

# AVENEWS

Newsletter of THE NEW YORK AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Washington, DC

## ***Capital Witness*, NYAPC's New History, Debuts in time for Christmas**

Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., Wilson Golden, and Edith Holmes Snyder

At this writing, 2,000 copies of *Capital Witness: A History of The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington DC*, are on trucks on the way from the printer! Eighteen years in the making, the new book describes how NYAPC, born of the Reformed tradition in America, has evolved and continues to transform—"reformed, always reforming"—irrevocably intertwined with the nation as a whole, the city in which it stands, and the lives of the people who give and receive its ministry.

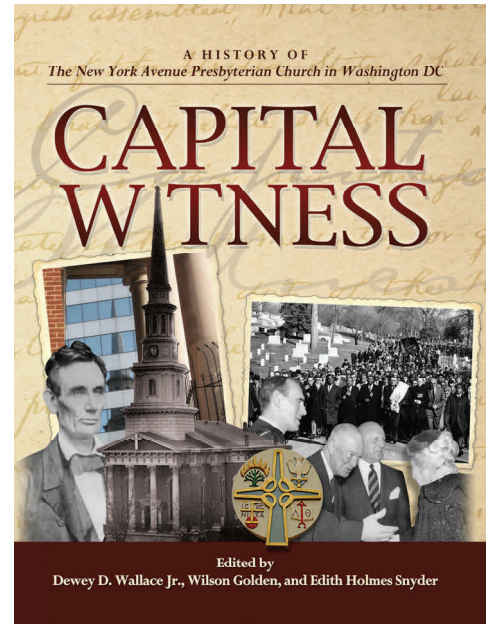
NYAPC's roots are deep in the nation's capital. During the church's span of more than 200 years and location in four sanctuaries and various temporary sites, the church has been renowned for preaching truth to power—James Laurie, Daniel Baker, and Phineas Gurley in the nineteenth century; Wallace Radcliffe, Joseph Sizoo, Peter Marshall, and George Docherty in the twentieth century; and Roger Gench in the twenty-first century. Three of its pastors have also served as federal legislative chaplains—specifically Septimus Tustin, Gurley, and Marshall.

NYAPC's pews have held such noteworthy historical figures as Presidents John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. *Capital Witness* recounts Adams's generosity to the church and its pastor, Jackson's role in the scan-

dalous affair of two friends, Lincoln's ultimate belief in the selfless love and reconciliation reflected in his Second Inaugural Address, and Eisenhower's inspiration for the addition of "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance.

The NYAPC clergy and congregation have been active leaders in the fight for social justice dating as far back as 1817, when Laurie backed colonization as one way to right the wrong of slavery. It continued through the Civil War era as Gurley counseled and consoled a

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### ***How to Buy the Book***

*Capital Witness: A History of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington DC* is \$55 for single copies up to four books, and \$49 each for five or more books.

Those who wish to purchase the book in advance are encouraged to go to the new NYAPC website to pre-purchase copies: Go to the website page that describes the book, <http://www.nyapc.org/capital-witness>. You will see a button below the cover that says "Reserve and Pay for Books Now." When you click this button, you will see a form that gives you the option to set up an account and order and pay for your books, or to continue to the next screen to order and pay for them as a guest. You will be able to pay by bank draft or by credit card.

All local purchasers are encouraged to pick up their books from the church. If possible, please bring the receipt from your online order. Others may have their books shipped and will pay for this service when ordering their books.

An announcement will be made in the church bulletin and via email when the books actually arrive at NYAPC. Books may then be picked up at the office during normal business hours, or on December 11 during the author/editor signing event following the second worship service (*see related story, back page*).

Purchases may also be made by check in the office, or at the December 11 event. Please note that the church will not be able to accept cash.

## *New NYAPC history celebrates the church's story, 'warts and all'*

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president struggling to understand the meaning of God's activity in the maelstrom of that war, and into the twentieth-century as Docherty and Jack McClendon led the congregation into active participation in the civil rights movement and protest against the controversial Vietnam War. This quote from the church's 1988 long-range plan sums up the role NYAPC has played and the people it has attracted over time: "Ours is a church for those who respond to challenge."

### **An Update to Edgington**

*Capital Witness* was born of fairly straightforward plans by the church's 1993 history committee to update Frank E. Edgington's *A History of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, 1803-1961*, which was published in 1962. In the intervening years, the project grew to become an analytic, up-to-date history for a potentially wider audience. This end result owes its beginnings to Elaine Morrison Foster, who had a dream and the passion and perseverance to make this new history much more.

Ultimately, *Capital Witness* seeks to use the best methods of historical research, and in relating the church's story, to focus more on the whole congregation than its leadership alone. The editors made the decision to celebrate NYAPC's history, but to tell the tale "warts and all." They also urged the book's multiple authors to write their portions of the story in their own ways.

### **Editors and Authors**

*Capital Witness* is edited by

Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., Wilson Golden, and Edith Holmes Snyder, and includes the work of 15 authors. These authors and the chapters for which they are responsible reflect extensive research and are listed in the order in which they appear in the book:

- Chapter 1: The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church—Reflecting the Stories of the Nation and of Christianity in America ~Dewey D. Wallace Jr.

- Chapter 2: Founding a Church in a City on a Hill—Joseph Nourse, James Laurie, and the F Street Church ~Elaine Morrison Foster

- Chapter 3: "A Censorious Ancestor"—Calvinistic Evangelicalism, Malicious Whispers, and Second Presbyterian Church ~Robert Milton Winter

- Chapter 4: Preserving a Dream—From Laurie to Gurley ~Elaine Morrison Foster

- Chapter 5: Abraham Lincoln's Minister—Phineas Densmore Gurley ~Ronald C. White Jr.

Stories of a President and His Pastor ~Frank van der Linden

- Chapter 6: A Growing Church in the Gilded Age—A Golden Era for Preaching and Outreach ~William E. Thompson

- Chapter 7: The Wallace Radcliffe and Joseph R. Sizoo Years—1895-1936 ~Thomas Faith

- Chapter 8: "This Prince of God"—The Ministry of Peter Marshall ~William A. Moyer

Christian Education at NYAPC in the Mid-Twentieth Century: A Reflective Memoir ~Mary Mace Spatz

- Chapter 9: "Too Little and

Too Late, But We Have Come"—Civil Rights and Vietnam in the Ministry of George Docherty ~Elaine Morrison Foster

- Chapter 10: For the Living of the Christian Life—Jack McClendon and Social Ministry ~Paul B. Dornan

- Chapter 11: NYAPC's Social Missions—1962-2010 ~Paul B. Dornan

- Chapter 12: A Challenged and Changing Congregation ~Dewey D. Wallace Jr.

- Chapter 13: "Upon a Great Common"—The Architectural Legacy of NYAPC ~John Sawyko and Wilson Golden

- Chapter 14: Music at NYAPC ~Cecelia H. Porter and Douglas R. Porter

- Epilogue: Reformed and Always Reforming ~Roger J. Gench

All told, *Capital Witness* includes these key features:

- Nearly 211,000 words and a total of 436 pages

- Four-color throughout

- Approximately 200 illustrations

- Five maps of the neighborhood around NYAPC in 1803, 1860, 1900, 1950, and 2010

- Appendices providing alphabetical and chronological listings of all Pastors and Parish Associates, Elders, Deacons, Trustees, Deaconesses/Diaconal Ministers, and Clerks of the Session, and the current church staff

- An illustrated timeline of the church's history in the context of events in the Reformed tradition and religion in America, and the

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### ***Book is the work of 15 authors***

history of the country

- Suggested readings on the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition in the United States
- An extensive index of the people, places, and events discussed

#### **With Special Thanks**

The final work owes special thanks to many, but particularly to the chapter authors for the generous donation of their time and talent to produce the substance of this book. In addition, Robert L. Doan offered his extraordinary skill as a fact checker, copy editor, and proofreader; James Spearman carefully constructed the detailed maps and illustrated timeline found in the book; and Kris Golden painstakingly compiled the appendices listing pastors and lay leaders of the church for more than 200 years

Many others, including pastors and members of NYAPC, also contributed their memories and other information found in this book. The church is further indebted to those who helped fund this history's publication. And last, but hardly least, *Capital Witness* has benefited—particularly during the past year—from the skill and guidance of its contract publisher, Plumline Media of Franklin, Tennessee.

## ***Capital Witness: The Sunday School Series***

By Wilson Golden

During September and October, members and friends of NYAPC enjoyed a fall adult Christian Education kick-off treat with a series of four classes centered around the launch of *Capital Witness*.

As anticipation built toward the publication of our first comprehensive history in 50 years, the editors offered a preview of the long-awaited volume through a slide presentation prepared by editor Edith Snyder, followed by three classes designed to give the congregation a taste of things to come.

On September 25, *Capital Witness* author/editors Dewey Wallace and Wilson Golden presented to a standing-room-only group an overview of the book: how it came to be, a sense of the broad sweep of the church's story as told by its 15 individual authors, and a preview of some of the reader-friendly features of the volume.

For the next three Sundays, gatherings of 50 + heard from chapter authors about the storied minis-

tries of Peter Marshall, Wallace Radcliffe, Joseph Sizoo, George Docherty, and Jack McClendon, spanning more than one hundred of the congregation's 208-year history since the founding in 1803 of one of NYAPC's two predecessor churches.

On October 2, author William Moyer (pictured)

gave a fascinating account of researching and writing the story of the Peter Marshall years. He described his chapter's treatment of subjects that emerged as key issues in the more than 60 years since Marshall's death—women's roles, race relations, environmentalism—commanding the interest of 21<sup>st</sup> century readers. These

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## **AVENEWS**

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## Jeremiah Nduyu's Visit Amplifies Interest in 2012 Trip

By Kirsten Kingdon

During two weeks in October, Jeremiah Nduyu, our long-time partner in Kenya, wowed those he met with his faith, calm, knowledge and commitment to bettering the lives of orphans and vulnerable children in his hometown of Njoro, Kenya.

From the very first discussions about needy children with National Capital Presbytery members of a mission work trip in 2003, Jeremiah has led in assessing the extent of the problem as well as developing and implementing the Saturday program, which now serves 35 orphans. NYAPC has been its principal supporter through the Alternative Christmas Store and the Board of Deacons with significant, ongoing support from Trinity PC in Bethesda.

The Deacons graciously hosted a potluck dinner for Jeremiah. He welcomed the opportunity to express his deep appreciation for their support, and to describe his ideas for furthering the welfare of the children and the poor families caring for them as well as helping the program expand and become more self-sustaining. Deacons' President Courtney Cook Spearman described it as a "highlight of the year."

Jeremiah's latest projects have come out of the work he and Fritz von Fleckenstein did in 2010 during our visit to Kenya. The first, a program to give the foster families chickens and a rooster to improve the nutrition of the entire family and earn some much-needed income, is underway. The second, to develop a breeding program of dairy goats – who are much in de-

mand in Kenya, received a big boost during this visit.

Through Deacon Karen Milam's contacts, we met with a farmer in Purcellville who was very intrigued by Jeremiah's ideas about developing a breeding facility. He pressed Jeremiah about what he would need to develop such a facility and learned that it was mainly money to buy the goats, hire someone experienced in animal husbandry to care for them, build pens and buy or grow fodder. At that point, he – much to our surprise – wrote out a check on the spot for the first two goats. Others have since contributed or pledged support, so the goat project is off and running!

We also advanced planning for and interest in a trip to Kenya, now set for August 2012. We can communicate by email, but there is no substitute for what we can accom-

plish when we are able to spend time with each other. The good Lord willing, we will be a vibrant, diverse, enthusiastic intergenerational group who will work with the teachers, leaders and children to further their educational achievements. Please contact me for more information at (kkingdon@starpower.net) or 202.797.7335.

Each step of progress in this program has been the result of a trip. Neither we nor our partners in Kenya could have accomplished what is being done for some of "the least of these" without the other. Together, with God's guidance, we are much more powerful than either of us alone. And what we are doing has the capacity to change the world, one child at a time, by changing the trajectory of a child's life. I am grateful to be a part of this process.

### Peace-Building in Kenya

by Jeremiah Nduyu  
(Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Njoro, Kenya)

Kenya has had a long history of conflict over land. The British began settling in the fertile highlands of the Rift Valley in 1902, confiscating the land of the Kalenjin tribe, which became government land at Independence in 1963. The governments of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel Arap Moi sold this land, mostly to members of the Kikuyu tribe, who moved into the area from the Mount Kenya region. This has caused mistrust and hatred between these communities, which flared into violence during the elections of 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007. The worst violence was in 2007 and early 2008, deliberately fanned by politicians and Kenyan émigrés. Thousands were killed, and hundreds of thousands lost their homes, their land and their property, and are living in camps, where the bad conditions have led to increased child prostitution and HIV/AIDS.

In 2008, Kofi Anan and the Group of Eminent Persons were able to bring the two main political parties together to sign a National Accord and Reconciliation Agreement which created a coalition government with Ministers from both parties, a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commis-

## Jeremiah Nduyu: “We are all one in Christ”

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sion, a proposal and process for drafting a new Constitution, and a structure for the churches, the youth and the community to work together to build peace.

The churches of Christ have a big role to play in peace building initiatives, taking into account the large following at the grass root level. The Church is always in contact with the common man and woman.

There are many examples in the Holy Bible teaching reconciliation between the Jews and the Gentiles. Christ commanded us in Matthew 28:19 **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”** Jesus was concerned for all the nations of the world, and following His teachings, the church will break the walls of ethnicity that cause strife among the communities. When Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well, he broke three barriers: the Gender barrier, the Cultural barrier and the Moral barrier.

(John 4:1-26, Acts 10:9 and ff.) We also see Peter’s vision concerning Cornelius the Centurion, which occurred three times. There are many other examples.

We are all one in Christ, and descendants of Adam and Eve, and equal before God. Jesus identified Himself with the marginalized and ate with sinners, thus bringing



Kirsten Kingdon, Jeremiah Nduyu and Fritz von Fleckenstein

them closer to Him. Jesus loved us till death on the cross and commands that we love one another. If we follow his examples, we shall cross the ethnic barriers that exist between communities and tribes.

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Njoro has contributed to Peace Building by hosting Youth Agents of Peace, in which young people of mixed ethnic groups and religions play and work together. These young people were badly misused in the clashes and they are determined to see that it doesn’t happen again. The church also has its own Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Committee, which helps the community work together for peace, including projects such as rebuilding homes destroyed in the clashes. The Orphans and Vulnerable Children program is a model in itself, as children of different faiths and ethnic communities learn and play together in peace and friendship.

(This is a summary of Jeremiah’s remarks during the class he gave on October 23 at NYAPC. For the full text, please see [www.nyapc.org](http://www.nyapc.org))

## History Class

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anecdotes, to the surprise of some, revealed Marshall to be ahead of his time in many respects, while quite old-fashioned in others.

Then, on October 9, the class was enlightened as author Tom Faith shared stories of the dynamic ministries of Wallace Radcliffe and Joseph Sizoo. As Tom put it, given the vastly different personalities of these two influential ministers and the tumultuous times in which they led a major faith institution in the heart of the nation’s capital, the Radcliffe-Sizoo half century was truly a “Tale of Two Ministers.”

To conclude the series on October 16, author and longtime NYAPC lay leader Paul Dornan shared his perspectives on the ministries of Jack McClendon and George M. Docherty. As leaders of a congregation thrust into the 1960s civil rights and anti-war movements and the struggle for social justice, these two pastors formed a team that laid the foundations for much of the church’s modern social action ministries.

It is on the shoulders of these trailblazing giants and their predecessors that in so many ways NYAPC became what it is today. We hope you will read these and the many other intriguing accounts contained in *Capital Witness!*

**Christmas Program with  
Children, Youth and Choir:**

**December 18, 10 a.m.**

**Christmas Eve services:**

**5:30 & 8 p.m.**

**Christmas Day service: 10 a.m.**

**New Years’ Day service: 10 a.m.**

## In Appreciation of the Many Gifts of Marjorie K. Foster, 1919-2010

by Cathy Schultheis

Marjorie K. Foster believed in the missions of The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. She and her husband, Dr. J. Edwin Foster, joined NYA in 1966 and were active members, devoted to sharing God's love through the many ministries of the church.

### Legacy Gifts to Our Church

Marjorie and Ed supported the ministries at NYA in life and in death. After Ed's death in 1991 Marge honored his life and work at the church by having the name of the church inscribed above the portico. This lettering had been envisioned but not funded when the current structure was built many years before the Fosters joined. Marge's memorial gift in honor of Ed made it finally happen.

Marjorie established a charitable gift annuity through the Presbyterian Foundation years ago. She had specified that following her death, the remaining beneficial interest of this annuity be given to the NYA choir; the church received this gift in January.

In addition, Marjorie included NYA in her will and the church's endowment fund recently received \$500,000 as a partial distribution from her estate. Her bequest will benefit the church for many generations to come as only the income from her generous endowment gift may be used and the principal never spent. We are deeply grateful for these future ongoing contributions to the church.

Marge was a founding member of NYA's Planned Giving committee. The committee is most appreciative of her dedication to the program's objectives and thankful for

the opportunity to learn from her about the joy of giving and the importance of planning for the future of God's work at NYA.

### Remembering Marge

Marge grew up on a farm in Radisson, Saskatchewan, Canada and it was in this community that she met the dashing Ed Foster. When Ed began graduate studies after serving in the Canadian Armed Services, Marge pursued a passion, taking voice lessons, at Indiana University. She had an active career in sales with Movies U.S.A., Newhouse Films, McGraw Hill Films and the U.S. Fortune 500 company, EMC Corporation, from which she retired in 1982.

Marge was actively involved in the life of the church. She was a deaconess, an elder and a trustee. She sang in the choir. She was a member of Presbyterian Women. She chaired the Pastor Nominating Committee that called Rob Craig to the position of Senior Pastor/Head of Staff and opened her home to Rob and Sharon until their home was available for occupancy. She was a member of the Women's Board at Ingleside at Rock Creek, nurturing many NYA member residents. She served on many committees on the various boards, the last of which was Planned Giving.

Marge was a member of the P.E.O. Sisterhood, first in New Jersey at the local and state levels, attaining the position of New Jersey First Vice President before she and Ed moved to the Washington area where she was active locally in Chapter K and at the D.C. state level committees. She sang in the

P.E.O. chorus which performed at special events



and the annual state convention.

She loved her Canadian heritage and served as President of the Canadian Club of Washington from 1984 to 1986. She would travel back to visit extended family and friends and welcomed them all here in her lovely home in Bethesda.

Marge was an amazing hostess who loved to cook (and did it well!) and entertain her friends. She liked to dance and loved to fish. She was as much at home in jeans, boots, flannel shirt and hat on a fishing expedition as she was in elegant dresses, scarves and jewelry for a night at the theater, the opera, the symphony or the Glen Echo Ball Room. Marge always looked beautiful!

She remembered what people shared with her and wrote many thoughtful notes and cards to friends and others. Marge liked to share her love of beautiful silk scarves by gifting scarves to her friends, often in colors that were a perfect accompaniment to a newly acquired outfit a friend had recently worn to church! She loved to go out to lunch with friends, especially to celebrate birthdays and milestones in life. She was a discriminating and constant reader who treasured good books.

With the help of many church members, friends and neighbors,

## Marge Foster

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Marge was able to realize her wish to live out her days in her own home. She was loved.

NYA's John Quinn went to Radisson Cemetery in rural Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada for the burial of Marge's cremains next to her husband. Marge was there last in 1991 after Ed's death and although she had no family nearby, more than 25 friends gathered there to say goodbye and share a meal while they gave testimony to her life.

Marge lived her life abundantly, with dignity and grace. She had a glorious capacity for friendship and her friendship was a precious gift, her hospitality a treasured memory. She enriched the world by a deep and abiding faith, with genuine concern for others. Those of us who knew Marge and Ed Foster will always remember how their love illumined the places they gathered.

## Remembering the Church

We are so deeply grateful to Marge for sharing her life and gifts with us in support of the future work of The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. While we will no longer have her bright and cheerful presence, Marge Foster's legacy will live on in the church that she so loved. Therefore, each time we pass the front of the church, let us give thanks to Marge and Ed Foster and all the saints of our church. And, let it remind all of us that we, too, have the same opportunity to include the church that we love in our estate planning and giving to support the mission of the NYAPC for years to come.

## Book Bits . . .

Among the books in the Sizoo Library in the Docherty Center are two recent volumes that help to flesh out recent attention to justice considered by Susan Thistlethwaite, Scholar-in-Residence. Her topic was "Toward Just Peace in a Wired World."

### *Just Hospitality*

*Just Hospitality: God's Welcome in a World of Difference*, by Letty M Russell, edited by J. Shannon Clarkson and Kate M. Ott, Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.

Letty Russell was a longtime member of the faculty of Yale University Divinity School, where she was a feminist thinker, teacher, and activist for marginal people. She died of cancer before finishing her last book. After her death, her partner, Shannon Clarkson, and Russell's student, Kate Ott, got her nearly finished work ready for publication. The early part of her book focuses on Russell as "misfit," in a variety of settings, including the Presbyterian Church, and her call to ministry.

Russell brings rich insights to such topics as diversity, the "other," and reframing one's thinking. Russell's goal is that we bring an increasingly large diverse group to our tables and that we learn to listen in increasingly God-given ways to what others say as we move to action. She searches for clues in the person of Christ and invites readers to think about "unity as given," diversity and hospitality as givens, and in Christ, unity as an "impossible possibility." Russell is an intuitive, wise, scripture-based, and language-

by Louise Berman

lover author. She advocates and invites reflection and action on issues of just hospitality.

### *Just Peacemaking*

*Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War*, edited by Glen Stassen, Pilgrim Press, 2008.

Glen Stassen is professor of Christian ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary. His edited book is in three parts: "Peacemaking Initiatives," "Justice," and "Love and Community." Within each part, chapters deal with ten prescriptions for just peacemaking. Examples include: "Support Nonviolent Direct Action," and "Advance Democracy, Human Rights and Interdependence." The 30 contributors, including Susan Thistlethwaite, bring a wealth of ethical perspectives, knowledge, and practical wisdom about their topics.

Stassen points the way to knowing persons, contexts, cultures, differences, history, and emerging ideas in areas in which just peacemaking is being sought.

In both of these books, one comes to realize that the possible and the impossible, embedded in hope and reality, are present as we reflect upon and act to help solve the dilemmas of persons, religious institutions, and society. Russell writes about "Riotous Differences as God's Gift to the Church" (p.53). As we work, realizing that we need to appreciate difference in today's conflicts, perhaps the admonitions to see the humorous as well as to engage in civil discourse can help us in our endeavors.



## McClendon Center Continues Good Work

Thank you, members of The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, for allowing me to be in your newsletter and to tell you about what is happening at the McClendon Center. My name is Dennis Hobb, and I succeeded Dick Davis as the Center's Executive Director over a year ago. I feel privileged to be in a leadership position at an agency that started as a faith-based ministry and to continue the good work that was begun by the Church over thirty years ago.

When the McClendon Center became a separate organization in 2004, we didn't cut our ties with the Church. In fact, we have increased the amount of space that we rent so we could provide services to more mental health clients and continue Jack McClendon's vision. When I first arrived at the Center in 2003, we were serving just over 20 elderly people each day for a morning program only. How things have changed! We currently have almost 80 clients who attend our program every day, with the day beginning at 8:30 in the morning and ending at 3:30 in the afternoon. We have gone from renting office space and two Sunday school rooms on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor to renting two spaces on the fourth floor (where our Human Resources Director, Billing Specialist, and Financial Services Manager are officed), as well as Room 127 across from the Lincoln Parlor.

The McClendon Center continues to make a real difference in the lives of the people we serve. One example is a young woman named Joanna (not her real name). She came to the Day Program several

years ago, diagnosed with depression and using crack cocaine. She was unemployed and her children had been removed from her home by a city agency. She struggled for over a year, trying hard to get clean and sober, and to manage her depression. Over time, after attending the Center's substance abuse groups every day, she learned to stay clean and to begin her recovery. Joanna graduated from the program two years ago because she was able to get full-time work. She is still in service with the Center at our outpatient clinic on North Capitol, and reports that she continues to work full time. Miraculously, she is in the final stages of regaining custody of her children.

At our quarterly All Staff Meetings, which are held in the Radcliffe Room, the staff all get a chance to share in the successes they're having with their clients. We have over 50 staff members, so we usually have to cut this short because they have many so many good stories to share! My intent is to share some of those successes with you over time in these pages. Through these stories, I'd like the members of NYAPC to know that what you began in 1980 is alive and well in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The seeds that you planted so long ago continue to grow and bear fruit.

If you would like to see how your seeds have sprouted, please contact me. I'd be glad to give you a tour and answer any questions you might have. I would also be glad to bring staff members and some of our clients to a forum or discussion group so you could meet the people who make all of

## Baghdad PC Opens Children's Center!

by Marilyn J. Seiber

With joy, prayers, and thanksgiving, the Baghdad Presbyterian Church fulfilled a dream and three-year effort to open a Children's Center that focuses especially on orphans. NYAPC's Alternative Christmas Store has raised funds for the Children's Center over the past two years. Elder Yousif Al-Saka, who visited NYAPC in November 2008 and July 2010, writes that the opening of the Children's Center on July 30 "was a historical



day in the life of our Church." The Center's name is **The Good Shepherd**, and the opening is the first stage of the project for which a kindergarten for children under age 6 has been established. Twenty percent of the children will be orphans, and their costs are covered by the subscriptions of the other children. The Baghdad Church will expand the program in stage

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these good things happen. Your support is important to us and the people we serve.

Dennis Hobb  
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## Children's Center Opens

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two by rehabilitating a second building on the same location. Elder Al-Saka is an engineer and designed the building that was just opened. The Baghdad Church oversees and manages the program.

Elder Al-Saka also announced that in the coming weeks the Church will begin another project for the care of the elderly using land and a house donated by a church member. The engineering designs for the Home for the Elderly have been completed and a contract has been awarded to a local contractor for construction. Elder Al-Saka also mentioned "with regret" that the medical clinic in the church complex had to be closed for lack of adequate financing for medical requirements and medicines as well as doctors' and nurses' salaries. Otherwise, the Presbyterian Church in Baghdad continues its active schedule of Sunday services, Wednesday services for women, Sunday School services on Fridays for children, and Bible studies on Saturdays. The church hires buses to transport parishioners to ensure the safety of church members.

## Online Giving Now Enabled!

With the launch last month of its new website, NYAPC now makes it possible for members and friends to pay pledges and make other financial gifts—including gifts to the Alternative Christmas Store—to the church online. See "A Guide to Online Giving" under the "Give" tab of [www.nyapc.org](http://www.nyapc.org) for detailed instructions.

## Cuba Corner . . .

### *Adios Carlos, Bienvenido Jesús!*

On September 1, the new First Secretary of the Cuba Interests Section, Jesús Perz, visited NYAPC for a tour and description of our Cuba Partners program. He was accompanied by out-going First Secretary Carlos Hurtado, who has visited NYA many times and was returning to Havana on September 3 for a new assignment. Carlos had been in his current assignment since January 2009, and was looking forward to going home to see his two children, a son age 27 working in the tourism sector, and daughter age 20 who is a student at the University of Havana. His wife was with him in Washington for this tour of duty, but it will be good to return to other family and friends.

Jesús comes to Washington for a second time, having first served in the Consular Affairs section for four years, 2004-2007. He also has two children, a son, age 15, and a daughter, age 7, and his family is with him for this assignment. First Secretary Perz has a facility for languages, he says, and speaks several—now he wants to learn Japanese! He said there is the *Abraham Lincoln Language School* in Havana that makes it easy to learn languages. The First Secretary said he was pleased and impressed to learn of NYAPC's history and connection with President Lincoln, and he thinks that

**For more news from Cuba,  
go to [www.nyapc.org](http://www.nyapc.org)**

by Marilyn J. Seiber

our friendship with Cuba through our partnership with First Presbyterian-Reformed Church of Havana is an important and wonderful relationship.



L, First Secretary Jesús Perz  
R, First Secretary Carlos Hurtado

### *"Cuba Coffee Fiesta" Held in August*

The Cuba Partners Committee held its annual "Cuba Coffee Fiesta" after the Sunday worship service on August 28. Cuban and other tropical food were featured including black beans and rice, Cuban black bean dip, a Tres Leches cake, "sunshine" eggs and crackers, guava paste and crackers, watermelon, pineapple, mango and other fruit. Cuban music from Villazul Band; displays of photos, books, and crafts; and a video of the NYA January 2010 trip taken by Jim Bird were also part of the



fiesta. The next NYAPC trip to Cuba will be March 27-April 2, when we will spend Palm Sunday with our partner church, First Havana.

## ***You're Invited: Official Capital Witness Launch December 11***

The historic Lincoln Parlor and John Quincy Adams and Radcliffe rooms will come alive with the sounds of celebration following the second service on Sunday, December 11, as NYAPC members and friends observe the official launch of *Capital Witness: A History of The New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington DC*.

Appearing together for the first time will be the editors and many of the chapter authors of the new history, along with former NYAPC clergy representing the past half-century of ministry at the church.

Harking back to the early 1960s when the last comprehensive church history was published, the church will host this special reunion led by Rob Craig, senior pastor from 1990 to 1999 and head of the history committee that first

conceived of a new church history. The Rev. Dr. Craig will preach at both worship services that day. Joining him will be other former clergy, including Alice Anderson (1992-2002), Rose Mitchell (1979-1985), Rusty Lynn (1975-1978), Bob Long (1963-1965), and Phil Newell (1963-1966).

Other former clergy and special friends have been invited, including Ben Jacobson (1971-1975), Sue Docherty and family, members of the van der Linden, McClendon, and Marshall families, and former staff members, among them Mary Awkward (Weithers) and Raymond Newman.

Plans include purchase and pick-up tables for the new book, plus complimentary copies of the 1962 history by Frank Edgington.



The book's editors, Wilson Golden, Edith Holmes Snyder and Dewey D. Wallace, Jr.

The first 300 purchasers will receive a complimentary

Lincoln \$1 first-day-of-issue coin as a souvenir of the occasion. Besides new and old friends from years past, the three editors and many of the chapter authors will be available for conversation and autographs of their work.

And, of course, there will be food and drink and plenty of good NYAPC fellowship.

So, mark your calendars, volunteer to greet visitors, and bring your autograph pen for this special day at the church. Remember—we only do this once every 50 years!



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