat Signature Conference

May 25-28, 2012

How do we, in the 21st century, hear God's Voice amidst the daily cacophony of messages coming toward us at digital speed? How might we be those who hear and follow that Voice today? Designed for professionals, parents, students, and all who seek God's Voice, this adult conference will bring together leaders from business, politics, athletics, and the arts who will tell their stories of how the voice of faith is instrumental in their professional lives. [Click here to learn more and to register online.](#)

#### Leading with Bold Imagination, the Montreat Institute for Church Leadership

October 15-18, 2012

What do you dare to imagine? What part do you play, as a leader in your congregation, in lifting up new ways of thinking and doing? If you're ready to challenge the ordinary with something all-together extraordinary and wonderful, be part of Montreat's 2012 Institute for Church Leadership, "Leading with Bold Imagination." Meet people past and present who live out inspired, imaginative ministries and demonstrate what can happen when, with God's help, they boldly and faithfully step forward.

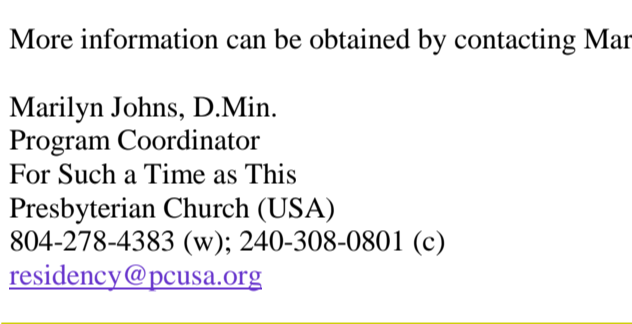
This conference for church professionals and lay people in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and beyond features Tina Carter, Tom Tewell, Jay Thomas, and Corey Widmer.

**Details and online registration [here](#).**

#### A Reminder from the Center for Youth and Young Adult Ministry

**Summer is closer than you think!** Now is the time to make sure the youth group at your church comes to this summer's [youth conferences at Montreat](#). The theme, "Perfectly Imperfect," will be explored by Lolimarta Ros Reiter, John Bell, Berry French, Laurie Taylor Weicher, and Pete Feltman (Weeks 1-2); Casey Thompson, Shelli Latham, Cleophus J. LaRue, Neeley Rentz Lane, Lindsay Layendecker, and Eric Timothy Nanz (Weeks 3-4); and Jeff and Kerri Peterson-Davis, Margaret Aymer, Stuart Hill, Megan Bannerman, and John Lee (Weeks 5-6).

And what would our youth conferences be without our [Small Group Leaders](#)? Now is the time to sign up, and this year it's easier than ever with our online ["2012 Small Group Leader Application."](#) Let us hear from you soon.



#### Lifelong Learning at CTS

**New Year's Special - Classes 15% off**  
Special offer ends January 13!

Click on a specific class below for more information

#### Selected 2012 Spiritual Formation Classes

- [Immersion Experience](#)
- [Wisdom of the Christian Mystics](#)
- [Sacred Listening: Group Spiritual Direction](#)
- [Loving Prayer: Experiencing Prayer in Many Forms](#)
- [Women's Contemplative Retreat](#)
- [Immersion Experience \(Week\)](#)
- [Growing in Wholeness](#)
- [Embodied Spirituality](#)
- [Exploring Wisdom's Wonder](#)
- [Spiritual Practice: A Way of Life](#)

#### Christianity After Religion

with Diana Bulter Bass

#### Programming with a Plan:

Intentional Youth Ministry

The 15% discount expires at noon on Friday, January 13, 2012. The discount is only available for new registrations. The class must be paid in full at the time of registration. Excludes housing and meals. For classes where the total program fee listed includes housing and meals, the 15% discount is calculated on the program fee excluding housing and meals and then re-combined with the housing and meals fee.

#### For Such a Time as This

Deadline to apply is January 31st!

The Office of Vocation reminds everyone that January 31st is the deadline for presbytery applications to participate in **For Such a Time as This, a small church residency program that pairs small, underserved congregations with recent seminary graduates in a two-year pastoral residency relationship.** The program was designed to renew the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) by equipping new pastors to grow small churches Deep and Wide in evangelism, discipleship, servanthood and diversity. Additional information and the application can be found at <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/residency/about-program/>.

**The latest feature on this program includes testimonials by Noe Juarez, from Salem Presbytery, at <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/12/7/our-first-christmas-together/>.**

For Such a Time as This Resources:

- [Information for Prospective Pastoral Resident Candidates](#)
- [Information for Prospective Pastor/Mentors](#)
- [Information for Prospective Pastoral Residency Churches](#)
- [Information for Prospective Pastoral Residency Presbyteries](#)

More information can be obtained by contacting Marilyn Johns.

Marilyn Johns, D.Min.

Program Coordinator

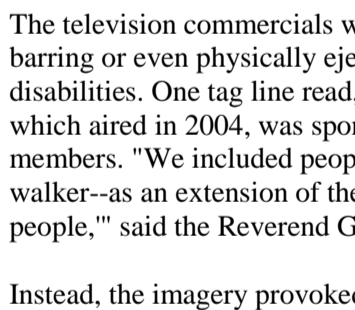
For Such a Time as This

Presbyterian Church (USA)

804-278-4383 (w); 240-308-0801 (c)

[residency@pcusa.org](mailto:residency@pcusa.org)

### Mission



#### Mexico Mission-Medical Trip

March 3-11, 2012

Join the Mexico Medical Team at the newly completed medical clinic in Ocosingo, Chiapas, Mexico!

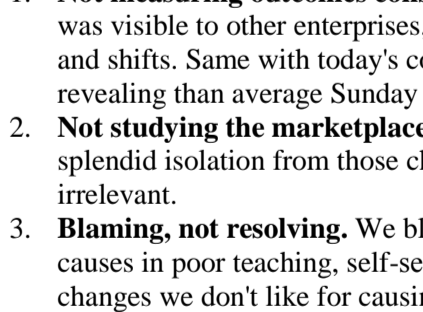
The team needs MDs, PAs, RNs, FNPs and non-medical folks willing to work cheerfully in needed jobs. Numbers are limited to 15, with priority given to medical folks, Spanish speakers, and cheerful hard workers. It is anticipated that this trip will fill quickly, so it is advised that potential applicants not delay in applying.

**Register for the Mexico Mission Medical trip now at**

<http://salem-presbytery.org/resources/mexicomission/mexico-medical-mission-app.htm>.

**The deadline for applying and mailing in your deposit is January 16th. [More details available online.](#)**

### News You Can Use



#### Witnesses to God's true Light

Greetings to members of the General Assembly Mission Council, mid council executives and friends,

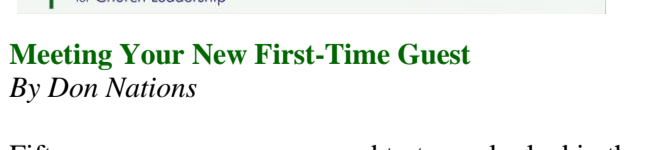
This [prayer for Epiphany](#) – provided by the GAMC's [Office of Theology and Worship](#) – is a fitting way for us to mark the celebration of this holy day:

Shepherd of Israel,  
you sent a star to enlighten the wise  
and a child to topple the tyrant.  
Make us wise enough to seek you  
among the least of your children,  
wise enough to trade our treasure  
for the gift of overwhelming joy.

As we celebrate the revelation of God's promise and purpose to the nations of the world, let us also begin this New Year with a renewed commitment to seeking God's face among the least of God's children and to working together for justice, freedom, and peace.

In his [Advent 2011 Letter](#), PC(USA) mission co-worker [Mark Adams](#) – co-coordinator for Frontera de Cristo, the Presbyterian Border Ministry in Agua Prieta, Mexico – is bold to cite the prophet Isaiah, "the prophet who spoke (and continues to speak) of a great light to a people walking in darkness." "In a world where the income gap between the 'haves, the have lesses and the have nots' is reflected not only in economic separation but also in social, cultural and political separations, a ministry in which rich, middle class and poor come together to seek to build relationships and understanding across borders is unusual," Mark writes.

It is my prayer that the light of Jesus Christ will continue to guide and illumine Mark, his wife Miriam Maldonado Escobar, also a mission co-worker with Frontera de Cristo, and all of our faithful mission personnel as they seek to show and tell of Christ as God's gift of grace and salvation for all persons. And may we all respond anew to God's call to be witnesses to God's true Light.



#### There Are No Barriers To God's Love

by Mark I. Pinsky

The television commercials were disturbing. Images showed congregants at traditional-looking churches barring or even physically ejecting members of racial and ethnic minorities, gay couples, and people with disabilities. One tag line read, "Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we." This national ad campaign, which aired in 2004, was sponsored by the United Church of Christ and was designed to attract new members. "We included people with physical disabilities in these commercials—in a wheelchair or with a walker—as an extension of the call and hope that churches would be intentionally inclusive of 'all the people,'" said the Reverend Gregg Brekke, a spokesman for the denomination.

Instead, the imagery provoked grumbling from some denominations because of its implied criticism of other faith traditions. Yet the criticism held more than a grain of truth. Churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples are places where people with disabilities might not expect to feel excluded, isolated, or patronized, but that has often been the norm. For years congregations have effectively excluded people with disabilities from worship—whether by steps and narrow doorways or by strained attitudes—or segregated them in "special" services.

**Continue reading "There Are No Barriers To God's Love"**

#### Twelve Poor Practices That Cripple Churches

By Tom Ehrich

**What, asked a reader, are the "poor practices" that prevent a congregation from growing, thriving, becoming healthy?**

I don't normally dwell on the negative, because it can sound like attacking and judging. But this reader's question deserves an answer. If our way forward is "best practices," we need to know what "poor practices" we are correcting.

Here is my list of **"The Dozen Poor Practices that Cripple Churches"**:

1. **Not measuring outcomes consistently and accurately.** The great decline that commenced in 1965 was visible to other enterprises, but not to mainline churches, because we weren't looking for trends and shifts. Same with today's continuing decline. If we saw it clearly, and by measures far more revealing than average Sunday attendance, we might be more motivated to respond.
2. **Not studying the marketplace.** If the world is changing outside our doors, we cannot maintain splendid isolation from those changes. Nor should we. All isolation does is make us increasingly irrelevant.
3. **Blaming, not resolving.** We blame the economy for our poor stewardship, rather than see its actual causes in poor teaching, self-serving and a soft approach called "charitable giving." We blame changes we don't like for causing outcomes we don't like, as if the two were inherently connected. They usually aren't.
4. **Relying on Sunday worship to do our work.** It's easy, it's fun, it satisfies our desire for belonging without sacrifice. We're like the remorseful drunk who plans a grandiose vacation to undo his damage to family. We make worship better and better, we fight over its every detail. Then, having built it, we are surprised when people don't come. Serving God and transforming lives aren't that easy.
5. **Rewarding complainers.** Rather than stand up to chronic complainers, we elect them to leadership. Rather than serve the many, we allow the petulant few to absorb attention and resources.
6. **Waiting passively to receive, rather than recruiting.** People won't just walk through our doors. We must recruit them, and that means we must understand who they are and what they seek.
7. **Letting just anyone into leadership.** We parcel out ordination slots, lay council slots and program-leadership slots as if they were prizes for loyalty and symbolic duty. And equip them with adequate support.
8. **Focusing on belonging and complying, rather than transformation.** We exist to change lives, not to gather like-minded souls into pleasant fellowships.
9. **Rendering the clergy powerless.** No institution can grow without strong, assertive and entrepreneurial leadership. Reining the clergy in – by formal polity or by informal practice – is nonsensical. It implies clergy are incompetent and untrustworthy – hardly a recruiting message for capable candidates – and it implies that lay ministry equals lay control.
10. **Clinging to failed ideas.** Instead of rigorously testing, measuring and assessing, we ignore outcomes and keep on trying ideas, practices and programs that simply were ill-conceived. There's no shame in failure, but plenty of shame in not recognizing failure and learning from it.
11. **Allowing small minorities to stymie progress.** For example, not adopting electronic communications because a few elderly don't use email. Or not rewarding powerful preaching because a few are timing worship. Or keeping young adults away because the elderly don't want to be displaced.
12. **Encouraging cultures of comfort.** We constantly take our "temperature," as if a perfect "98.6" could be attained by avoiding conflict, by being nice, by meeting the needs of the needy, rather than leading them to newness of life, and by only acting when we are assured no one will complain.

This is my list. You'll notice there is nothing on there about worshipping this way or that, following this doctrine or that, having adequate space, or being well located. Being an effective faith community is much harder work than that.



#### Meeting Your New First-Time Guest

By Don Nations

Fifty years ago a person moved to town, looked in the newspaper or phone book for a church of their denomination, visited a couple of them (if there were more than one), and then joined the church.

Twenty-five years ago a person moved to town, looked in the newspaper or phone book for churches in general, visited three or four of them, and then joined the church of their choice — or at least attended there on a regular basis. [Read More](#)

#### Your Website is Your Church's Welcome Mat

By Matthew Lyons

Increasingly, those looking for a church begin their search online. Therefore, a congregation's website must function as a satellite of their church. Consider these facts:

- Eighty to 85 percent of people searching for a church use the internet.
- For church websites generally, 19 percent of "content views" relate to new visitor information. In other words, this is what one in five persons viewing your website is seeking.
- On average, however, visitors spend only 90 seconds on the homepage of a church site.

#### Read More

**Please share this newsletter with others in your congregation and committees.**

This newsletter goes out via email to all Ministers, Lay Pastors, Clerks of Session, Educators, Churches, Church Treasurers, Neighborhood Connectors, Committee Chairs, and to those who requested to be on the mailing list.

[Click Here for the Weekend Update Online.](#)



Questions, comments or e-mail address change? Email Bre Van Dorpe, the newsletter editor, at [bvandorpe@salem-presbytery.org](mailto:bvandorpe@salem-presbytery.org)