



Our speaker will be Burkhard Paetzold.

PCUSA Missionary

He will be in Elizabeth Presbytery
Oct. 9-16.

You can schedule him to visit your congregation
by contacting:

Rev. John Illian

Central Presbyterian Church

Summit, NJ

jillian@centralpres.org

908-273-0441

You can get to know Burkhard and his ministry at

<http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections/profiles/name-search.htm> or

<http://www.pcusa.org/missionchallenge/speakers.htm>

Burkhard Paetzold has been serving as facilitator for the PC(USA)'s work with the Roma people in Central and Eastern Europe. (The Roma were formerly known as "Gypsies," a term now considered pejorative by most people, including the Roma themselves.) Since the summer of 2003 Burkhard has also been serving as regional liaison for Central and Eastern Europe to facilitate PC(USA) support for partner programs, relationships, and activities and to implement regional strategies. Burkhard lives with his family in Petershagen, near Berlin, Germany.

Burkhard facilitates and supports the work of mission workers, pastors, and congregational and local community leaders who are trying to improve the relationship between Roma and non-Roma. The Roma mission activities seek to promote the participation of Roma in congregational and church life, develop Roma leadership, and improve the economic development and education for Roma.

The premise of the ministry is that Roma and non-Roma must find together an integrated approach to address diversity. A prerequisite to any program is the acceptance of marginalized people as a people worthy of respect. The churches of Central and Eastern Europe, redefining their own identity and gaining new acceptance after the "Velvet Revolution," have to play an important role to civilize this relationship.

Burkhard was first appointed to mission service with the PC(USA) in April 1998 to serve as a coordinator for special projects with the Jinishian Memorial Program (JMP) of PC(USA)'s Worldwide Ministries Division. His work focused on in the Republic of Armenia and the Middle East. Established in 1966, JMP provides basic services and direct relief to Armenians while encouraging the community-based approach to economic development. As coordinator for special projects, Burkhard oversaw the initiation and implementation of new development plans and provides information and advice about sustainable development themes throughout the Jinishian Memorial Program.

Burkhard is a member of Evangelische Kirche Berlin-Brandenburg, one of the Protestant churches in the former German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and has worked as a volunteer with this entity since the 1970s in a program called "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation." This experience led him to his current position.

"After the change of government," Burkhard writes, "I felt encouraged by my volunteer experience to find work in sectors which have to do with social concerns, community development, and the environment. I was educated as an engineer, with special technical training and experience in the scientific world. However, at this point in my life I want to find a place in society where I can serve human-scale development rather than merely contributing to unlimited technical progress."

From 1994 to 1997, Burkhard was the director of a community-based sustainable development project ("Local Agenda 21") through the German Federal Environmental Protection Agency and the Study Group of the Church Development Service in Berlin. Prior to that, he was mayor and administrative head of his hometown, Petershagen, from 1992 to 1994. He co-founded the Institute for Regional Conversion after the fall of the Berlin wall (1989-1992), concentrating on civil use of military resources. From 1974 to 1990 he was an engineer working in a staff research and development position for power plants and agriculture in Berlin. Burkhard got his graduate engineering degree at the Technical University of Ilmenau in East Germany in 1974. He furthered his education at the AGEF Training Center in Berlin, where he studied object and team-oriented planning in development work in 1996 and mediation training in 1997.

As a member of Evangelische Kirche Berlin-Brandenburg, Burkhard has been a speaker of the Council of the Evangelical Students Congregation in East Germany (1972-1974) and a member of a working group for disarmament within the theological studies department of the Union of Protestant Churches in the German Democratic Republic (1978 to 1990). He and his wife Christine have two adult children, Juliane and Franziska.