



Make the Most of Your  
January/February 2007  
Magazine

## How to Use *Horizons Magazine*



### WHY THIS ISSUE IS IMPORTANT

What do you think of when you hear the words “generation” and “genealogy”? You may think of those boring genealogies and “begats” in the Bible, and begin to groan and sigh in boredom! In addition to the thousands of people around the world who research their families’ genealogy, William Strauss and Neil Howe studied generations and genealogy at large (*Generations: The History of America’s Future, 1584-2069* [1992] and subsequent works). They define a generation as “a group of people who share a time and space in history that lends them a collective persona. A span of a generation is roughly the length of a phase of life.” It’s that last word, *life*, in the Strauss and Howe definition that connects us to the articles in this issue, and to the PW Purpose\*.

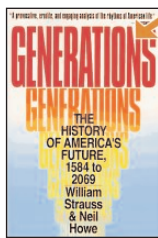
In our modernity, we forget that in scripture, the birth of each new generation was inextricably linked to issues of identity and inheritance. In the New Testament, the genealogies of Christ point to “the intent of the Evangelists: to establish that Jesus fulfills the Messianic hopes of Israel” (*HarperCollins Bible Dictionary, Rev. Ed.*, p. 366). We confess God as the author and creator of all life, and we look to Christ’s example as recorded in scripture (\*we study the Bible and pray) to show us how to live lives (\*through supporting mission, working for justice and peace, and building communities of witness) that “glorify God and enjoy God forever” (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q. 1.). So to pass on the faith from generation to generation (see *Deut. 6:4–7*) means working with the Holy Spirit to encourage the life Jesus bespeaks when he says “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (*John 10:10b*).

Read the articles in this issue with receptive eyes, ears and heart, opening yourself to ideas and ways to demonstrate your identity as a follower of Jesus Christ to the GI, Silent, Boomer, Gen X and Millennial generations. Share your ideas with others of all generations, rather than hoarding them! The best way to “pass on the faith” is to live it: be a link in the chain that binds generations together in “the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit” (*2 Cor. 13.13*).

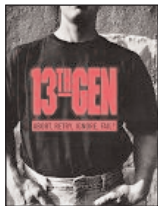
### RESOURCES ON GENERATIONS AND GENERATIONAL THEORY

-  For a list of books whose authors have applied generational theory to church life, see [www.congregationalresources.org](http://www.congregationalresources.org).
-  Borrow from your presbytery’s resource center or a Christian educator these volumes of the *APCE Advocate*, both of which contains not only excellent topical articles (both practical and theoretical), but also extensive resource lists:
  - *Linking the Generations* (Spring 2006, Vol. 31, No. 1)
  - *XYZ: Ministering to New Generations* (Winter 2006, Vol. 31, No 4)

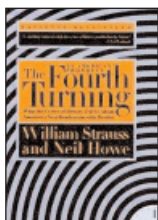
 Other helpful resources:



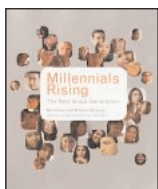
*Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584 to 2069*  
by Neil Howe and William Strauss. New York: Harper Perennial, 1992  
ISBN: 0688119123



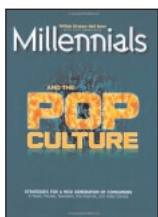
*13th Gen: Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail?*  
by Neil Howe, William Strauss, R.J. Matson, and Ian Williams. New York: Vintage Books, 1993  
ISBN: 0679743650



*The Fourth Turning*  
by William Strauss and Neil Howe. New York: Broadway Publishing, 1997  
ISBN: 0767900464



*Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation*  
by Neil Howe, William Strauss, and R. J. Matson. New York: Vintage Books, 2000  
ISBN: 0375707190



*Millennials and the Pop Culture*  
by William Strauss and Neil Howe. Great Falls, VA: LifeCourse Associates, 2006  
ISBN: 0971260605



Check out the Generations United Web site, [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org).

“Generations United (GU) is the national membership organization focused solely on improving the lives of children, youth, and older people through intergenerational strategies, programs, and public policies. GU acts as a catalyst for stimulating collaboration between aging, children, and youth organizations providing a forum to explore areas of common ground while celebrating the richness of each generation.”



Read an inspiring article about grandparenting (biological or otherwise) at [www.homefrontmagazine.com/feat/grandparents.html](http://www.homefrontmagazine.com/feat/grandparents.html).

While it is no longer in print, you may be able to borrow this intergenerational mentoring resource from your presbytery resource center, church library or a Christian educator: *Grand Friends, Young Friends* (Leader and Participant books), by Pat Roller, Louisville: Bridge Resources, 1998.

Support organizations that help the generations connect and that offer programs to help the generations care for those who are older or younger, e.g., Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. For instance, Girls Scouts can earn an Interest Project Award (formerly called a badge) for learning and practicing proper methods of childcare for young children. There is also a “Generations Hand in Hand” Interest Project Award.



Consider using these sessions related to the “Generations” theme from The Thoughtful Christian [www.thethoughtfulchristian.com](http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com) in a church school class or other church group, or with your circle or PW: Children’s Spirituality; Midlife Spirituality; Older Adult Spirituality; Caring for People with Alzheimer’s

For an amusing yet thought-provoking poetic look at the generations, see James A. Autry’s poem “Genealogy” in *The Language of Life: A Festival of Poets*, by Bill Moyers. New York: Doubleday, 1995, pp. 18–20.

## FOCUSING ON THE ISSUES

“Better Together” by Robert D. Putnam and Lewis M. Feldstein, with Don Cohen

- What is “social capital”? How would you define it? In addition to what you gather from the article, see these Web pages for more definitions and links:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_capital](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_capital) and [www.google.com/search?hl=en&lr=&client=firefox-a&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&hs=3Iz&defl=en&q=define:Social+Capital&sa=X&oi=glossary\\_definition&ct=title](http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&lr=&client=firefox-a&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&hs=3Iz&defl=en&q=define:Social+Capital&sa=X&oi=glossary_definition&ct=title).
- If you have not read Robert Putnam’s book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001) you may want to read it either individually or suggest it to a book group in which you participate. It would also make an excellent discussion vehicle for a Sunday school class or other adult learning group.
- In what areas of life do you see greatest evidence of the erosion of social capital (work, church, school, civic and social groups, athletics, etc.)? Be specific with your examples. When did you first become aware of what Putnam and Feldstein call “withdrawing from community life”?
- Do you find yourself following the trend of withdrawal from community? What about family members and friends?
- Share this article with your pastor and/or Christian educator (or borrow such a person from another congregation if you’re without), and ask them to talk with your circle or PW about the effects of eroding social capital on the life of the church. How do they see worship, Christian education, stewardship, fellowship and other areas of the church’s life as being different than in the one or two generations preceding? Note that you can ask this of church professionals of any age. Compare and contrast the church workers’ responses with your own and that of others in your group.
- Looking at your congregation through a “social capital lens,” what activities and areas build “bonding” social capital? How does your church, or your PW group, engage in the creation or growth of “bridging” social capital?
- The authors say: “During the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, spanning roughly 1870–1915, rapid industrialization, immigration, technological change and urbanization disrupted traditional patterns of community organization.” Do you see any evidence of any of these forces in your community? your church? your own life? How are you, and the organizations to which you belong (including your church) dealing with the disruption of “traditional patterns of community organization”?
- ReligionLink offers resources to journalists who are writing about religion in government, politics, education, social services, science and other areas of public life. The resources are often excellent introductions to topics; their article on community organizing answers many questions that you or members of your group may have. See [www.religionlink.org/tip\\_040518c.php?printer\\_friendly=1](http://www.religionlink.org/tip_040518c.php?printer_friendly=1)
- Many congregations, along with synagogues and mosques, have found participation in faith-based community organizing to be a worthwhile process for building “bridging” social capital. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) supports faith-based community organizing (also called congregation-based community organizing) through its Urban Ministry Office. The following organizations promote faith-based community organizing in unique and creative ways:
  - PC(USA)’s Urban Ministries, [www.pcusa.org/urban/cbco.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/urban/cbco.htm), an office dedicated to helping urban congregations and organizations strengthen their congregations and communities

- The Industrial Areas Foundation, [www.industrialareasfoundation.org](http://www.industrialareasfoundation.org), an organization that advocates for political and social changes that will better the lives of individuals
- The Gamaliel Foundation, [www.gamaliel.org](http://www.gamaliel.org), an organizing network in the United States and South Africa that promotes involvement in social justice campaigns
- People Improving Communities through Organizing National Network, [www.piconetwork.org](http://www.piconetwork.org), a national network of faith-based community organizations that are working on solutions to problems facing urban, suburban and rural communities
- The Direct Action and Research Training Center, [www.thedartcenter.org](http://www.thedartcenter.org), an organization that promotes congregation-based community organizing to respond to social justice causes

**“Living-In-Between: Caring for Those Who Cared for You”** by Carol Gruber

This article could be an especially interesting discussion vehicle in your circle or other church group. Try these suggestions for starters:

- A superb theological grounding for this article can be found on pp. 49–61 of Joan Chittister’s book, *The Ten Commandments: Laws of the Heart* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2006, ISBN: 1570756848). Chittister reminds us: “The fourth commandment asks us to look again at the way we care for those who, having gone before us, show us the way. It reminds us, at the same time, of our own debt to generations to come . . . . Honor those who are parenting your soul to wholeness . . . . Each of us, whether we have children or not, gives birth to the next generation. We do it by being either wise or foolish, loving or hostile, arrogant or humble in their presence.”
- Think about the people in your circle, PW group, congregation, Sunday school class, civic groups, etc. How many of them are either “sandwich generation” caregivers, or are caring for elderly parents/relatives though they have no children at home? How many are women? How many are employed outside the home?
- Do you have personal experience as a primary caregiver for an aging or ill parent or relative? If you’re comfortable doing so, share your experience with your circle, PW, or other group. Consider including details about your daily routine, coping mechanisms, frustrations, needs, joys, and any other information you feel would help others better understand your situation. Ask those present to lift in prayer you, your family, those for whom you provide care, as well as all others who face similar situations.
- What care and respite options are available in your community for caregivers who need a “break,” or who are employed outside the home and cannot leave their dependent persons at home alone? Invite a speaker from an adult day care center or other respite care provider to speak to your circle, PW group, or other church group. Ask the speaker to include in the presentation an overview of helpful agencies and services available in your area.
- How are needs of caregivers in your own congregation being addressed? If there’s room for improvement, your circle or PW group might approach the appropriate session committee or the board of deacons about possibilities for reaching out to caregivers with organized congregational assistance. Be sure to research options and ideas as well as you’re able, as this will improve chances for positive action.
- Carol Abaya, a nationally syndicated newspaper columnist and recognized expert on the sandwich generation, aging and elder/parent care issues, maintains [www.thesandwichgenera-](http://www.thesandwichgenera-)

[tion.com](http://tion.com), a Web site with resources on elder care as well as frequently asked questions. Visit the page if you provide care or send the link to someone you know who is a caregiver.

- Books about, by and for the sandwich generation:
  - *The Sandwich Generation: Caught Between Growing Children and Aging Parents*, by H. Michael Zal. New York: Perseus, 2001. ISBN: 0738205818
  - *Unwrapping the Sandwich Generation: Life Vignettes About Seniors and Their Adult Boomer Children*, by Susan Cunningham. Garden City, NY: Morgan James Publishing, 2005. ISBN: 1933596007
  - *The Family Squeeze: Surviving the Sandwich Generation*, by Suzanne Kingsmill and Benjamin Schlesinger. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. ISBN: 0802071341
  - *Looking Through the Peephole: The Sandwich Generation*, by Patricia Lynn Kitzmann. Pittsburgh: Dorrance Publishing, 2006. ISBN: 0805971556
  - *Soul Food for the Sandwich Generation: Meditation Morsels for Caregivers*, by Myra F. Smith. Austin, Tex.: Langmarc Publishing, 2005. ISBN: 1880292661

### “Coming Full Circle” by Susan Baller-Shephard

- In considering her family background, Baller-Shepherd refers to herself as a “mutt.” Are there biological family members you seem to most closely resemble physically or in temperament? Do you know your family history through genealogy work and/or anecdotes? Do you have photos, letters, or other memorabilia from past generations? Which among these items do you most treasure, and why?
- Have you ever thought of the Bible as a sort of family genealogy or family tree for Jews and Christians? Some books, like Numbers, contain extensive genealogies. Do you know where to find the two genealogies of Jesus? (See *Matt. 1* and *Luke 3*.) Who would you list as the biblical “heads of household” worth emulating? Who are the “crazy aunts (or uncles) in the attic” in scripture? This could be a fun icebreaker or sharing exercise in a church group. Be sure to work in pairs or groups so that participants who aren’t as biblically literate as others may feel less intimidated.
- How was the “baton of faith” handed down the generations in your family? What does the handing-off process look like in your immediate family, or your church family, today? What is the most important message you want to leave succeeding generations with regard to your own Christian faith?
- Not everyone knows her/his biological family history or background. In what ways can we sometimes forget this fact or be insensitive to it? How does scripture help us with positive images of adoption? (See especially *Rom. 8:15–17, 22–23; Rom 9:4; Gal. 4:4–7; Eph. 1:5–14*.)
- The author composed a poem to her ancestor (mother? grandmother? aunt?). If you were to write a letter to an ancestor, relative, or forbear in the faith, what would you say about your relationship with her/him? Would your faith in God be mentioned somewhere in that letter?
- If you’re not the fortunate inheritor of previous generations’ family genealogy work, consider starting the process yourself. Consult your public library’s genealogy section, or check out these genealogy Web sites, which will themselves have links to other helpful sites, groups, and information (Note: some Web sites offer free services while others require purchase of membership or other fees):
  - [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com), and sister sites [www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com), [www.genealogy.com](http://www.genealogy.com), and [www.genealogy.org](http://www.genealogy.org)

- [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)
- [www.genhomepage.com](http://www.genhomepage.com)
- [www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com)
- [www.onegreatfamily.com](http://www.onegreatfamily.com)
- [www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org) (The National Genealogical Society)

- The author quotes scripture several times in her article. Does your family faith history include specific scriptures that have held special meaning for parents, grandparents, etc.? Are there particular scripture verses or passages you cite or recite regularly with your own family now?
- Do you know your Presbyterian genealogy? How far back does membership in a Presbyterian church extend in your own family? If you're "first generation," what led you to become part of this branch of Christ's body? If your family has some history with Presbyterianism, what is it, and do your children know that history? For more background on the denomination's own "genealogy," visit the Presbyterian Historical Society Web pages, [www.history.pcusa.org/pres\\_hist/](http://www.history.pcusa.org/pres_hist/).

**"Presbyterians and Gender Justice, Part Two"** by Sylvia Thorson-Smith

- Did you attend the 1993 ReImagining Conference or do you know someone who did? Most participants were supportive and enthusiastic about the event, and many were astounded by the strongly negative response of the folks "back home." If possible, invite a woman who attended ReImagining to share her experiences of the conference and its aftermath with your circle, PW group, or young women's group.
- For more information, visit the Web sites of the groups and committees named in this article:
  - Advisory Committee for Women's Concerns, [www.pcusa.org/womensadvocacy/acwc](http://www.pcusa.org/womensadvocacy/acwc)
  - National Network of Presbyterian College Women, [www.pcusa.org/nnpcw](http://www.pcusa.org/nnpcw)
  - Racial Ethnic Young Women Together, [www.pcusa.org/rejwt](http://www.pcusa.org/rejwt)
  - Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns, [www.pcusa.org/acrec](http://www.pcusa.org/acrec)
  - Encuentro V (national triennial gathering of Hispanic/Latina Presbyterian Women): see inside back cover of November/December 2006 *Horizons* magazine
- Having read Thorson-Smith's article (both first and second parts), what is your reaction to the history recounted in light of the current situation in the PC(USA) that includes staff reductions, diminished funding, theological disagreements, etc.? Do you feel that issues of particular concern to women perhaps have been disproportionately delayed or denied? [As an example for discussion, the PC(USA) has just finished a denomination-wide celebration of ordination anniversaries for women as church officers (100 years for deacons, 75 years for elders, 50 years for ministers of Word and Sacrament). Yet as pointed out in this article, over the last 20 years, funding for women's ministries as a unit dropped by nearly half, and staff positions in the synods were eliminated entirely.]
- How does this issue's theme of "Generations" relate to this article? What is the legacy you want to leave for younger women (perhaps your own daughters and granddaughters) with regard to women's issues and participation in the life of the PC(USA)? What do you want the denomination to do, in your congregation, presbytery, synod, and at the GA level?

### **“Mission in Our Midst: The Birthday Offering at Work in a Presbyterian Camp” by David Gill**

- Visit Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center’s Web site, [www.ferncliff.org](http://www.ferncliff.org).
- Find instructions for assembling and shipping Church World Service Gift of the Heart Kits (Health, School, Baby, Emergency Clean-up, and Heart-to-Heart Kids Kits) at [www.church-worldservice.org/kits/](http://www.church-worldservice.org/kits/).
- Does your circle or PW participate in the Birthday Offering? If not, share this article and discuss the reasons for participation—be an advocate!
- If your circle, PW group, Sunday school class, youth group or other group in the church has not done so, consider asking your mission/outreach or Christian education committee to secure session approval for a “Gift of the Heart Kit Drive (or Event).” Publish the supply list for one or more types of kits, designate a collection spot in the church, and let folk know when to show up to sort supplies and pack kits. Be sure to budget funds for shipping. This is a wonderful intergenerational activity that can involve all ages.
- Are you familiar with the confirmation camp concept as explained by David Gill? If the young people in your congregation might be interested in this type of experience, call your presbytery or synod office and ask for help in finding the camps nearest you that provide such events.
- Consider sharing this article with junior and senior high young people in your congregation. Ask them to name ways they see the congregation active in mission and outreach. Which activities are actually on-site at the church?
- Ask permission of the session to offer the entire congregation the opportunity to participate in the Birthday Offering. As a minute for mission, summarize David Gill’s story, and be sure to have this issue of *Horizons* on hand as a visual aid.
- Your circle, PW group or other church group can use this article to brainstorm for new, active links among generations in your congregation. As David Gill notes, one of the characteristics of many of today’s young people is a preference for hands-on, personal involvement in mission and service opportunities. What’s already happening in your church that youth and young adults could meaningfully participate in? What ideas do your youth have for existing or new projects, and how can you put together intergenerational teams to help viable ideas come to life? For example, do your visits to homebound members habitually take place when only retired persons or those who don’t work outside the home can go? Consider how existing ministries of mission and service might be altered or modified to include an intergenerational cross-section of your congregation. A side benefit is that new ministry leaders can be mentored and developed over time, and relationships among generations grow stronger.

### **“Birthday Offering of Presbyterian Women”**

- After seeing the list of grant recipients, you may want to invite someone who has recently traveled to or lived in Namibia, South Korea, or Malawi to speak to your circle or PW about their experiences in these places. This is one way of helping to personalize or “bring home” the situation of Birthday Offering grant recipients. You might check with a university or community college to see if they have faculty or staff members who are familiar with these countries.
- Note the scriptural name of the Talitha-Kumi Christian School (see *Mark 5:41*). Namibia has only been an independent country since 1990.

For a map and information about Namibia's geography, people, government, economy, and more, visit <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mi.html>.

- For more information on Presbyterian mission in Korea, see pp. 245 and 247 in the *2007 Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study* (order item 1571530711 from Presbyterian Distribution Service, 800/524-2612 or [www.pcusa.org/marketplace](http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace); \$8.50 plus shipping).

For more information on the Presbyterian Church of Korea, including the number of women pastors, see [www.cwmission.org.uk/about/view\\_church.cfm?churchID=12](http://www.cwmission.org.uk/about/view_church.cfm?churchID=12).

For background information on the history of women's involvement in the Presbyterian Church of Korea, see [www.warc.ch/dp/rw9512/04.html](http://www.warc.ch/dp/rw9512/04.html) from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (note that this article was published in 1995).

The International Health Ministries Office of the PC(USA) Web pages include a highlight of Presbyterian involvement with Kwangju Christian Hospital; visit [www.pcusa.org/health/international/profiles/kwangju.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/health/international/profiles/kwangju.htm) to learn more.

- For more on Presbyterian mission in Malawi, see pp. 336–337 in the *2007 Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study* (ordering information above). Malawi is also featured on pp. 66–67 of the *2007 Children's Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study* (order item 1571530703 from Presbyterian Distribution Service, 800/524-2612 or [www.pcusa.org/marketplace](http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace); \$5.50 plus shipping).

The International Health Ministries Office of the PC(USA) Web pages include a highlight of Presbyterian involvement with the Mulanje Mission Hospital; visit [www.pcusa.org/health/international/profiles/mulanje.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/health/international/profiles/mulanje.htm).

For more a map and information on the people, government, geography, and economy of Malawi, visit <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mi.html>.

- Living Waters for the World is featured on pp. 263 and 274 of the *2007 Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study* (ordering information above). Also visit their Web site, [www.livingwatersfortheworld.org](http://www.livingwatersfortheworld.org), for more information and to find out how to obtain interpretive materials or become an advocate in your own congregation for this ministry.

“The Diary of Hagar the Wanderer” (*Horizons* Bible study resource) by A. Vanessa Hawkins

- In what ways did you find this visualization exercise in the first-person voice helpful or unhelpful in studying this scripture and the lesson?
- *Genesis 16:3* is the only place in the Bible where the name “El Roi” is used for God. “El Roi” means the “God of seeing” or “God who sees me.” To Hagar, God revealed Himself as the God who saw her in her distress. Have you ever felt “seen” by God in a time of crisis or particular distress in your life? If you're comfortable doing so, share this experience in your circle or PW.
- Did you notice: “Hagar is the first person in Genesis to be encountered by the angel of God, and the first woman to be given promises [see *Gen. 25:23*]. In response, Hagar becomes the only person in the Old Testament to name God” (*The New Interpreters Bible, Vol. 1, p. 454*).
- Can you identify with Hagar's seemingly paradoxical situation: “The anger and hurt from being forced back into slavery has been appeased by the love of my child”? Have there been times in your own life when you felt that great blessing and deep affliction were connected?
- The author of this Bible study interweaves reflection on the doctrine of God's providence throughout the lessons. Where do you find evidence of God's providence for the slave Hagar? for her son Ishmael?

- If there are Muslim women in your community willing to do so, you might invite several to attend your circle or PW meeting and offer their views of Hagar’s story. What does it mean to them that in verse 10, Hagar and Ishmael receive the continuing promises of God?
- You or members of your circle or PW may want to read this book before (or after) discussing this lesson:
  - *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives*, edited by Phyllis Tribble and Letty M. Russell. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2006. ISBN: 0664229824
- Notice that both Sarai and Hagar appear to have a relationship with God independent from Abraham’s (Sarai, *verse 5*; Hagar, *verse 13*). Is this important to you, or only incidental to the story? Share and discuss your responses in your circle or PW.
- Hagar is a slave, an Egyptian, an outsider, an African. What would be similar circumstances in today’s North American context?
- If you were to write or speak Sarai’s version of this story in the first person voice, what would you say? Remember that Sarai takes initiative rather than passively waiting, and the means she uses are normal and typical for her time and place.

How does this story tie in with the theme of this issue of *Horizons*, “Generations”?

\*Recommended resources are available through several channels—purchase at your local bookstore or online book retailer; some may be available through your presbytery resource center.