

**OUTREACH DIVISION
JULY 28, 2009**

**HUNGER COMMITTEE
Nickel a Meal Spring 2009 Grants**

Thank you to all the churches that have participated in the Nickel-A-Meal offering so far this year! At its June 6 meeting, the Hunger Committee reviewed three applications and awarded the following **Regional Grants** pending Council approval:

- \$5,000 to the Pay It Forward Food Pantry, a mission outreach of Fairview Presbyterian Church in Lenoir.
- \$7,500 to Angel Food Y.U.M.M. (Your United Mission Ministry) in Valdese, sponsored by the Session of Waldensian Presbyterian Church.

October 1 is the deadline for Fall applications, and checks for those grants will be dispersed in January 2010. If you know of a mission or agency in your area that specifically addresses hunger, encourage them to apply.

Descriptions of these missions that can be used in your newsletters or bulletins:

Angel Food Y.U.M.M. (Your United Mission Ministry), begun in 2003, started out with a few volunteers from First United Methodist Church in Valdese and fed only a handful of people on their first night. The ministry has grown to include about 80 volunteers, representing a number of local churches, including Waldensian Presbyterian Church. Every Monday evening, teams of volunteers provide a hot, nutritious meal in a welcoming environment and provide prayer upon request. This ministry was born out of a friendly conversation about how to help the needy in the Valdese community and has evolved into an ecumenical ministry feeding nearly 1500 people per month. (Contact is Barbara Temple, P.O. Box 637; Valdese, NC 28690; 828-874-0006, fumcvaldese@earthlink.net.)

The **Pay It Forward Food Pantry** has been a mission outreach of Fairview Presbyterian Church for the past four years. It provides physical and spiritual nourishment to those in need in Caldwell County, and helps approximately 400 people per month. The ministry does so by:

- 1) providing healthful, nutritious food to those having difficulty providing for themselves and their family,
 - 2) providing an attitude of caring through individual, interactive conversation,
 - 3) maintaining an attitude of respect and dignity toward all visitors,
 - 4) providing spiritual support through prayer.
 - 5) Encouraging recipients to respond with Christian action through community volunteer opportunities or interaction with family, neighbors and others in need.
- (Contact is Gary Amos, P.O. Box 2460; Lenoir, NC 28645; 828-757-0952, gryamos@bellsouth.net.)

MISSIONS COMMITTEE



Letter from Rev. Dr. Becca Young,
PCUSA Mission Co-Worker in Indonesia,
to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina

Greetings to my friends and family in the Presbytery of Western North Carolina! It is such an honor to know that you are lifting up the PC(USA) mission work here in Indonesia as part of your gathering today. As you know, I am continuing to do tsunami relief work and also to teach at Jakarta Theological Seminary.

The tsunami relief work is in an exciting phase right now because we have just begun the second phase of a mangrove planting project along the coastline that was devastated by the tsunami. Mangroves are important not only to protect land from erosion but also as a major site for crabs and many types of fish to produce offspring, so when the tsunami destroyed the mangroves, it also destroyed the habitat and the livelihood of the fishermen. We are planting 74 acres of mangrove trees in a joint program with the local church and a Muslim youth group (the teenagers do the actual planting of the seedlings in the ocean). I hope to visit there soon and will send you photos.

The teaching continues to go well; my recent courses have included Contextual Christology, where we explored "Who is Jesus?" in the Indonesian context, and Missiology, where among other field visits, we saw a slum that has been established inside a Chinese cemetery, because land pressures and lack of government support leave the homeless with nowhere else to go. At the seminary, as happens to all professors, I keep having to add committee work: I'm now on the chapel worship committee, the library committee and the planning committee for the seminary's 75th anniversary this fall (we are the oldest seminary in Indonesia). I got to see my first group of advisees graduate on June 6th, which was very gratifying. It is certainly never dull around here!

In the midst of all that is going on, I can't tell you how much your faithful support means to me. I truly am aware of how you are so vigilant in lifting me up in your prayers, and that means the world to me and gets me through some challenging times. In this time of economic difficulty, I am also deeply touched by how you continue to provide financial support to me, enabling me to continue this ministry without having to worry about that aspect of my work.

Having been at Columbia Seminary with Grace Boyer, I am also very excited to have her be part of our mission support within the Presbytery. I can't think of a better, more committed person to take on this role after Ginnie Stevens. Godspeed to her in her work among you.

Thank you again and again for your support, including the lovely cards and letters and gifts I receive from many of you throughout the year. Know that you are also in my prayers, as I ask God to guide you in the important ministries that each and every one of you undertakes in your local setting.

God bless you! Have a great Presbytery meeting. Lord willin and the creek don't rise, I'll see you next year when I'm home on furlough!

Peace,
Becca Young

Malawi Mission Trip May 20-June 1, 2009 Team Report—Written by Alice Salthouse

I once heard a tale of a person who was struggling with faith issues and the amount of suffering there is in the world. In prayer this person asked God, “Why don’t you do something about all the pain and misery in this world, God?” God answered, “I did. I sent you.”

On May 21, a team of 9 Presbyterians boarded a small jet in Charlotte, to begin the 10,000 mile journey to Malawi. We were a diverse group of men and women, each bringing a variety of life experiences to the adventure that lay ahead. This was the fifth such journey for the Presbytery of Western NC, but it was my first.

We were headed to a land where life is vastly different from what we are familiar. Malawi is called the “Warm Heart of Africa”. People there are pleasant and friendly even though their struggles are intense. They are kind to strangers and often give beyond their means.

As each of us signed up for the trip, we were unsure what tasks we would undertake. I was told that the purpose of this mission is more about being together and building friendships than it is about what we will do. I knew that we would be serving the needs of the Nkhoma Hospital where our missionary, Dr. Barbara Nagy is stationed and I knew we would be delivering supplies to the new school where Barbara’s daughter, Happy, attends. What I didn’t know was that I would get to participate in an amazing miracle that will save the lives of many Malawians.

Nkhoma Hospital has a catchment area of about 250,000 people. Malawians often travel great distances on foot to seek medical care there and many times people are brought to the hospital by members of their family. Malaria is a devastating disease and joins forces with AIDS to leave the country’s life expectancy at 35 years of age. Parasites and infectious diseases that are virtually nonexistent in the U.S. are common place there. Children and adults suffer the effects of malnutrition and starvation. It is difficult for me to comprehend the pervasive nature of the sickness in this land.

Two weeks before we were scheduled to leave, I received a phone call from the Presbytery office. I was asked if I could install some laboratory equipment in the Nkhoma hospital. I had worked in laboratory medicine for twenty years but I have been away from the lab for the past eight years. While I was concerned about my ability to do this, I was excited about the prospect of it all.

Over the next few days, it was determined that I should travel to Kalamazoo, Michigan for training on the instrument to be installed in the Nkhoma hospital laboratory. All the years working in the lab were still there and I actually remembered what was needed to get the job done.

To make a long story short, suffice it to say that there was a sequence of events that took place in Malawi, the US, Holland, and Korea that enabled the much needed laboratory equipment to be delivered and installed. This long story involved:

- finding the most appropriate instrumentation for this 3rd world setting
- getting the money to purchase the equipment
- having a person available who possessed the education and ability to install the equipment who just happened to be coming with a mission team
- getting funding to send that person to Kalamazoo to train on installing the equipment

- bringing a medical technologist to the Nkhoma hospital laboratory from Holland to work in the lab for a year to develop a fully trained staff for the long term
- having that person present to be trained by the one installing the instrumentation
- bringing a Malawian from a northern village who has a lab background to prepare for working in that lab long term

This sequence of events took place in less than 3 weeks. It would have been difficult for anyone to put all these things together over six months or a year. For God, the pieces of this puzzle came together quickly and were neatly fitted together showing a beautiful picture.

During our time in Malawi, this was not the only project executed by the team and it definitely was not the only time that the miraculous power of God was acutely evident.

We delivered school supplies to the Ebenezer School mentioned earlier.

We visited and delivered supplies to the Ministry of Hope Crisis Nursery. This is a place where abandoned babies (birth to 2 years old) are taken and feed and nurtured until they are adopted or reach 2 years of age at which time they are sent to an orphanage.

Two new oxygen concentrators were delivered to the hospital.

We cleaned and painted the Guardian Houses at the hospital. This is an area on the hospital campus where families of patients sleep and prepare meals while a loved one is cared for in the hospital. It is also the place where women who have high risk pregnancies stay so that they will be near the hospital when they go into labor. These rooms are bare and people sleep on a cement floor.

We repaired many things in the hospital that were broken.

We painted hospital beds.

We delivered money that would help build new classrooms to the Ebenezer School.

We did all these things and much more. But, as I said earlier the things that we did were not the best part of the mission. The best part came when we stood in church and sang hymns and prayed with the Malawians with one voice. The deep joy came when:

- We had Malawian friends over to eat dinner with us
- When they showed us how to wrap our heads with scarves the way they do
- We had devotions and sang song together after dinner
- We went with Barbara and Happy on a hike to the top of Nkhoma Mountain
- We acted like children and got the giggles after lights out in our cots at night
- We played the drums with the nurses and teachers after a meal together
- We listened to the deep rich voices of people walking on the road singing praises in this country that is one of the poorest in the world
- We realized that in the midst of suffering and hopeless situations, Jesus shows up and gives hope and life just like he did when he called Lazarus out of his tomb

It truly is more about the being than about the doing. We left that place knowing that the lives of the people there would be improved because we came. We left knowing that our lives would be improved because we went. God is good – All the time.