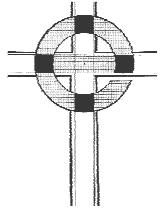




# The Presbyterian

## of The Presbytery of Elizabeth



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### "I Have a Dream, too"

At the March 23, 2010 meeting of Elizabeth Presbytery, Interim Executive Presbyter Greg Albert shared his dream for the Presbytery in a sermon, "I Have a Dream, too." At the end of his sermon, he asked the congregants to write on one side of a card their dream for the Presbytery and on the other side their dream for their congregation. The responses were as follows, in no particular order.

#### Commissioners' Dreams for their Congregation

- To continue to expand in community development.
- More people in the church to go on mission trips.
- That my congregation will be filled with the spirit of God – want to know him more – want God and his church to be more a part of their lives.
- More focus on mission work that the discernment of his word.
- May Jesus come back into our hearts and his, and only his will be done!
- That the member would desire to be the peacemakers in their lives and in the church and in our community.
- That our congregation opens their hearts to the differences of those who worship with us; rich, poor, black, white, multicultural, sick, gay, those with addictions.
- That we will connect with the community.
- That congregations be filled with God's spirit, pews filled with God's people, all spreading God's love in Jesus.
- That His church would return to the supremacy of the Holy word of God as found in scriptures. Because faith, saving faith only comes in His word believed and not in the doctrines of men!
- More from country club fellowship where opposing one another as goal into a Christ centered fellowship of disciples laying down their lives for others and gospel.
- To find our way into the futures so we can spread into the surrounding communities and expand our worship and mission.
- That my church will have a vision of embracing the entire world of reaching out to others in the world, to feed and clothe them, that one day we will all be one in

#### Commissioners' Dreams for the Presbytery

- Put more emphasis on God's love and put the mechanical procedures in second place.
- That the Presbytery inspires and empowers congregations to do God's work here and in the world at large.
- That the Presbytery opens up and focus on Christ's mission of love, and helping others.
- That this Presbytery will be the link, facilitator, clearing house, mentor, cheerleader, foundation, and fellowship for the great commission.
- That we will work together and support each other. Many congregations are small and can benefit from working with others to have successes.
- To see more youth, young adult involvement in Presbytery. Bring back the youth connection.
- To be more connected to the individual churches.
- Congregations teaming up for mission efforts – in particular, pairing a small church with one of larger resources – to give small congregations more opportunities to do something on a large scale.
- More Presbytery mission events.
- Cease competing with each other and affirm each other's ministries and missions.
- Eliminate the bureaucracy and power grabbing. Open ourselves to the Holy Spirit's work even when it does not match our expectations. Embrace our communities together as partners to share God's love in word and deed.
- To start at least two NCD's and Fellowships every year.
- More participation from the 50 congregations

For the complete lists, visit our website: [www.elizabethpresbytery.org](http://www.elizabethpresbytery.org)

## Spiritual Development: Balance & Payoff

In Spiritual Development, learning and doing should go hand in hand. The goal is balance, not a single-shot “magic pill” to attain spiritual excellence.

Congregations should offer regular instruction on each spiritual discipline, to show possible ways and examples from life.

In addition, congregations should offer opportunities to act on spiritual formation, such as mission work and prayer vigils.

If learning and doing aren't in balance, doing loses its foundation, and learning becomes sterile and precious.

The point isn't to promote a single way, but several ways that work together to promote spiritual well-being. For example:

- Confession opens one's eyes and heart to distance from God
- Prayer seeks to bridge that distance
- Mission follows as a way to express gratitude for feeling closer to God
- Stewardship follows as a way to act out Christian values in one's personal life
- Fasting follows as a way to rethink one's life in basic ways
- Silence follows as a chosen place to listen to God's response to that rethinking
- Meditation asks for more

There is an institutional payoff, as well.

Most congregations have plenty of smart leaders and willing leaders. What they often lack is “Christian entrepreneurs,” by which I mean leaders whose conviction demands that they take risks in order to help a broken world, whose faith is strong enough to embrace failure, whose love plays out in collaboration, whose humility doesn't seek control or applause.

The healthy congregation will steadily expand a core leadership cadre who understand spiritual vitality as essential.

*(The above article was written by the Rev. Tom Ehrich, founder of the Church Wellness Project. For more information about the Project, go to churchwellness.com.)*



### Focus on Classical Spiritual Disciplines

In our opinion, the healthy congregation will seek to ground its members in the classical spiritual disciplines, not to stifle other expressions, but to give them a sound starting point.

These are the classical spiritual disciplines to be taught:

- Prayer
- Study
- Fasting
- Service
- Giving
- Worship
- Confession
- Silence

## What's Happening in The Presbytery of Elizabeth

**Health Fair & Flea Market Extravaganza**  
**Saturday, June 5 \* 10AM - 3 PM**  
 United Presbyterian Church  
 525 East Front St., Plainfield, NJ  
 (908) 756-2666

**American Red Cross Blood Drive**  
**Sunday, June 6 \* 9 AM—12 Noon**  
 The Presbyterian Church in Westfield  
 Assembly Hall  
 140 Mountain Ave., Westfield, NJ  
 (908) 233-03-01



**PLACE AN ORDER TODAY**  
**2010-2011 PLANNING CALENDAR**  
**Call 908-755-3776**

**GreenFaith, The Green Seminary Initiative**  
**Drew Theological School,**  
**Watchung Avenue Presbyterian Church and**  
**RCE (Restoring Creation Enablers .Elizabeth Presbytery)**

invite you to  
**Save the Date!**  
 for

**Ground for Hope—New Jersey**  
**Environmental Education and Leadership for**  
**Clergy, Laity, Seminarians, and Seminaries**

**Sunday, Nov. 14 – Watchung Ave. Presbyterian Church, N. Plainfield**  
**Monday, Nov. 15 – Drew Theological School, Madison**

- Resources for environmental leadership in faith communities
  - Environmental Justice Tour
  - Connect with other religious–environmental leaders
- Stay tuned for information on speakers, workshops and opportunities to get involved.  
 Questions?  
 Contact Rev. Fletcher Harper at [revfharper@greenfaith.org](mailto:revfharper@greenfaith.org)

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