

1989	Jarra Jagne	Gambia	Veterinary Medicine	2,000
1988	Martin Bicamumpaka	Rwanda	Plant Breeding	2,500
1988	Musa M'Benga	Gambia	Plant Breeding	2,500
1987	Mpoko Bokongo	Zaire	Food Science	1,250
1987	Godwin Ndossi	Tanzania	Nutrition	2,000
1987	Cyrille Niameogo	Burkina Faso	Nutrition	2,000
	<b>TOTAL, 1987-2007:</b>	<b>\$97,260</b>		

\* awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> grant

**Presbyterian Yesterdays is a publication of the History Committee of the First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, New York.**



# PRESBYTERIAN YESTERDAYS

"ITEMS OF ENDURING INTEREST FROM THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ITHACA, NEW YORK"

Issue # 6

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## THE FRIENDSHIP CENTER STORY

### PART 2: THE CENTER OPENS

By early 1988, the Peacemaking Task Force had made progress in developing the idea to establish a drop-in center that would offer food, a place to meet, and Christian friendship to all comers. A name for the center had not yet been chosen, however. When the CRESP committee at Cornell, led by Peg Unsworth of the Baptist Church, inquired about the project, they found that no formal mission statement had yet been produced. Attendance dwindled at meetings of the Drop-In Center Committee of the Peacemaking Task Force. At one point in April, the only ones present were Ken Strike and John Weiss.

Word had nevertheless reached the wider Ithaca community that the Presbyterian Church was working on a project that would be a partner to Loaves and Fishes. Local community activist Laberta Glasser then approached the Task Force. She had first called attention to the problem of homelessness in Ithaca by taking reporters on a tour of "the Jungle"

behind the Agway buildings, a kind of refuge for those without another place to sleep, furnished with cardboard, canvas, and plywood shelters.

Her work brought the Jungle, and the general problem of homelessness, to the attention of both the Red Cross and the Southside Community Center. The latter pretty quickly found some space for some of the homeless, but the agreement required that those who bedded down there (mostly middle-aged men) had to vacate the place during the day. So the need for a real "center" remained. Loaves and Fishes, housed in St. John's Episcopal Church, was open only at mealtimes, and Southside could not be a center for daytime living. The need for the Friendship Center remained. It should be pointed out that the center was never seen as a place only for those who had literally nowhere else to spend the night: it was not offering overnight accommodations, after all. Assistance with finding places – at the Red Cross, Southside, or in inexpensive housing – was always on the agenda.

Bertie Glasser's appearance gave new energy to the search for a place for the center, even as major questions,

such as whether or not to have a paid director, remained unsettled. In late spring of 1988, the disposition of a building owned by the church at 114 Court Street appeared on Session's agenda. Beau Farmer, John Weiss, and Earl Thomas appeared at the meeting to argue for making the building the site of the Friendship Center. In a close vote, Session rejected the idea, with the majority arguing that they wanted to "get the church out of the landlord business." By August, however, a new site had been located: a large basement room in the city-owned Henry St. John building at the corner of Clinton and Geneva Streets. When Pastor Dan Little brought a one-year lease to the Session in August of 1988, the vote to become tenant, rather than landlord, was unanimous.

The church's new local mission project still lacked a name, funds to support its operations, and a director. Finally, the "Friendship Center" came to seem most in keeping with the Peacemaking Task Force's idea of the function of the new site, a name that John Weiss, co-founder and first president, found especially apt in the light of the name of his daughter, Amity. Thirty-seven hundred dollars to support the first year's operations was raised in September in one of the largest yard sales ever held in Ithaca. Donations and work running the sale came not only from our church but from members of Immaculate Conception and St. Catherine

of Siena parishes. When he discovered that a room for dropping in was now available within walking distance of Loaves and Fishes and that it lacked only a responsible person present to begin operations, Bill Howard, who had been volunteering as a supervisor at the overnight operation at Southside Community Center, offered his services. Thus, in December 1988, the Friendship Center finally opened its doors to the disadvantaged.

## **THE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE:**

The Memorial Committee, established in 1962, is an ad-hoc committee of Session with members originally appointed by Session. It works closely with the pastors in seeking memorial interests within the congregation. The committee meets four times per year, with seven members.

Family members are contacted, when possible, to determine their wishes as to expenditure of the memorial funds. A record of all memorial gifts has been maintained, including recipient, dates, and donors.

## STAINED GLASS WINDOWS IN THE APSE:

*Submitted by Margaret J. Thomas*

The seven tall windows and the round window above the west end of the sanctuary create a welcome beauty each day, be it sunny or not. They were all placed there when the building was built. In 1983, these precious windows were taken down and cleaned. When they were reinstalled, a protective layer of lexan (a plastic) was placed on the outside to save them from possible vandalism.

Starting on the right as you face the windows from inside, they portray (1) Saint Paul; (2) Mary, the mother of Jesus; (3) Saint Peter, the fisherman; (4) Christ; (5) Saint John, the favorite disciple of Jesus; (6) Mary Magdalene with her cruse of oil; and finally, on the far left, (7) John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness. All of them were given in memory of people who had lived in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and almost all of those memorialized had been active members of the First Presbyterian Church in Ithaca, New York.

In 1979-1980, Alison M. K. Bishop, who lived across Court Street from the church, gave a talk about these seven windows. She spoke about where the donors lived and how they (probably) made their livings. Mrs. Bishop's daughter had her mothers talk about the windows printed in 1989 in her mother's memory.

## MEN'S UNION:

*Submitted by Theron L. "Terry" Johnson*

The First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca has been in several different Presbyteries, including the Cayuga Presbytery, the Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery, and now in the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley. While it was in the Cayuga Presbytery, there was an organization of men called "The Men's Union." Each local congregation in the Presbytery had a "chapter" affiliated with the "Men's Union." Each chapter was divided into "units." Each unit was small, with, as I recall, from 4 to 8 members. Each unit met often for fellowship and improving our personal Christian lives. The leader of the unit in which I was a member was Al Reeves. Al was the father of Kennedy Reeves, who is a present member of our church. Al was a very good gardener. One time, our unit had a picnic at Stewart Park. Al supplied sweet corn, which he picked only minutes before putting it in the hot water. It was *very* delicious. He knew exactly how to cook it! The Archives Committee has a picture of another unit, led by Harold Brown, as of February 12, 1961. It includes, among others, Herbert Hartwig, Jr., who is a present member of our congregation.

The Men's Union held well-attended, Presbytery-wide meetings occasionally and had outstanding speakers, such as Seminary faculty and public figures.

One time, I recall, the meeting was in our Ithaca church during the pastorate of Rev. Walter Dodds. I was president at that time, and Rev. Dodds suggested I tell them to remain *seated* and sing "Rise Up, O Men of God." He said "that usually gets a chuckle." I took his advice and the men responded with more than a chuckle! We often met in Auburn because Auburn had three Presbyterian churches.

At the Synod level, men were organized in what was called Presbyterian Men. I remember attending (along with another man from Ithaca) a meeting in New York City. We came back on the Lehigh Valley train before passenger service was discontinued to Ithaca. There were meetings at the General Assembly level also.



**Harold Brown's Men's Unit of First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, NY, as of Feb. 12, 1961.**

**Front row (l-r): John Wooster, J. Sellman Wollen, Dr. James Nicol.**

**Back row (l-r): Herbert Hartwig, Jr., Wm. B. Whitney, Harold Brown, Harry Sherer.**

## INTERNATIONAL HUNGER - STUDENT FIELD SUPPORT PROGRAM

FEB. 15, 2008 STATUS REPORT

### **Background:**

Encouraged by Rev. Dan Little, a group of Presbyterians interested in world hunger and food problems met on several occasions in 1985 and 1986 to consider ways the local church might help address the issues of world hunger. From these discussions and a series of adult education forums, a student aid mission program was initiated, based on an idea proposed by one of our guest speakers, Prof. Dan Sisler.

The primary purpose of the program is to provide supplemental research funding for international graduate students whose research area shows significant promise and likely will contribute to hunger alleviation (i.e. agricultural production, nutrition, education, communications, food policies, and water hydraulics). A second purpose is to involve and educate church members on a country's hunger issues and research progress by the student grantee.

The funds may be used to add technical assistance,

equipment, or other needed resources to implement thesis research in the student's home country. It is not meant to provide a salary or stipend to the student, support travel to or front the country, or pay for typing of the thesis. Grants awarded range from \$500.00 to \$2,400.00.

### **Operation of the Program:**

The Missioners Committee of the church has established an "International Hunger Steering Committee," responsible for the program and interviewing prospective students based on applications and advisor recommendations. Current members in 2008 are David Call, Roy Colle, Tom Scott, and Martha Mapes (Chair). Former members of the committee include Njoku Awa, Gary Bergstrom, Sally Blackwell, Art Bratton, Sandra Greene, Mary Rhodes, Ken Turk, and Katie Walker. The committee works closely with the Senior Associate Director of International Programs at Cornell, who distributes announcement of the grant program to appropriate Cornell faculty and receives the completed application forms. The grants are paid by the church directly to the students, funded by annual appeal.

### **Program Accomplishments:**

A few words describe an enormous success story. Starting in 1987 and including 2007's grants, our Presbyterian church has awarded grants to a total of 67 Cornell international graduate students from a total of 27 countries. As of 2007,

a total of \$97,260.00 has been awarded due to the generosity of church members and their friends. These students have faithfully reported back to church members. By supporting these students, our most important accomplishment is making a small contribution to the growth of human capital that can develop local solutions to major problems of hunger and malnutrition.

A complete list of all recipients is included in this issue of Presbyterian Yesterdays. It begins on page 6.

**First Presbyterian Church  
International Hunger Program  
List of Recipients**

YEAR	NAME	COUNTRY	FIELD	AMT. (\$)
2007	Eduardo Carrillo-Rubio	Mexico	Natural Resources	1,000
2007	Lydia Gatere	Kenya	Soil Science	2,000
2007	Sudha Narayanan	India	Applied Economics	1,000
2007	John Walker Makhanu Recha	Kenya	Soil Science	2,000
2006	Jacqueline Kung'u	Kenya	International Nutrition	1,500
2006	Sokona Dagno	Mali	International Agriculture	1,500
2006	Joseph Kemetu	Kenya	Soil Science	1,500
2006	Vingau Kandiwa	Zimbabwe	Development Sociology	1,500
2005	Pascal Andriamanambina	Madagascar	Env. Information Science	2,000
2005	Jane Kapkiyai	Ghana	Env. Information Science	2,000
2005	Salomey Yeboah	Ghana	International Development	1,400
2004	Joseph Kimani Mbugwa	Kenya	IARD	2,300
2004	Karma Tenzin	Bhutan	Natural Resources	1,500
2004	Andre Luie Goncalves	Brazil	Natural Resources	1,000
2003	Mohamed Ag Ayoya	Mali	International Nutrition	2,000
2003	Tom Owiyo	Kenya	Env. Information Science	1,000
2003	Maria Rodriguez	Mexico	International Nutrition	2,000
2003	Lucy Thairu *	Kenya	International Nutrition	1,000
2002	Mohamed Ag Ayoya	Mali	International Nutrition	1,985
2002	David Bwamiki	Uganda	Crop and Soil Science	2,000
2002	Gatua Wa Mbugwa	Kenya	Crop and Soil Science	1,250
2002	Josee Randriamamonjy	Madagascar	Agricultural Economics	1,000
2002	Nanama Simeon	Burkina Faso	International Nutrition	1,250
2001	Diji Chandrasekharan Behr	India	Natural Resources	2,000
2001	Blandina Cheche	Tanzania	Env. Management	1,500
2001	James Gethi	Kenya	Plant Breeding	1,200
2001	Eseza Nsibambi	Uganda	Food Science	
2001	Ragendra de Sousa	Mozambique	Developmental Sociology	640
2001	Isaak Tecele	Eritrea	Plant Breeding	1,200

2000	Mustapha Ceesay	Gambia	Soils & Crop Science	2,000
2000	Edward Mabaya	Zimbabwe	Dev. Econ., Marketing & Dist.	1,500
2000	Lucy Thairu	Kenya	International Nutrition	1,600
1999	Dossa Ekwe	Togo	Soil, Crop & Atmospheric Sci.	1,400
1999	Virgil Mensah-Dartey *	Ghana	Ag. Resource & Man. Econ.	1,000
1999	Richard Nyankanga	Kenya	Veg. Crops, Plant Path.	1,200
1999	Fatou Jah Sanyang *	Gambia	Rural Sociology	1,600
1998	Anthony Akunzule *	Ghana	Animal Science	800
1998	Isatou Jack	Gambia	Intern'l Ag. & Rural Dev.	1,200
1998	Margaret Mbwana	Tanzania	African Studies	1,000
1997	Rosern K. Rwampororo	Uganda	International Development	1,100
1997	Joseph Munyesi	Kenya	Nutrition and Planning	500
1997	Frida Mugo	Kenya	Nat. Res. Policy and Manag't	1,100
1997	Mutsa C. Masiyandima	Zimbabwe	Soil and Water Engineering	1,100
1996	Emilio E. Perez *	Nicaragua	Natural Resources	1,500
1996	Georgia Lema Ndasi	Cameroon	Nutritional Sciences	1,500
1995	Catherine Montet	Kenya	Nutritional Science	1,950
1995	Rakey Cole	Gambia	Program Eval. and Planning	1,325
1995	Luis Vasquez	Honduras	Entomology	950
1994	John Gorlorwulu	Liberia	City and Regional Planning	1,000
1993	Venancio Acebedo	Philippines	Intern'l Ag. & Rural Dev.	700
1993	Radhamas Lora	Dominican Republic	Natural Resources	700
1993	Esther Odofoley Mensah	Ghana	Food Science	1,000
1992	Veni Hadju	Indonesia	Nutrition	2,000
1992	Evelyn Gakonyo	Kenya	Agricultural Economics	660
1992	Kwesi Opoku-Debrah	Ghana	Education	1,000
1991	Kanchan Basnet	Nepal	Agricultural Engineering	1,300
1991	Enrique Estrado-Loera	Mexico	Systematic Botany	1,500
1991	Ruth Minja	Tanzania	Vegetable Crops	2,200
1990	Isaac Annan	Ghana	Entomology	2,000
1990	Kabba Colley	Gambia	International Agriculture	2,000
1990	Zeinab Sayed	Sudan	Nutrition	2,400