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Focus on the Family HQ
and Pike's Peak
Colorado Springs, CO

From the Director's Desk

In November 2010, I received an unexpected invitation to speak at a conference that was co-hosted by *Focus on the Family* in Colorado Springs, CO. When I mentioned the invitation to others, they said, "What a great opportunity! You should go!" So I did. And it was. But not in the way I expected.

The conference was very well-run, reasonably attended and thoughtfully executed. An abundance of resources—technological, financial, and personal—were clearly and intentionally poured into the event. I suspect the conference planners walked away very excited that they had achieved their intended result—and they should be. But I walked away feeling deeply unsettled. All weekend long, I couldn't shake a feeling akin to "I don't belong here." It wasn't that my presentations weren't good enough—I think they were of a similar quality to anything else I observed. Nor was it that I'm "so Presbyterian" that I can't even function in "broadly-Evangelical-world." It was more like God took me to a highly-publicized venue in a mega-church environment promoted by multi-million-dollar organizations so that he could say this to me: "*Focus on the family.*"

Focus on the family. Not the para-church organization—but *His* family. Focus on the family—the PCA family. Focus on the family—of the local church—including my own, which has always been the "incubator" of new ideas and experiences for me. Focus on the family—the individual families living on the perimeter of congregational life. Focus on the family—those hurting families in our local communities who need access to the Gospel—the good news of the coming of the kingdom—in word and deed.

So here's a word of wisdom—straight from Pike's Peak in Colorado Springs: "Wherever God has called you to minister, just 'focus on the family.'" Don't get caught up in expectations that you should have big programs, or publicity, or multi-media productions. Just love the "family" God has put in *your* life—In Jesus' Name. ~Steph

All God's Children in Nashville, TN

Here's an update from my friend, Gigi Sanders, *All God's Children* Coordinator:

"Christ Presbyterian Church is having a great time with the part of our Children's Ministry called *All God's Children*. The Lord has been so gracious to give our congregation families with children who have special needs. On Sunday mornings, we have five children who have buddies. Being one-on-one allows for guided help, but mostly for friendships to develop. Each child is individually placed in his or her age- or developmentally-appropriate class. Several children have buddies during Children's church as well, and enjoy music and Bible story with their buddy.

Once a month, we host *Special Saturday*, a respite for children with special needs and their siblings, while parents are welcome to stay or enjoy a few hours on their own. We have amazing volunteers who help—many of whom are awesome teens. The children have free play, music, a Bible story, crafts and snacks. We have been journeying through Old and New Testament Bible truths. This monthly event is open to the community and is a great opportunity for outreach. We also host a VsBS (Very special Bible School), a Vacation Bible School for children with special needs and their siblings. For all of the above we humbly give thanks to God, as He is allowing our congregation to grow in His great love! Come visit us!"



All God's Children
Christ Presbyterian Church
Nashville, TN



Welcome Joel Wallace!



Joel and Holly Wallace
Birmingham, AL

For those of you who are regular readers of this newsletter, you know that I usually reserve this section for new resources. Guess what? I still have! Our greatest resources in the body of Christ are not books, or videos, or how-to manuals. They're *people*—God's covenant people. And Joel Wallace is one of those people whom God has uniquely gifted in the arena of disability ministry and outreach.

I can hardly contain my excitement in telling you that, as of 1 September 2011, Joel will be joining MNA staff as **MNA Special Needs Ministries Associate Director**. Joel and his wife Holly Wallace have been married for 22 years and have two children, Anna who is 16 and

Andrew who is 13. They have been members of Briarwood PCA in Birmingham since 1985, and Joel has been on the staff of Briarwood for 23 years. He and Holly ministered for 18 years with Campus Outreach, including five years spent in Japan. The past five years have been committed to directing *Special Connections*, Briarwood PCA's disability outreach ministry.

Please pray for God to provide abundantly for Joel and Holly's financial needs as they begin the support raising process. **To welcome Joel, or contact him about partnering in ministry through your financial gifts, please email him at jwallace@pcanet.org.**

Ongoing and Upcoming Opportunities!



Tim Hubach
Graduating on June 8th

For those of you who have been asking, "Where's Steph?"...here is a schedule of the speaking engagements I have coming up this year so far.

- March 12th, Joni and Friends Conference, Zachary, LA
- March 13th, Plains PCA, Zachary, LA
- March 26th, Proclamation PCA, Bryn Mawr, PA
- April 1st, College Church, Wheaton, IL
- April 2nd, Voice of Care, Chicago, IL
- April 3rd, All Souls Anglican, Wheaton, IL
- April 10th, That All May Worship Conference, Virginia Beach, VA
- July 11th, YXL Northeast, Stevens, PA
- September 23-25th, Sycamore PCA Women's Retreat, Richmond, VA
- October 7-9th, Amazing Grace 360 Women's Conference, Atlanta, GA
- October 12th, Covenant College (Chapel), Lookout Mountain, TN

I will not be at General Assembly (GA) this year, as my son Tim is graduating from high school the week of GA. Instead, Martie Kwasny—a valuable member of our MNA SNM Advisory Team—and the director of *Sonbeams* at Pear Orchard Presbyterian Church will be working our GA booth. Please stop by and see her!

Also, the **2010 WIC Love Gift brought in over \$100,000**—for which we're immensely thankful! Now we're hard at work putting together *Gospel and Disability Gift Packs* for distribution by the end of 2011. Stay tuned for details! Please check our website later this year to register to receive a *Gospel and Disability Gift Pack* for YOUR church! www.pca-mna.org/specialneeds

"Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful to me and answer me."

Psalms 27:7

Your Prayers Matter...

- Praise God for the overflowing generosity of His people in the PCA who gave so sacrificially to the 2010 WIC Love Gift—especially in economically challenging times!
- Praise God for providing Joel Wallace to join the MNA SNM staff—just in time to help execute all the projects developed through the 2010 WIC Love Gift funding!
- Praise God that 100% of Steph Hubach's budget was raised in 2010!
- Please pray for PCA families who are experiencing their first personal encounter with disability at this time. Pray for responsive congregations.