

## STEWARDSHIP RESOURCES

The Resource Center has nearly 100 books, videos, and CDROMs on Stewardship in its collection. These resources explore the meaning of stewardship, help people to understand the opportunities and results of stewardship, show congregations how to create a stewardship program, and explain special offerings in the PCUSA.

Here is a sample of some of the resources available for your use:

•**Caesar & God: Ethics and Stewardship**—This 5 part video discusses principles that guide our attitude toward the use of money, our ethics of food, our ethics of caring for animals, our ethics of health care, and our work ethics.

•**Giving Together**—This book is ideal for families. The author reminds us that stewardship is about much more than money. Careful consideration of the choices we make shows the role Christian discipleship plays in our lives.

•**Creative Stewardship**—This scripturally based book by Richard B. Cunningham is easy to read and, like Scripture, is filled with ideas we should consciously teach our children: give the self first; give God the best; give voluntarily; and give in love.

•**Children's Mission Yearbook**—Children learn about a different country or part of our country each week through activities, stories, and prayers that highlight the mission work of PCUSA

**Stu Bear**—This story about a little stuffed bear, written by Lynn Williams Delgado, will help the youngest children learn about helping, sharing, and caring.

Lorraine Jones, the Resource Center Coordinator, will be happy to assist. Please call her at the 330-505-2167, ext. 103.

## HUNGRY HEARTS ONLINE

You can read additional articles in the online version of "What's in your Wallet?" You can also download a reader's guide and find a bibliography of further resources to enhance the discussion of faith and finances. Visit [www.pcusa.org/](http://www.pcusa.org/)

Learn about the theological and biblical basis for stewardship and get whole-life, year round, practical ideas for meaningful congregational and presbytery stewardship programs at the **Presbyterian Stewardship Conference** on March 9-11, 2009 in Kansas City, Missouri.



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Eastminster Presbytery

# EASTMINSTER EVANGEL



## STEWARDSHIP RESULTS

By: Bill Melver, SDOP Committee

Every year in the spring, we take up a special offering called One Great Hour of Sharing. Part of this collection goes for a Presbyterian mission called Self Development of People, designed to create partnerships with groups of people who are oppressed by poverty or social systems and wanting to take charge of their own lives, organize to pursue economic and social opportunities that produce long term solutions for themselves through projects that they control. In the past, our Presbytery has struggled to find suitable projects and worthy applicants for this mission. This year, however, we were excited to have the KaRen Community of Akron submit an application to the national committee for \$20,000 that was approved in May. Subsequently, they submitted a second application to Eastminster Presbytery for an additional \$5,000, which has also been approved.

The KaRens are refugees, arriving from the Southeast Asian country of Myanmar (formerly known to us as Burma). Since gaining its independence from Great Britain in 1948, Myanmar has been ruled by a military dictatorship. Even after a stunning

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*Continued from page 1*

victory by the National League for Democracy in 1990, the ruling junta refused to step down and continues to govern the country through military rule and repression of democratic opposition and ethnic nationalities. One of the largest of these ethnic nationalities is the KaRens with an unofficial count of approximately 7 million. Many KaRens began to seek refugee status in nearby Thailand, and through the generosity of our own country, some have made their way to America. During 2006-2007, the United States resettled around 9,000 of these KaRen refugees into parts of middle America.

The first KaRen family to arrive in Akron two years ago was Tricia Naw and her husband Kaw Moo. They both have very good command of the English language skills and have secured employment as translators. Together, they have formed the KaRen Community of Akron and Tricia serves as the current president. Through a serendipitous occasion, they met Al Neighorn, once an ordained Methodist minister, studying to earn a doctorate degree in Urban Studies and Public Affairs from the University of Akron. Mr. Neighorn also happens to be a proficient grant writer and assisted with the SDOP applications.

Application submitted to the national committee by the KaRens included an unique proposal for micro loans, made to groups of individuals desiring to pursue business opportunities. Five specific opportunities were initially identified. They were – sewing traditional garments and bags

for retail sales, truck farming, performing traditional dances and songs, repair services for appliances and household items and home repair and small construction projects. The second application made to Eastminster Presbytery was for the creation of a Medical and Social Services that provided transportation and translation services for members of KCA so that proficient professional care could be provided for those in need of these services. Both of these projects are just getting underway.

KCA is governed by a Board of Directors, made up of ten members who have been elected by the members at large. Tricia Naw is the president and the Board meets once a month. Standing committees are being formed to pursue each of the different business projects. They must submit a business plan with a comprehensive repayment plan to the Board before requested funds are approved and disbursed.

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This concept speaks directly to the heart of the SDOP mission – oppressed people, organizing themselves to become self sufficient. The local Self Development committee is excited to work with these people and to witness their development and re-settlement progress. The KaRens are also acclimating themselves into the spiritual development of the local communities, attending worship services and engaging in other activities. Last July, to express

their appreciation to Presbyterians for the SDOP grants, they prepared a traditional meal for the Presbytery meeting, held at Akron's Westminster Church and also gave a singing performance as part of the evening's program. We are blessed that God has delivered the KaRens into our midst in order for us to witness the SDOP mission, right before our eyes.

### \$\$\$-TALENTS/TALENTS-\$\$\$ By Rev. Christy Ramsey

Ever come to church and GET MONEY? Well, it happened at least once. As a young pastor I signed a personal note for \$1,000 and gave out \$50 "talents" to twenty people. The sermon was on the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25. After inviting a response, I had people sign out \$50 to invest for the Lord and return in two months. I bought an Ad with my money and gave computer lessons and help. Others bought ingredients and baked pies for sale, others put up preserves, one did a quilt. One added to his day trading amounts and played the stocks! And yes, one buried the \$50 bill and turned it back in, unopened, just like our Bible story.

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The money was turned in at the end of the two months and I paid off the note. We also had several hundred left over to give to mission. The most important dividend was in the life of one of the participants. One person bought inks and canvas and

created beautiful drawings. His wife saw them and "hired" him to do more for her talent investment. They sold well, which encouraged him to quit his day job and become a full time graphic artist! When I left several years later, he was happily using his talent as full time employment!

Don't be afraid to use your talents! God will bless you just as Jesus promises in Matthew 25.

### THE CONFIDENT STEWARD

There are six Confident Steward CDROMs for use on your home computer to help you plan and conduct a successful stewardship campaign as well as commit to year long stewardship education. All of the programs contain an assessment tool to help you determine what type of stewardship campaign you should conduct with your congregation. Whether you end up visiting every member in your congregation, holding small group meetings, or soliciting members via telephone, each plan includes 5 themes from which you may choose to use throughout the year:

- \*Faithfulness Sustains Generations
- \*Give Thanks...Sing Praise...
- \*Varieties of Gifts/Service
- \*Renew in the Spirit
- \*Ready to Share

You will find clip art, Bible studies, leader information...for each theme. Visit the Resource Center to sign out any or all of the Confident Steward programs.