

### Adult Mission Trip

By: Rev. Mark Ruppert

During the month of April, eight dedicated people from the First Presbyterian Church in Akron went to Camp Nathanael in Eastern Kentucky on the Adult Missions Trip.



While there, this crew kept busy by cleaning the camp chapel, cabins and windows, constructing a front porch and cabin floor and installing a tin roof on a rustic cabin that is going to be used as a Nature Museum on the camp property.

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### Dakota Native American Mission Interpreter

By: Rev. Robert Offerdahl

Rev. Sidney Byrd, a 90-year-old Santee Sioux pastor, from Flandreau, S.D. visited western Pennsylvania and north-east Ohio, October 29th thru December 6th. His busy itinerary included an introduction at New Kensington PCUSA, a Chapel Service at Westminster College, a faculty dinner and a faculty/student presentation at Geneva College, and a Chapel Service at Park Vista. He also spoke at the November Pre-Presbytery Meeting

When Rev. Byrd returns home, on Dec. 7th, he will have spoken in at least a dozen different congregations: Presbyterian, non-denominational, Roman Catholic, Baptist, and Assembly of God. Through the Office of Student Diversity at YSU, arrangements were made for him to speak in at least nine different college classes. He also participated in a number of ecumenical pastor's / minister's meetings. He attended the Native American Celebration Day activities at Slippery Rock University, took part in the Greater Austintown Ministerial Association's Community Thanksgiving Service, and attended the Mayors' Interfaith Prayer Breakfast and spoke to parochial and public school classes.

Several of his presentations were videotaped and will be combined into a DVD that will be available with all proceeds going to the Dakota (Native American) Presbytery Mission Project. Contact Bob Offerdahl, phone 330-207-6233 or e-mail [pastorbobccp@yahoo.com](mailto:pastorbobccp@yahoo.com)

# EASTMINSTER EVANGEL

### WE'RE MISSIONAL! - Really?

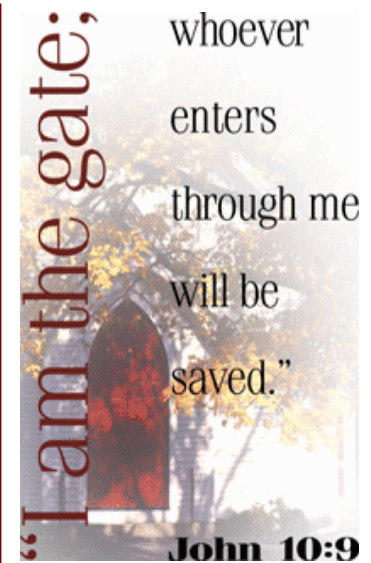
By: Rev. John Sharick

It's an enlightening and truth-telling experience to realize that we are using a word to describe that for which the word was not originally intended. A word with an original meaning and intention, used over a long period of time, can take on a new meaning and become "domesticated" taking on what the user wants the word to mean, for the user's purposes. Missional, as used among many church folk, is one of those words which has "morphed" into different meanings from that of its origin.

The "morphed" or "domesticated" meaning, distant from its original intention, is demonstrated when a well meaning person declares, "Our congregation is missional. We give generously and regularly to mission causes in our community and around the world. We have groups going to various places, near and far away, to do various kinds of mission work. We even have a Mission Committee in our church, along with a line item in our budget called 'Mission'! We are a missional church."

What that well meaning church person said may be true, is well and good, and for many, captures the "morphed" meaning of mission. That description, however.....

(For complete article visit [www.faithfulness.com](http://www.faithfulness.com))



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## Family Promise

By: Rev. David Joachim

Family Promise is a program that has been going strong in 146 cities in 39 States founded in New Jersey in 1986. The Interfaith Hospitality Network, known locally as “Family Promise”, helps families in desperate straits receive shelter, food, training in job/home-hunting, temporary help on an emotional and spiritual basis. The goal of the 13 area churches in our Network is to help families “get back on their feet again”. Currently the need is very great. Houses of worship become temporary homes in which families become guests. *Volunteers* make it happen.

Westminster Church, Boardman, hosted its first Family Promise week in September, and we are gearing up for guests December 6-13. The volunteers came out of the wood-work to: convert 4 Sunday school classes into “bedrooms”, set up Fellowship Hall and prepare meals, stay overnight at the church (2 each night), play with the kids, and entertain with “dinner music” (guitars). Parents and children catch their van at 6:30AM each morning and the “overnighters” are there to see them off: kids to school, adults to the Day Center in Girard.

Sure, church-folks have had to make adjustments (particularly on Sunday morning) but there’s not been even a “peep” of protest (did someone say “How unusual”?!). It was a step of faith, a risk, but a rewarding one, to know that so-called “homeless” families are getting real help, in the name of Jesus Christ. Contact Ruth Brayer for more information.

## The English Center comes to John Knox

By: Rev. Jeanine Haven

If you come to John Knox on Monday, Wednesday or Friday mornings, you might hear people speaking Greek, Italian, German, Spanish, or Chinese. In 2009, a new chapter began in the Life of John Knox when The English Center joined the list of “in house” missions. The English Center is a non-profit organization founded late 1985 that operates an English As A Second Language (ESL) Program for the foreign born in Northeast Ohio.

Current enrollment is 71 students with approximately 38 different native countries represented. The program offers eight levels of ESL with a teacher for each. Levels range from one for students who have little or no English, to the highest as one that prepares students for the TOEFL (Test of English As A Foreign Language) exam given to professional people and students entering the university.



In addition, the programs help students to develop an understanding of our culture, a community awareness component to the curriculum was established as an integral part of language learning. Field trips, special classes, speakers and social events have been included. This has been an exciting new chapter in the life of John Knox and it will be interesting to see where the future takes us!

## Mission at Akron Westminster Presbyterian Church

Submitted by Rev. Derek Starr Redwine

Westminster Presbyterian Church has had a longstanding commitment to home repair mission projects including past local projects through Rebuilding Together and disaster rehabilitation trips to New Orleans, LA, Biloxi, MS and Findlay, OH.

For Summer 2009 our mission trip to Oil City, PA was very rewarding. It was a new experience for most of us, working beside members of other churches in our presbytery. The churches represented were the Girard, Niles, Barberton, and Westminster Presbyterian Churches.

We demolished a free-standing garage, and a porch. We rebuilt the porch and porch roof. We repaired stairs in a house, and put new subflooring down in another. The families served were very pleased that we could help them.

This Fall a couple from our church currently in Kenya as medical missionaries learned of a last-minute need for demolition of a garage prior to selling their Akron home. Another impromptu construction crew was assembled on very short notice and completed the project in record time.

We are hoping to involve more congregations in an effort to make repairs on facilities at the Joseph Badger Meadows Presbyterian Church Camp in the spring of 2010.

# EASTMINSTER EVANGEL

## Christmas Joy Offering Children’s Art Contest

[www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org)



Judges from the Mission Interpretation program announced the winners of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Christmas Joy Offering Children’s Art Contest. The contest, in which children up to age 14 were invited to submit art representing their own visions of the Christmas story, attracted more than 250 submissions from scores of churches across the country.

There were 3 winners in each age group. In the 7-10 year-old group, second place winner was SYDNEY PHILLIPS from the Poland Presbyterian Church.



The winning images are featured on the Christmas Joy Offering website, [www.pcusa.org/cjoffering/childrenart.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/cjoffering/childrenart.htm). Many of the images have also been used in creating a special coin bank that congregations can order instead of or in addition to the traditional bank.

A Presbyterian tradition for more than 70 years, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of the ways that the whole church joins in grateful generosity to provide care for faithful church leaders and support for a new generation of racial ethnic students.