

**ITEM B.205
FOR INFORMATION**

**MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN HEALTH, EDUCATION &
WELFARE ASSOCIATION (PHEWA)
AND THE PC(USA) DISABILITY CONCERNS CONSULTANTS PROGRAM**

Gail Tyree, leader in PHEWA's Presbyterian Criminal Justice Network (PCJN) will be one of the keynote speakers at Compassion, Peace & Justice (CPJ) Training Day on April 17 in Washington, DC, themed "*Breaking the Chains: Mass Incarceration and Systems of Exploitation*". Gail will also co-lead a workshop there with Bob Brashear from PHEWA's Presbyterian Association for Community Transformation (PACT) network on *Grassroots Responses to the Mass Incarceration Crisis*.

George Kerr, Co-moderator of PHEWA's Presbyterian AIDS Network (PAN), will co-lead a CPJ Training Day workshop on *How to Become a Welcoming Church to Returning Citizens*. George was also the featured guest on a February 17th radio program/webinar, interviewed by Dr. Sanjeev K. Sriram, host of "Dr. America" on We Act Radio, discussing HIV and AIDS prevention today, George's harm reduction work through START at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC, and what is still much needed from the faith community concerning HIV and AIDS ministry:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9l-35bRpWfQ>

At the request of the Synod of the Trinity, and through funding by them, PCJN is planning an August 2015 regional organizational gathering to assist them in building a Synod-wide network to inspire, equip, and engage local Presbyterians around the issues of criminal justice and ministries with currently and formerly incarcerated citizens.

Leaders from PHEWA's Presbyterian Health Network (PHN) developed resources to assist in observing Health Awareness Sunday and Day of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness, Feb. 15, 2015 on the Presbyterian Planning Calendar, themed "*Fear Not. . . Sorting Truth from Fiction in Healthcare*," tips for seeking out credible health-related information on the internet and increasing one's Health Literacy: <http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/phn>

At the request of Board of Pensions staff person Peter Simes, a leader from PHEWA's Presbyterian Health Network (PHN) has agreed to attend and provide faith community nursing (formerly parish nursing) skills and leadership for two of the Board of Pensions eight day CREDO conferences in 2015. CREDO conferences "help PC(USA) teaching elders cultivate their spiritual, vocational, health, and financial well-being, as well as their leadership potential."

On Feb. 4, 2015, eight promising persons, representing five different congregations engaged in ministry around serious mental illness, came together via a GoToMeeting webinar with PHEWA staff persons to vision toward a rebirth of PHEWA's Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network (PSMIN). We are seeking funds to facilitate a face-to-face meeting of this group to facilitate the training and team building that will enable them to effectively resource the substantial number of inquiries coming to PHEWA from congregations needing to respond to ministry needs in their worshiping communities.

Leaders from PHEWA's Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) network, working with the four PC(USA) Disability Concerns Consultants, completed the writing of their 52 page disability awareness and inclusion training resource, "*Better Together: Transformed by God's Variety of*

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April 15- 17, 2015
Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Area

Gifts,” toward implementing Item 21-02 from the 220th General Assembly (2012). The resource has been submitted to OGA staff persons for input. The final version will be used by PDC as an aid for observing Disability Inclusion Sunday, June 14, 2015 on the Presbyterian Planning Calendar, as well as ensuring broad distribution to mid council entities, per action of the G.A.

PDC Co-Moderator Cindy Merten will represent the PC(USA) in March and June seminars sponsored by the National Collaborative on Faith and Disability. The March 30th webinar is on “Congregational Strategies for Reaching Out to Agencies and Working With Them to Identify and Honor Spiritual Supports and Enable Inclusion and Ongoing Participation.” Registration is free at: <http://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/events/4485>

The Rev. Rick Roderick, PC(USA) Disability Concerns Consultant for Visual Disabilities has agreed to serve on a newly created *Presbyterians Today* magazine Creative Team, to serve as point person, working with others to deepen the magazine’s accessibility for people with disabilities.

Leaders of PHEWA’s Presbyterians Against Domestic Violence Network (PADVN) are developing materials around the theme of the role that men need to play (and in some cases, are playing) in preventing domestic violence for Domestic Violence Awareness month in October. This work is meant to complement the October emphasis of the PMA World Mission’s Reconciliation Initiative: End violence against women and children.

So far this year, PADVN leaders have developed and resourced three training events in the Synod of the Southwest, with focus on the intersection of human trafficking and domestic violence, on elder abuse, and on Native American values, the role of men in the congregation in reducing abuse, and the effects of domestic violence on children. PADVN also led trainings on dating violence awareness and prevention for the New Visions Health Care Class at Fulton-Montgomery Community College in Johnstown, NY and for seniors at two high schools in the bounds of Albany Presbytery.

Leaders from PHEWA’s Presbyterian Association for Specialized Pastoral Ministries (PASPM) network continue to provide valuable expertise in addressing questions and difficulties that prospective chaplains and other specialized ministers have in obtaining endorsement from their presbyteries. Most of these questions are addressed once the candidate has learned how to navigate the system and advocate for themselves with their COM’s and CPM’s. On occasion, PASPM members have been called upon to intervene with a executive presbyter or the appropriate committee chair on the candidate’s behalf.

PASPM leaders have taken on fundraising responsibilities, trying to continue the historic PC(USA) Breakfast gatherings at the annual conferences of the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) and the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE). For decades, this modest cost was supported by the denomination’s national offices to enable these important networking opportunities.

Leaders from PHEWA’s Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options (PARO) network continue to offer their expertise in resourcing questions from Presbyterians who do not understand the PC(USA)’s policy on women’s reproductive health, as well as supplying appropriate resources to those doing this interpretation in their congregations and presbyteries.