

Inside The VOICE

2
Investing in
ministry



3
Spring varietals



4
Think globally, act globally



6
Prayers for
Madagascar



7
Inside guide



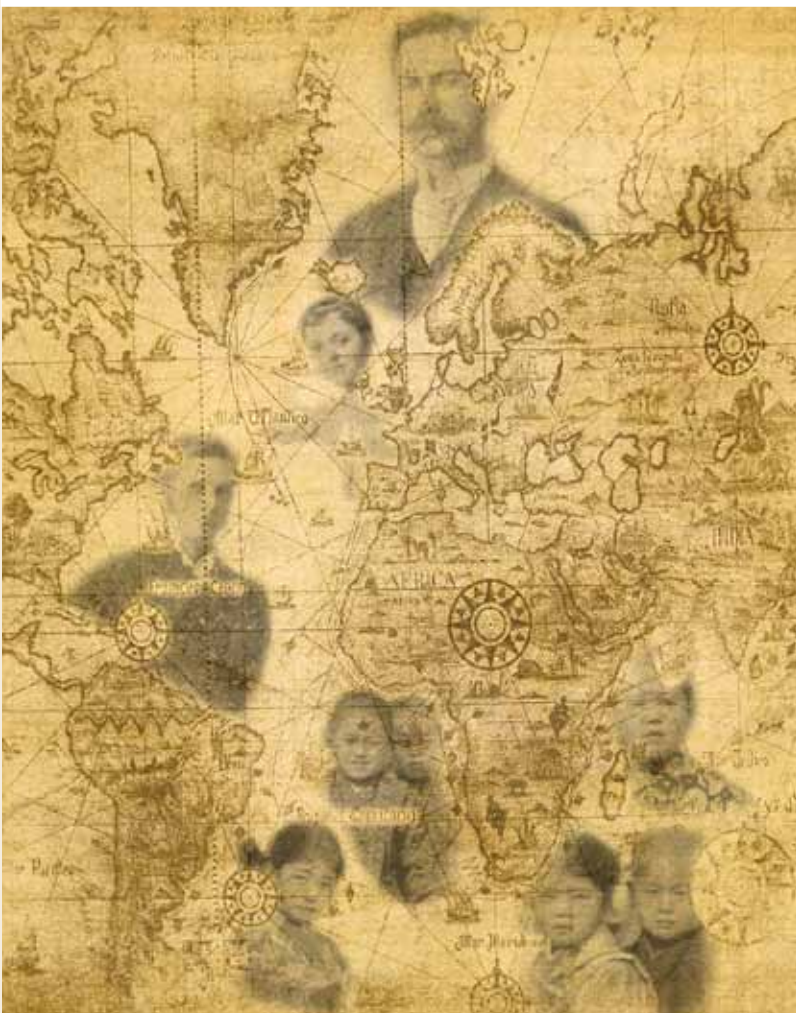
The VOICE

Fifth Avenue
Presbyterian
Church



April 2011

'The Great Missionary Society'



On Dec. 21, 1908, one of six days of special events celebrating the centennial of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Robert E. Speer rose to speak. Speer was one of the most recognized religious figures of the time, and an authority on Christian missionary work—Presbyterian missions in particular.

His topic on that day was "Our Church and Foreign Missions."

"This church has contended in all its history," he said, "that the whole organization is a missionary organization, and that every man and woman and child who passes into that organization becomes a member of the great missionary society, bound by the very fact of church membership to an obligation to share the gospel with the whole great world."

As it was in 1808, and 1908, so it is in 2011.

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church has a remarkable heritage of reaching out—to our neighbors on the streets outside, and in cities and villages around the world. With support from this congregation, 19th century Presbyterian missionaries helped to found hospitals, chapels and schools in Yokohama, Japan; in Ning Po, China; in Guatemala; in Hamadan, Persia (Iran); and among Native American communities in Alaska.

In many ways, FAPC demonstrates mission work at its best. Our volunteers sign up for real labor. They form relationships. They continue to serve the people they meet, either through return trips or initiatives here at home.

Today—with a pair of Adult Education classes on global mission coming up in April, a sale of Egyptian handicrafts scheduled for May (an outgrowth of last year's mission trip to Cairo), and three mission trips in the planning stages for 2011–12—it seems an opportune time to consider the scope of FAPC's outreach to "the whole great world."

Turn to pages 4 and 5 for an overview.

A PASTORAL RESIDENCY



Beginning this summer, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church will become the training ground for a freshly ordained Presbyterian minister.

FAPC is now accepting applications for a new residency program, generously funded by the Lilly Endowment, that will expand the number of clergy on our staff, while contributing to the vitality of Presbyterian ministry at the same time.

This year FAPC joins a group of other main-line Protestant congregations in New York City in a collaborative fellowship program created by the Lilly Endowment in 1999. The Lilly Endowment is an Indianapolis-based philanthropic foundation, founded in 1937 to support religion, education and community development.

The Lilly Fellows Program, also known as the "Transition-into-Ministry Initiative," provides two-year internships for new members of the clergy—either graduating seminarians or recent graduates still awaiting their first call. Lilly Fellows are ordained into their positions and, like medical residents, spend two years in rotation, gaining experience in all of the various ministries and administrative departments of the congregations they serve.

"Lilly's research indicates that half of seminary graduates only remain in the field of ministry for a short time," says Mary Rose Main, chair of FAPC's Personnel Committee, which reviewed and recommended the Lilly program. "This is astonishing. This is precisely what the Lilly Endowment is trying to address in funding programs all over the country that support and develop fledgling members of the clergy before they have their first pastorate positions."

The collaborative program in New York City began last year with four participating churches—St. James Episcopal Church, Christ Church United Methodist, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church and Judson Memorial Church, an American Baptist/United Church of Christ congregation. As many as four more congregations, including FAPC, are joining the program in

2011–12. Residents will receive mentoring and guidance from clergy and staff within their congregations, while also learning from the experiences of fellow residents at the other participating churches.

"This is without doubt a boon to FAPC," says senior pastor Scott Black Johnston. "The Lilly Fellows Program is highly competitive, attracting the best and brightest from our seminaries. The program allows us to choose our own resident, who will be available to support any or all of our program ministries."

More than 800 beginning pastors have completed the Transition-into-Ministry program since its inception. In a 2008 evaluation of the program, the Alban Institute applauded the Lilly Endowment for restoring the vital role of congregations and lay leaders in preparing new pastors for ministry.

"Transition-into-Ministry programs have developed an approach that is centered in congregational ministry and depends upon the close collaboration and interaction of congregations, mentoring pastors



Mary Rose Main



Easter Through the Eyes of Children, an exhibit by the Sunday School classes of FAPC, is on display in the Gallery until early May. Among the creations (left to right): "Jesus Lives in Us!", a joint effort by all classes; "A Midnight Garden of Prayer," by the kindergarten and first graders; and "The Incredible Empty Tomb," by the second and third graders.

and the beginning pastors," the Institute said. "[New] pastors come to experience themselves and congregation members as co-participants in Christian community, partnered in making their way together in the world."

The Institute pointed out that seminarians are often unprepared for the transition from classroom to congregation. Many new ministers also are hired as solo pastors in struggling congregations, with limited collegial or institutional support. Transition-into-Ministry programs help prepare new pastors for such challenges.

"We must keep in mind," Main says, "that in addition to the benefits this program offers to our congregation, we are also making an investment in the quality of ministry for the entire Presbyterian Church."

The Lilly Endowment will cover most of the costs of the residency (salary, housing allowance, benefits and book allowance) for the first two years. The longer a congregation participates in the program, the greater share of the cost it assumes. By the fifth year, a church is expected to assume the full cost of its resident-in-ministry.

FAPC will be accepting applications for the Lilly Fellows Program through April 4. Our new ministerial resident is expected to be on board by July 1.

RANGE OF LEARNING



Religious pluralism... disaster relief... homelessness... anti-Semitism... children's literature... spirituality... living wills. There is tremendous diversity in the brief series of Adult Education classes that begins next month at FAPC.

The Spring 2011 term opens on Sunday, April 3, with two extraordinary classes—"Christian Perspectives on India's Religious Pluralism" by Margaret and the Rev. Byron Shafer; and "Six Years After Katrina, We've Not Finished Yet," by Kimberley Dow.

The Shafers—recently returned from three years in Bangalore—will offer an overview of India's multifaceted religious landscape, which includes sizable populations of Muslims, Jains, Buddhists and Hindus. Margaret Shafer is the former Associate for Outreach at FAPC, where she led three mission trips to India.

Kimberley Dow has led an equal number of trips to the Louisiana Gulf Coast, ever since Hurricane Katrina devastated the area in 2005. With public attention drawn to other crises in other lands, her presentation will raise up the still-unmet needs of New Orleans' poorest residents.

The three-part, multifaith film series, "We Are the Ones We've Been Waiting For," concludes Thursday, April 7, with a screening of the 2009 documentary *Defamation*. The film is a frank, sometimes irreverent examination of 21st century anti-Semitism. The screening, with a discussion led by Cantor Elizabeth Sacks, begins at 7 pm at Central Synagogue, 123 E. 55th St.

On Sunday, April 10, FAPC's Steps Study Group and the Committee on Homelessness tackle a question New Yorkers confront every time someone on the streets asks for spare change—*should I?* The class, "Does \$1 Make a Difference on the Streets?," will explore better solutions to helping the homeless of the city.

Perhaps the marquee event of the season is on Sunday, May 1, when the acclaimed author Katherine Paterson comes to FAPC. Paterson will read selections from some of her award-winning children's books, including *Bridge to Terabithia* (1977) and *Jacob Have I Loved* (1981). This special afternoon will include a conversation with the congregation, led by senior pastor Scott Black Johnston.

On the morning of May 1, the Rev. Randy Weber begins the next installment in his exploration of Celtic spirituality. "The Seven Days of Creation" is a four-week class that will center on the fourth through seventh days of creation from the book of Genesis.

On Sunday, May 15, Emily Dunlap leads a workshop, "Demystifying Advance Directives," that will clarify the difference between health care proxies and living wills, and examine why all of us need to plan ahead for potential illness or incapacity. Dunlap is a social worker at FAPC.

For a schedule of class times and locations, look for the Spring Adult Education brochures available in both the Fifth Avenue and West 55th Street entrances, or go to fapc.org/learn.

FAPC REACHES OUT TO THE WORLD



Six years after Hurricane Katrina, neighborhoods in New Orleans are still in recovery. "People have learned to work around the leftover destruction," says Kimberley Dow (*left*), who has worked on three FAPC mission trips to the Gulf Coast and hopes to organize more. "You drive down a street and see one house fixed, and two that are not. Most neighborhoods are like that."

The people most in need are the poor, the uninsured and the elderly, some of whom have been ripped off by unscrupulous builders. In her April 3 Adult Education presentation ("Six Years after Katrina, We're Not Finished Yet"), Dow hopes to convey both the ongoing need for volunteers to rebuild New Orleans, and the deep appreciation of the local residents, who are grateful to know they have not been forgotten.

As Dow puts it, "It's the neediest of the needy who need us now."



The website of Engadi Ministries Intl. states it plainly: "The average male in Guatemala City is in a gang by 13, where he's involved in drug dealing, extortion, gang rape and more." Engadi's mission is to save as many boys as it can.

Last summer, nine volunteers from NEXT Ministries (*above*) traveled to Antigua to start excavation on what will become a boys' ranch, a refuge for at-risk youth. They worked side by side with Nathan Hardeman, the son of Southern Baptist missionaries, who grew up in Guatemala and now leads Engadi Ministries with his wife, Claudia.

The experience won them over; this summer, they plan to return. The next NEXT mission to Guatemala will be July 23-30. Contact Mary Gazella (mary.gazella@gmail.com) or Lauren Moon (laurenmoon@gmail.com) if you'd like to go along, see the countryside, meet the boys—and put in some long hours. "Participants should be prepared for daily physical labor," Lauren says. "It's both intensely challenging and deeply fulfilling."



For more than 20 years, a nonprofit called CODEP (Comprehensive Development Project) has been working to create sustainable projects that would alleviate the entrenched poverty of Haiti. CODEP began as a collaboration among Presbyterian and Episcopalian missionaries and congregations, and continues to receive significant support from the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The persistent need in Haiti worsened considerably last year, in the wake of an earthquake that killed a quarter-million people in January and a brush with Hurricane Tomás in November.

The FAPC Mission Trip Committee is planning a weeklong trip starting May 14 to work with CODEP in Haiti. It's not too late to sign up—contact Sally Harwood (sharwood2@earthlink.net) to learn more. Expect to do some manual labor, anything from building houses to installing cisterns, depending on what's needed.

Photo courtesy of CODEP.



Fourteen women from FAPC, led by the Egyptian-born Suzan Habachy, set out for Cairo in February 2010. Habachy brought the women to meet the Zabaleen—Coptic Christians, desperately poor, the garbage collectors of Cairo, who live among mountains of refuse collected every day from throughout the city. But women and girls at the largest garbage site, Moqattam, have an opportunity to transform scraps of paper and fabric into notecards, quilts and rugs, raising money to build schools and finance a future.

The mission trip didn't end when the FAPC group came home. "We have continued to meet every month or so for dinner and to talk about what we can do to help the people we met there," Habachy says. "Especially the women and girls."

Habachy and her sister, Nimet, have sponsored sales of the Zabaleen-crafted products in New York for nearly 20 years; next month (May 3-5), FAPC will sponsor a sale for the first time. Proceeds will go directly to benefit the people of Moqattam. "The sale is a tribute to the women who went to Egypt on this mission trip," Habachy says. "They saw what could be accomplished and committed themselves to doing it."



As the daughter of Presbyterian missionaries working in the Punjab, Margaret Shafer has known India all her life. During her time on staff at FAPC (she retired as the Associate for Outreach in 2004), she organized and led three mission trips to India and another to Egypt.

Shafer has just returned from three months in Bangalore, where her husband, the Rev. Byron Shafer, was the visiting professor of Old Testament at the United Theological College. The Shafers will present an Adult Education class on Sunday, April 3, that explores the multifaceted dimensions of India, a secular democracy that is home not only to a Hindu majority, but also to substantial populations of Buddhists, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains and Christians.

"Because so many—at least 90%—of Christians in India are from the outcast or very low caste background, they are hungry for affirmation that they are indeed precious in God's eyes," she says. "When we have come all the way from America to visit them and learn from them, they feel some of that affirmation. But, as with every mission trip, the participants are the biggest beneficiaries, as they open themselves to new perspectives and different ways of thinking."



*Above: The Shafers in India
Right: A Jain temple in Bangalore*



Egypt

India

Philippines

Madagascar

New Orleans

Guatemala

Haiti

In 2004, 12 congregants took part in a mission trip to Madagascar, a little-known island nation off the southeast coast of Africa. Little known, that is, but for the strong, historical connection between Madagascar and the Presbyterian Church (USA), and for the contingent of Malagasy Americans who are members of FAPC. *Turn to page 6 to learn more about the current crisis in Madagascar from three of those who made the trip in 2004.*

Having made their way from the Philippines to FAPC, five Filipino-born congregants are now finding their way back. The five—Evelyn Acosta, Neta Baberino, Benedicta Dignadice, Epifania Mercado and Ernie Villanueva—are in the midst of organizing a mission trip to two of the Philippines' major geographic regions, the Visayan Islands and Luzon.

Partnering with local churches, the group intends to learn about the history of Protestantism in this Roman Catholic nation and the influence of colonizing cultures (Spanish, Japanese and American) in the country's development. They will also explore such contemporary issues as housing and homelessness, children's welfare, and the role of women in church and community.

Target date for the two-week trip is late January/early February 2012. Drop a line to missiontrips@fapc.org if you are interested to learn more.

MADAGASCAR ISLAND IN CRISIS



By John Crane

Lying 800 miles off the southeastern coast of Africa, Madagascar is the world's fourth largest island and an environmental treasure. Because of its isolation, over 80% of its mammals, birds and plants cannot be found elsewhere. The island also has abundant natural resources, including extensive rosewood forests, oil, natural gas and many metals—most of which are only starting to be developed. Almost half of its population is Christian.

But there are problems in this paradise. Its Malagasy residents suffer widespread hunger, poverty and ill health. According to the World Bank, about 70% of the island's 19 million people live on less than one U.S. dollar per day. About 80% do without basic services like electricity.

Despite their difficult living conditions, the people are energetic and enthusiastic. This spirit still impresses the 12 FAPC members who made a mission trip to Madagascar in 2004 to see the Presbyterian Church in action.

"It amazes me how the people of Madagascar do so much with so little," says Brunilda Fernandez, an FAPC Elder and mission-trip member. "I was impressed with the spirit of the people and their desire to improve their living conditions, even though their schools, clinics and infrastructure are primitive by our standards."

Recent political instability has added to the island's woes. In 2009, the military backed a coup d'état against the democratically-elected president and installed Andry Rajoelina, the former mayor of the capital city of Antananarivo, in his place. The new government quickly suspended parliament, suppressed press freedom, violated human rights and instituted policies that have increased hunger, poverty and environmental damage. Some of these problems continue today.

The political upheaval has deeply affected the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s partner, the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar, commonly known as FJKM. The second-largest Christian Church in Madagascar, FJKM has 4 million adherents in nearly 6,000 congregations around the country. The church is also deeply involved in the economic and social life of Madagascar, operating schools, health clinics, orphanages, literacy and vocational training, village co-operatives, and home and handicraft centers.

"As Christians, we have been deeply concerned about the human-rights violations and other restrictions taking place against the church, its pastors and the citizens of Madagascar," says Jacky Radifera, a former FAPC Elder who led the 2004 mission trip. "We are also concerned that church-supported schools and health centers will have to close because of lack of government support. That would have a devastating effect on people who live in one of the poorest countries of the world."



Brunilda Fernandez, Charlie Dougherty and Jacky Radifera review the latest news on the political crisis in Madagascar.

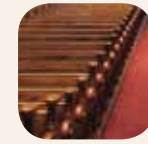
Many of FAPC's Malagasy members and friends joined the Presbyterian Synod of the Northeast and the Presbyterian Church's recent General Assembly, among others, who have demanded that Madagascar restore democracy and human rights. They have also urged the U.S. government to work with African leaders to secure a democratic, peaceful and expeditious end to Madagascar's political crisis.

In the meantime, members of the 2004 mission trip are urging the church and its members to pray for Madagascar and provide financial support, so that the FJKM can continue its ministry to this impoverished nation.

"The Presbyterian Church (USA) has made sure that every dollar given to its partner church in Madagascar is used to fund education, health and economic opportunities for the local people," says Charlie Dougherty, another member of the mission trip. "The integrity of these people is without question, and the need is great. Even a small amount of money can have a big impact on the lives of these people."

"The church is an integral part of daily life in Madagascar," adds Fernandez. "I strongly support providing benevolence grants so that the FJKM church can continue their good works at a time when cuts have been made in government programs."

John Crane is a member of the Board of Trustees and a frequent contributor to The VOICE.



PEWS, WINDOWS, NUTS AND BOLTS



The walls of the church, at least in the balcony, were originally stenciled. The facilities staff has stripped away the paint on a few places to provide a glimpse of the ornate design.



Left: Among the treasures of the Sanctuary is the rose window that rises above the rear balcony, opposite the pulpit.

Above: Gail Crane and Derek Maddalena at the foot of the window, which affords the best view of the magnificent detail of the stained glass.

Ever notice—there are no sharp corners in the Sanctuary?

The reason: From the slope of the floor to the gentle curves of the balcony, the space was purposefully designed to focus every eye and every ear on the words spoken from the pulpit. (That's a Reformation church for you.)

Ever wonder—how high the organ pipes rise?

The answer: Three stories. Those magnificent, golden pipes are real (and extremely valuable), but they are also silent as the proverbial church mouse. They are merely the public ornament for the 7,000 working pipes they conceal.

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, this 136-year-old landmark, is a treasure house of art, architecture and history. On Sunday, March 27, two individuals who know the place best—Gail Crane, a member of the church for almost 50 years, and Derek Maddalena, the director of facilities—will lead a tour of the Sanctuary and Kirkland Chapel that explores how the buildings came to be and how we keep them running.

The tour anticipates the publication of a new resource for members and guests alike, *A Walking Tour of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church*. Look for the guide sometime before Easter.

The hope is that the March 27 event and forthcoming guide will revive interest in regular tours of one of New York's foremost houses of worship. If you miss the March 27 tour, drop a line to fapc@fapc.org. We'll keep you posted when future tours are arranged.

Can you imagine—what it would cost to build this church today?

Good question. When FAPC was built in 1875, New Yorkers called it "the million-dollar church." The land cost \$350,000, and all the rest—construction, woodwork, stained glass—came in at nearly \$600,000. At today's prices, who knows? How does "the hundred-million-dollar church" sound?

Upcoming Events

MAR APR

MARCH

- 27 **A Historical and Architectural Tour of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church.** Gail Crane, a member of the church for almost 50 years, and Derek Maddalena, director of facilities, lead this inside look at the history, architecture and operations of our remarkable church. 12:30 pm, starting in the Romeyn Room.
- What We Believe.** First session of new members' class, led by the Rev. Randy Weber. 12:15 pm, Corning Logan Room. This class also will be offered at 6:30 pm Tuesday (March 29) for those unable to attend today.
- 30 **Lenten Mid-Week Service.** Charlene Han Powell, M.Div., preaching. 7 pm, Kirkland Chapel.

APRIL

- 3 **Christian Perspectives on India's Religious Pluralism.** Margaret and Byron Shafer lead this Adult Education class on the multifaith wonder that is India. 9:30 am, Corning Logan Room.
- Six Years after Katrina, We're Not Finished Yet.** Kimberley Dow shares her experience and perspective on the arduous rebuilding of the Louisiana Gulf Coast. 12:30 pm, Corning Logan Room.
- 7 **Multifaith Film Series: *Defamation*.** This third and final film in the series is an irreverent examination of modern-day anti-Semitism. Cantor Elizabeth Sacks leads a discussion following the film. 7 pm, Central Synagogue, 123 E. 55th St.
- 9 **Parents Night Out.** 3:30 pm, Christian Education Center.
- Meals on Heels Spring Banquet and Staged Reading of *The Mousetrap*.** Tickets are \$35, and advance reservations are required. Contact: Bob Brennan (april24bob@aol.com). Dinner starts at 6 pm in Bonnell Hall. Performance and dessert buffet follow in Jones Auditorium.
- 10 **Does \$1 Make a Difference on the Streets?** In this Adult Education class, members of the Steps Study Group and Committee on Homelessness explore the question of how we can *really* help the homeless people we meet on the street. 12:30 pm, Boardroom.
- The Seasons in Song.** The Spring Concert from the Arts and Our Faith Committee features Jennifer Zetlan, soprano, and David Shimoni, pianist. 2 pm, Kirkland Chapel.



Jennifer Zetlan performs in the Spring Concert on April 10.

- 16 **Pancake Breakfast for the Homeless.** 8 am, Bonnell Hall.
- Family Ministries Easter Egg Hunt.** 10 am, Sanctuary and Christian Education Center.
- Shelter Families Easter Egg Hunt and Party.** 2 pm, Christian Education Center.
- 17 **Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast.** 8 am, Bonnell Hall.
- 19 **Employment Advisory.** 6:30 pm, Christian Education Center.
- 25 **Easter Monday.** Building closed.

Holy Week Worship Schedule

- April 17 **Palm Sunday.** 9:30 am, Kirkland Chapel; 11 am, Sanctuary.
- April 20 **Stations of the Cross.** 12:30 pm and 6 pm, Sanctuary.
- April 21 **Maundy Thursday Communion Service.** 6:30 pm, Sanctuary.
- April 22 **Good Friday Meditations.** 12 noon–3 pm, Sanctuary.
- April 24 **Easter Sunday.** 9:30 am and 11 am, Sanctuary.
- Easter at the Bowery Mission.** Worship service and dinner led by FAPC volunteers. 5:45 pm, 227 Bowery, between Prince and Rivington Streets.

