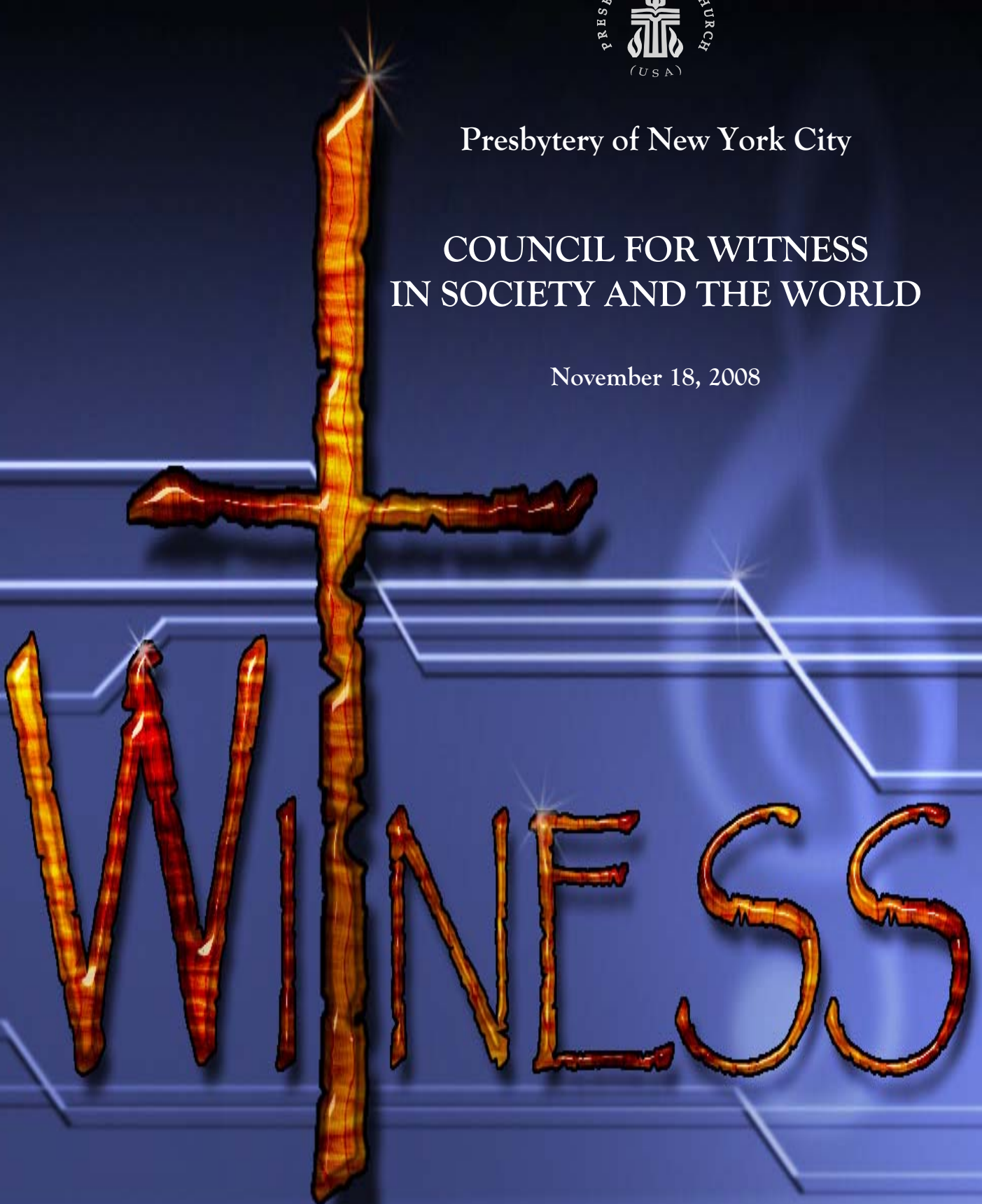




Presbytery of New York City

COUNCIL FOR WITNESS
IN SOCIETY AND THE WORLD

November 18, 2008



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Dear All in Christ,

Our commitment to Christ translates to our work in society, not only as members of the Lord's Great Commission, but also as people endeavoring to be good Samaritans to their neighbors. The work of the New York City Presbytery Council for Witness in Society and the World (CWSW) reflects, in many instances, our collective efforts in this regard.

It is with this in mind that, as chair of CWSW, I am pleased to submit our 2008 report. Its content is organized in four parts: (i) supporting congregation-based mission; (ii) resourcing Presbytery engagement on a few key issues (immigration, police/community relations, prison/re-entry ministry and advocacy; (iii) supporting campus ministry, and (iv) community connections.

There is much more that CWSW should be involved in. However, the Council faces obvious limitations: firstly, voluntary people in the Presbytery willing to work on issues are not inexhaustible. In this connection, I wish to express my deep appreciation on behalf of the Presbytery to brothers and sisters of various walks of life who have taken their time of leisure or deserved rest to participate in working groups, to take up special assignment, or simply to attend a conference or voice a concern. Special thanks to the core membership of CWSW and to Annie Rawlings its assigned staff from the Presbytery. Secondly, our ability to provide grants and incentives has been in decrease. CWSW's budget has been shrinking.

Despite these limitations, CWSW remains engaged to discharge the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Presbytery. It counts on your continuous support.

Yours respectfully in Christ,

Emmanuel Goued Njayick

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Presbytery of New York City
COUNCIL FOR WITNESS IN SOCIETY AND THE WORLD

2008/2009 Program Year

The Council for Witness to Society and the World (CWSW) works to advance the mission of the Presbytery of New York City (PNYC) by

- Supporting the care-giving and justice-making ministries of its churches.
- Providing information and options for action on a few key issues.
- Linking its members and congregations with opportunities, or organizations, whose work bears witness to the mission of Jesus Christ in our time.

CWSW carries out its work by:

- Supporting Congregation-based Mission *see page 4*
- Resourcing Presbytery Engagement on a Few Key Issues:
 - ~ Immigration *see page 5*
 - ~ Police/Community Relations *see page 6*
 - ~ Prison/Reentry Ministry and Advocacy *see page 7*
- Supporting Campus Ministry *see page 8*
a CWSW responsibility listed in the Standing Rules
- Working Through Community Connections *see page 9*

Current Members of CWSW

Chair: Elder Emmanuel Goued Njayick

Rev. David Aja-Sigmon
Elder Anne Barstow
Rev. Bob Brashear
Elder Charlene Dash
Elder Nydia Murphy

Elder Tina Serlin
Rev. Donald Shriver
Rev. Pongsak Sintumat
Rev. Hi Chul Yang

Staff: Annie Rawlings, M.Div. Interim Associate Executive Presbyter for Social Witness
212-870-2221, ext. 4249 socialwitness@presbynyc.org

SUPPORTING CONGREGATION-BASED MISSION

Celebrating and Encouraging Congregations

In May 2008 CWSW hosted a mini-retreat called *Growing Mission Engagement*. As a result of the retreat, CWSW has adopted the following goals:

- ~ ***Create better connections with individual churches:***
 - Learn more about social witness mission – care-giving and justice-making – by churches of the Presbytery of New York City.
 - Identify ways in which CWSW, other entities of the church, and/or other organizations might collaborate or otherwise support those efforts.

- ~ ***Celebrate mission engagement by churches and individuals:***
 - Publicize these engagements to the full Presbytery and beyond, including via the use of new media.
 - Through commissioning ceremonies for those preparing to embark on mission trips or other special witness projects.

Grants

CWSW offers grants to congregations, faith community collaborations, community organizations, and select global witness initiatives. In March, 2008, CWSW published *Mission Grant Highlights 2005-2007*, a booklet containing narrative descriptions and photographs of some of the programs CWSW has funded, along with a complete listing of all grantees, during the years 2005-2007.

CWSW grants are given to churches/entities connected to the Presbyterian Church, USA as well as to organizations who are engaged in substantive initiatives of care-giving and/or justice-making, or who represent ministry areas within CWSW's responsibilities as listed in the *Standing Rules*.

CWSW accepts proposals for funding three times per year:

February 1 May 1 October 1

CWSW also offers scholarships to support attendance at social witness-related conferences – proposals must be submitted a minimum of 8 weeks prior to the conference for which the scholarship is being requested.

Note: CWSW requires written reports from all grantees and scholarship recipients.

CWSW also periodically publishes a description of grants available from PCUSA entities at the national, Synod, and Presbytery level.

Contact Annie Rawlings, staff, for proposal guidelines or scholarship applications.

RESOURCING PRESBYTERY ENGAGEMENT

Immigration

CWSW's Immigration Working Group (open to all members of the Presbytery of NYC and its churches) supports education and action related to immigration.

Through staff, the Working Group is in regular communication with Julia Thorne, Immigration Attorney and Coordinator for Immigration Issues – PCUSA. CWSW provided “Presbyterians for Just Immigration” buttons for distribution at the June 2008 General Assembly to help promote the work of the Immigration Office.

Resource for Action and Education

Working Group
Resource Packet

MINISTRIES OF WELCOME:

IDEAS FOR ACTION / RESOURCE LIST

Contact Annie Rawlings, staff, for a copy.

In addition to this listing, the Immigration Working Group, and CWSW as a whole, are discussing further options for dialogue/education on immigration and other issues.

Meanwhile, **the Working Group encourages congregations to learn about immigration in particular through the stories of immigrants.** Learn from members of your congregation. Or, contact Annie Rawlings to find a guest speaker.

Legislative Reform

The Immigration Working Group is in contact with a handful of partners to monitor immigration-related legislation. Most immigration advocacy groups postponed work on comprehensive legislative reform until after the recent presidential election. If the Working Group recommends Presbytery and congregational engagement on immigration legislation, it will do so in consultation with:

- ~ The PCUSA Immigration Office
- ~ The New York Immigration Coalition (the Presbytery of NYC is a member)
- ~ Staff at key faith organizations who are also working on legislative reform, e.g. the American Jewish Committee and the Interfaith Center of New York.

If you are interested in participating in CWSW's Immigration Working Group, please contact Annie Rawlings.

Police/Community Relations

CWSW began working on the issue of Police/Community Relations following the killing of Sean Bell in November, 2006. Many people in our Presbytery have long histories of working to try to improve relationships between members of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and the people of New York City. CWSW's goal has been to identify strategic faith and community partners with whom we can collaborate in working towards the goal of improving relationships between the police and the community where the lack of a positive relationship has had negative and even tragic consequences for all concerned.

Conversations for Change

CWSW is partnering with New York Faith & Justice on this initiative in which community members and police officers from the local precinct talk together in a facilitated, multi-session dialogue. The project uses the methodology of *Everyday Democracy* (formerly known as “Study Circles”). Initial pilot conversations took place over the past year at several churches in the South Bronx – including the St. Augustine Presbyterian Church. The next step is a pilot involving the multi-session methodology: it will be focused on a handful of precincts in the South Bronx. New York Faith & Justice is currently in negotiation with the NYPD concerning its involvement in this project.

To learn more: www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Issue.8.aspx

Youth Council Project

In the Spring of 2008 CWSW staff, along with staff from the Council on Congregational Ministry and Nurture (CM&N) and the Youth Council, met with leadership of the Presbytery's Youth Council to propose a youth-driven project whose goal is to identify roles churches can play in diminishing the enmity between youth and members of the NYPD, and in creating safety for youth on the streets of New York City. The project has two major components:

1. **Research:** working with CWSW, CM&N and Youth Council staff along with mentors from churches in the Presbytery of New York City: pairs of youth will interview key leaders/players in the arena of Police/Community Relations: from our churches, from the community and from the academic world. Out of the research the youth will develop action recommendations for churches and other entities within the Presbytery of New York City.
2. **Presentation:** the youth will present their findings and recommendations for action.

If you are interested in participating in either of these projects, contact Annie Rawlings, staff.

Prison/Reentry Ministry and Advocacy

CWSW's Prison/Reentry Working Group (open to all members of the Presbytery of NYC and its churches) supports education and action related to the large numbers of people incarcerated in the United States (the greatest percentage of population of any country in the world), including:

- ~ The need for ministry with people in prison and their families;
- ~ The need for ministries of support for people who have returned home after an experience of incarceration;
- ~ The need for policy-level changes such as: changes in mandatory sentencing laws and the provision of higher education for people who are incarcerated (both were Working Group issues in the 2007/2008 program year).

Resource for Education and Action

Working Group
Resource Packet

TAKE A NEXT STEP:

RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND ACTION

Contact Annie Rawlings, staff, for a copy.

The Take A Next Step idea ...

TAKE A FIRST STEP: If your congregation has not yet engaged in education or action related to people in prison, people coming home from prison, the families of currently and formerly incarcerated people; or in relation to criminal justice policies – TAKE A FIRST STEP!

If your congregation is already studying, already engaged in ministry, already acting at the policy level ...**TAKE A NEXT STEP!** Do one thing more. Suggestions and resources are listed in the Take A Next Step resource packet.

Criminal Justice Sunday is a great time to launch or reinforce your congregation's Prison/Reentry engagement (though your engagement is needed year-round). **Criminal Justice Sunday** is celebrated on the 2nd Sunday in February.

Legislative Reform

In January the Prison/Reentry Working Group will choose which criminal justice policies it will work on during the coming legislative session: in Albany (state level) and/or at other levels. The Working Group will choose issues based on their importance as well as the opportunity for change. The Working Group will work with key partner organizations to provide relevant educational materials, and to provide options for action – including conversations with elected officials.

If you are interested in participating in CWSW's Prison/Reentry Working Group, please contact Annie Rawlings.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

CWSW-Funded Programs

Manhattan Cornerstone Artists' Fellowship (MCAF)

Campus Ministry, with programming in both English and Korean, for artist-students at two New School programs: the Mannes College of Music and the Parsons School for Design. The program motto is to "preach the unsearchable riches of Christ," believing that God outpours blessings on those who follow Christ.

This ministry was founded in 1996 as a ministry to music students, and has begun a new ministry for young visual artists. MCAF is officially recognized as a student group by The New School.

Niche, Campus and Young Adult ministry of Broadway Presbyterian Church

Broadway Presbyterian Church has a long history of engagement in the Morningside Heights area. The purpose of Niche is to include the student populations of Barnard, Columbia, Teacher's College and the other surrounding institutions in the life and activities of the church by creating an engaged and meaningful group for them.

The Protestant Association, Hunter College, City University of New York

The Protestant Association at Hunter College, sponsored by the Presbytery of New York City through its Director the Rev. Diane Lacey, continues its long history of Christian witness on this important urban campus.

The Protestant Association works collegially with the Directors of the Newman Catholic Center and the Hillel Jewish Campus Life program. They function together as the Chaplain's Council which serves as a liaison between the College VP for Student Affairs and outside clergy who wish to provide chaplaincy services on campus.

Expansion of Campus Ministry

In May of 2007 members of the Presbytery and its congregations who have had experience in campus ministry, or experience relevant to it, gathered to discuss growth of campus ministry in the Presbytery of New York City. The model currently under discussion is a church-based outreach model. Next steps include mapping churches in the Presbytery of New York City in relation to campuses within the City University of New York (CUNY) system.

Contact Annie Rawlings, staff, if you are interested in learning more about Campus Ministry in the Presbytery of New York City.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

CWSW works with churches and entities that are part of, or are connected to, the Presbyterian Church in the USA.

CWSW also works with other congregations and faith groups, community groups, and other initiatives through its grantmaking, its *Working Groups*, and its programming. Through these connections CWSW links the Presbytery of New York City with the wider community, just as churches do through their mission and outreach. CWSW community connections, from the period of 2004 to the present, are listed below.

Faith Organizations

American Friends Service Committee
Archdiocese of New York
Auburn Media
Auburn Seminary
Council of Churches of the City of NY
East Side Congregations for Housing Justice
Everyday Democracy
Hunter College Protestant Association
Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing
The Interfaith Center of New York
Interfaith Coalition of Advocates for Reentry and Employment (ICARE)
Justice For Our Neighbors
National Council of Churches
New Sanctuary Movement
New York Faith & Justice
New York Metro Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
New York Theological Seminary
New York Yearly Meeting Prison Committee
People of Faith Network
Reformed Church in America
Religious Funders Peer Network
Sistahs in the Hood Outreach Ministries
Sojourners Ministry
Queens Citizens Organization
Queens Congregations United for Action
Riverside Church
Trinity Grants
Union Theological Seminary
Youth Ministries for Peace & Justice

Community and Other Organizations

Broadway Community, Inc.
Community Action Project
Community Voices Heard
Educational Priorities Panel
Fortune Society
Green Worker Cooperatives
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
JusticeWorks Community
Make the Road by Walking
New York Immigration Coalition
Osborne Association
Picture the Homeless
Prison Families Community Forum
Rehabilitation Through the Arts
Sanctuary for Families
West Side Campaign Against Hunger

Global Witness

Reinvest South Africa (RISA)
Student Christian Movement of India
Voice of the Martyrs
World Student Christian Federation