



The Story Behind the 2011 Donor Print

As promised, following is the paraphrased story of how artist, Nicole B., a member of New Beginnings Church in Denver, CO came to draw this print which will be given to major PCA donors in 2011. *I felt alone and had been looking for something because I felt I had no place to belong, and didn't feel complete. I've been hurt by the church on the outside and haven't really read the Bible much, so when my roommate suggested I enter the art contest, I was at a loss as to what the theme was supposed to be. I looked up Matthew 25:36. I read it and it meant something to me, and I drew what the verses made me feel like. I want something to hold me up and to shine light. I don't know God and I don't know religion, but my picture is what I want it to be. Maybe I can't understand it in my head, but through art and music it can be in my heart. It meant a lot to me to win. It makes me feel a little bit whole.*



PCA Board of Directors: Back row: Rev. Greg Karlsgodt, Neil Bullock, Jim Tuinstra, Eric Sponheim, Rev. Rich Rienstra; Middle row: Rev. Toni Hawkins, Carol Porter, Mary Mortenson, Rev. Emily Cardin; Front row: Gloria Gurwell

PCA Board of Directors Meets in Denver

The PCA Board of Directors met in Denver, CO on May 7th & 8th, where they were hosted by Our Savior's Lutheran Church, which has given long time support to New Beginnings Church in the Denver Women's Correctional Facility. Significant energy was put into visioning and planning for the future work of PCA. A highlight was being able to worship with Pr. Emily Cardin and the women of New Beginnings.

Visit us on the Web at www.prisoncongregations.org

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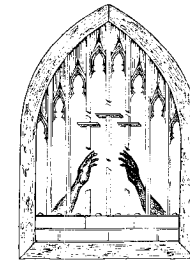
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Prison
Congregations
of America, Inc.

Executive Director:
Mary Mortenson
Administrative Assistant:
Pam Dirksen
Address:
PO Box 1132, Mitchell, SD 57301
Phone:
605-990-8330, or 800-417-6692
Fax: 605-990-4102
Email: mary@prisoncongregations.org
Web Site: www.prisoncongregations.org



Prison Congregations of America, Inc.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Sounds

This is the time of year when we in South Dakota hear the song of the cicadas. While not everyone would agree that the cacophony of sounds coming from the trees every evening is exactly "song," I love it! There is something beautiful about how these insects, hidden and sometimes unpopular, sing their song so triumphantly every evening. These special creatures remind me of prison congregations around the country. With the inclusion of St. Francis of Assisi Christian Church in Draper, UT, we now have nineteen worshipping communities in twelve states. (There are actually sixteen congregations, but some of them are two-point parishes.) This number includes Prisoners of Hope in Appleton, MN, that has an Associate Council that refuses to give up, and is planning to reestablish the congregation when the prison reopens later this year or next.

So, what do cicadas have to do with prison congregations? Like the cicadas, people who are incarcerated are often misunderstood, if they are thought of at all. Yet, when a prison congregation worships, the sounds are strong and clear and beautiful.

In April, I shared in the "Palm Sunday" service with Women at the Well. The women each had homemade palms and several times during the service, the "Hosanna" call and response was fairly shouted! In worshipping with both St. Dismas congregations in South Dakota, I was reminded how much fun it is to sing in a prison congregation as the volume of the song has less to do with numbers of singers than it does with the sheer joy of worship. When Jack, the PCA Board and I worshipped with New Beginnings Church in Denver, we were touched by the strong, clear voices reading Scripture

and leading prayer. As the men of Followers of Christ in Lincoln, NE celebrated the installation of their new pastor, their collective response to the Bishop's call for support of Rev. Bob Bryan was a resounding affirmation. Just last month as Jack and I met with the inside council of Grace Place, we were touched by the women's energy and enthusiasm for service. So exuberant was the discussion that, more than once, the council president had to call for one person to speak at a time! Also last month, we witnessed the men of Luther Luckett Christian Church clapping with joyful abandon as they welcomed their new sisters of St. Francis of Assisi Christian Church, also Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), into their family. And finally, anyone who has ever worshipped in a prison congregation knows that sharing the peace is a chaotic time in which every hand is shaken by every other hand – at least once!

Here's the deal about these sounds of prison congregational worship – the razor wire does not and cannot contain the sound. Just like the cicadas' song, the prison congregations' songs spread to the outside and the church is renewed. Please know that the work in which we are all engaged does, indeed, matter and simply would not be reality without you. You are going to read quite a bit about finances in this issue of the newsletter. The reality is that interest in the PCA model of prison ministry is growing dramatically just at a time when finances are tested. We are positive and excited about the opportunities ahead of us, and we need your help to meet the needs of the ministry.

May a loud and joyful song play your heart,



Executive Director
Mary Mortenson

Mary

PCA Goes Green

We are wanting to switch as much of our paper mailing list to electronic as we can, so if you would like to receive correspondence from us via email, please give us your email address: mary@prisoncongregations.org.

Visit us on the Web at www.prisoncongregations.org



“Come & See”

PCA’s annual “Come & See” conference will be September 29–30, 2011 in Sioux Falls, SD. The event is hosted by St. Dymas of South Dakota, Cornerstone Prison Church, and Prison Lighthouse Fellowship, all prison congregations in Sioux Falls.

The “Come and See” event enables people to learn about and experience the PCA unique model of prison ministry. “Come and See” is for prison administrators, mission-minded Christians, prison chaplains and prison religious coordinators. Speakers will include PCA’s executive director, prison administrators, and those involved with established and successful prison congregations. Attendees will also experience worship with a prison congregation at the South Dakota State Penitentiary.

Registration fee for “Come and See” is \$125, which covers materials, meals and motel. A nonrefundable \$40 deposit is required with each registration. Scholarships of \$85 are available to the first 15 qualified people applying so attendees receiving scholarships would pay only the \$40 deposit and travel expenses. If you are interested in attending, please register as soon as possible as scholarships are given on a first come, first served basis.

For more information, check the PCA website: www.prisoncongregations.org or contact the PCA office: PO Box 1132, Mitchell, SD 57301-1132, 605-990-8330 or mary@prisoncongregations.org.

PCA Hosts On-Line Scentsy Party!

Thanks to Nikki Tyhurst, an Independent Scentsy Consultant and a good friend of PCA, you have the chance to purchase the Scentsy brand of low heat Electric Warmer lamps and scented wax AND benefit PCA! Nikki is generously making it possible to order through PCA’s on-line party. Just go to <https://nikki-tyhurst.scentsy.us/Buy> to order from the choices of Warmers, and Wickless Scentsy Bars in over 80 fragrances. Shop from your home or call Nikki (605-660-1866) to order from our party. Her email is nikki.tyhurst@hotmail.com. You and your friends can shop for yourselves or for Christmas gifts, and your orders will be sent right to your door. Nikki will even send a FREE gift to everyone who orders online. The party is open until September 16th so don’t delay! If you choose to book a party, booking must be done by September 16 and party held by December 31, 2011 in order to benefit PCA.



“Partners at the Cross” Celebration & Ingathering

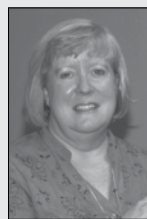
It’s time to buy tickets for PCA’s annual “Partners at the Cross” Benefit Banquet at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD, on Saturday, October 1, 2011. Tickets are \$25 per person or \$200 for a table seating eight. Following dinner, the Master’s Voice Quartet will present musical selections and keynote speaker, Christie Sprinkle, a former member of New Beginnings Church in the Denver Women’s Correctional Facility, will share her story. A silent auction will include items donated by members of prison congregations. The enclosed letter includes a ticket order form.

If you are unable to attend the banquet, you are invited to send a donation or, you might consider planning a fundraising event at your church so you can bring or send the proceeds as part of the ingathering. Money raised provides PCA with operating funds for general expenses, travel to existing and potential congregations, and for development of new congregations so more men and women will have a chance to become members of a healthy faith community while they are incarcerated.



Women at the Well Has a New Pastor

As founding pastor, Rev. Arnette Pint, moved to serve St. Mark’s United Methodist Church in Iowa City, IA, Rev. Lee Schott began her call with Women at the Well on July 1. Lee is an ordained United Methodist elder who grew up on an Iowa farm, left a career as an attorney to respond to God’s call, and just ended eight years as pastor at Polk City UMC. Lee’s initial call to ministry focused on reaching people for relationship with God through Jesus Christ. From her own experience, she knew this was an elusive goal, even for those who have been lifelong “church people.” While she was in seminary, God brought her to a broader sense of call that encompassed hunger, social justice and the renewal of the church. After eight years in a suburban setting, she finds herself now at Women at the Well, at the intersection of all those streams. Lee and her husband continue to reside in Polk City with their three sons.



With Your Help, Ministry Happens

As you read all about what is happening with PCA, know that it happens only with the blessing and support of our donors. Our annual budget of \$140,000 for a national ministry is small by most standards, yet activity is outpacing funding. Know that your financial support is always appreciated and that the PCA board and staff will be good stewards of all gifts.

Attention Snowbirds

If you are going South for the winter, would you please contact us with your temporary winter address or switch to email delivery? When we use the Return Service on our mailing, the post office doesn’t forward the newsletters to you, and we don’t want to lose touch. And MAYBE we can plan some sort of get-together, especially for you who go to Arizona!!

Thrivent CHOICE

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans members, please designate your share of Choice Dollars to PCA! Log on to www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 1-800-847-4836 today!

Also watch for an opportunity to give input on choosing the national ministries that will benefit from the 2012 \$1 million donation. PCA is a national ministry and would love to be a recipient of some of these funds!



PRAYER CORNER

We offer special prayers of thanks for the hundreds of people around the country who, even in these fragile economic times, offer support to PCA and their local prison congregations.

PCA and Social Media

If you look at: www.prisoncongregations.org, you’ll find: Updated calendar and news! Links to Facebook and Twitter Join the Friends of PCA Group on Facebook!



Thanks For Your Support! YOU ARE CHANGING HEARTS AND MINDS!

Gifts received from January 1–July 22, 2011

Endowment Gifts

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Living Stones Prison Congregation, Shelton, WA
Living Word Lutheran Church, Milbank, SD
Love of Christ, ELCA, Weslaco, TX
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Kim & Lorie Mortenson, in honor of Payton Elizabeth & Parker Ann Hick’s first birthdays and first grandchild, Zakaria Bahbaz’s eighth birthday

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Meredith Taylor

Russell & Marie Tesch

Abbie & Douglas Thrash

Lavonne Titze–Haier, part given in memory of Elsie Titze

Calvin Tonsager

Trinity Lutheran Church, Mitchell, SD

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Jeff & Stacey Iweit

Union Creek WELCA, Akron, IA

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Marcia Vrbka-Olson

Wally Walton

Mark Ward

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Elverne & Laurie Ziemke

Don’t forget about the Partners in Change Society and the \$25,000 Endowment Match!

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