

Congregations Engaged in God's Mission: A Brief Annotated Bibliography

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Photo by Barry Sumner



How to use this bibliography

This brief annotated bibliography is one of the fruits from my January – February 2010 sabbatical. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Please browse through the index and click on the links to read the brief descriptions on each resource.

The book titles, all of which are in print, came either as recommendations from the Christian Theological Seminary librarian, colleagues deeply involved in doing mission or teaching missiology, or my own library. If you have a book title, periodical or web site that should be added, please email me at fmartinez@whitewatervalley.org

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1. Topical List

- a. Theological and Historical Perspectives

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b. Studying Mission at a Congregational Level

2010 Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study. Louisville, KY: Witherspoon Press.

Many in the Presbyterian Church (USA) are familiar with this denominational resource, which highlights the local and international mission work of congregations, presbyteries, synods and the General Assembly. Each entry includes data about the featured country or ministry, as well as the list of lectionary passages for that day.

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c. How-to Books

Vial, Debby D. *When God's People Travel Together: A Trip Leader's Planning Manual. Volume I*. Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Peacemaking Program Presbyterian Church (USA). 1999.

This is a concise and detailed leader guide to organize and implement a mission trip. Though the emphasis is on an overseas experience, the material could be adapted easily for a U.S. mission trip.

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This helpful leader guide is intended for the person in charge of helping a mission trip team reflect and worship before, during and after their trip. The Bible study and reflection resources alone make it worth reading this book.

Winters, Alice. *When God's People Travel Together: Bible Studies for Mission. Volume III*. Louisville, KY: Worldwide Ministry Division, Presbyterian Church (USA). 2003.

This book is a series of Bible studies deeply rooted in mission. The author is a PCUSA mission worker in Colombia, and her experiences there inform and enrich her exegetical work. This five-session resource would be good for any group interested in studying more about mission.

Campbell-Evans, Sally. *People, Places and Partnerships: A Workbook for Your Mission Trip Abroad*. Louisville, KY: Worldwide Ministries Division, Presbyterian Church (USA). No date.

Here is a brief, self-guided workbook which would be a helpful resource to both seasoned and novice travelers alike. Offered in journal format, it invites participants to reflect on, prepare for and debrief their mission trip experience.

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A popular book, this evangelism resource fits in this Mission bibliography for the challenge it poses readers to be deeply rooted in Christ in order to share their faith in word and deed. This book might be an easy read, but if one takes its challenges seriously, it should really help one get closer to God, to fellow believers, and to those who have yet to believe. The book is meant to be read by the church leadership, as part her three-book series (*Unbinding the Gospel, Unbinding your Spirit, Unbinding the Church*) by the same author.

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2. Helpful Websites

a. PCUSA Links

<http://www.pcusa.org/navigation/mission.htm>

The PCUSA's official mission page is not something impressive to look at, but it has very valuable links to mission pages and resources. It is very much worth perusing the wide selection of links.

<http://www.pcusa.org/worldmission/>

This is the official *World* mission webpage for our denomination. It is an important resource to congregations wanting to know more about or get involved in PCUSA's World Mission. It has helpful links to websites and other information.

<http://www.pcusa.org/missioncrossroads/podcast.htm>

A helpful website which offers "a monthly podcast of Presbyterian World Mission, helps you learn how to engage more faithfully and effectively in God's mission. 'God's Mission Matters' brings you insights from mission workers and scripture based on a guiding 'tip of the month' for mission involvement."

<http://missioncrossroads.ning.com/>

Users must sign in to get access to this PCUSA network of blogs and resources. The main strength of this site is that it connects users to motivated, mission-minded colleagues to have conversations or to read their thoughts. The bulk of the site seems to be dedicated to international mission.

<http://www.pcusa.org/goodnews/>

This is the PCUSA's home page for evangelism and church growth. Click on videos (watch or download) and be sure to follow the link to "Grow Christ's Church Deep and Wide a Call to Action Study Guide" <http://www.pcusa.org/evangelism/pdf/deepandwidestudyguide.pdf>

<http://www.pcusa.org/witness/faq.htm>

This is the PCUSA's Witness Season page with Frequently Asked Questions about mission.

<http://www.pcusa.org/witness/resources.htm>

This is a list of PCUSA resources for mission. Some are free, others are for sale.

b. Links to Resources

<http://www.alban.org/bookbrowse.aspx?t=title>

Here is the Alban Institute list of resources by title, which makes it easy to browse.

<http://centerforcongregations.org/index.aspx>

The Center for Congregations helps churches primarily in Central Indiana, but has recently expanded to other areas of the state. The Center is a collaboration of the Alban Institute and Lilly Endowment. It offers consulting, resources, and matching grants in all areas of a congregation's life.

<http://www.congregationalresources.org/>

This page has a wealth of congregational resources in a variety of areas of ministry. It is worth browsing.

<http://www.uscwm.org/index.php/urbana/>

"The U. S. Center for World Mission (USCWM) is a mission agency that helps to improve strategic decision-making and practice on the frontiers of mission, surmounting the barriers that hinder God's kingdom from coming among all peoples." This particular page offers some video clips which would be helpful for someone considering becoming a missionary full time, or someone wishing to go on a short-term mission trip.

<http://fact.hartsem.edu/products/index.html>

FACT, which stands for "Faith Communities Today," shares the congregational research of the interfaith Cooperative Congregations Studies Partnership, in conjunction with Hartford Seminary's Hartford Institute for Religion Research. Their reports include insights into what makes some churches vital and growing congregations. Materials are available for free as pdf files, or for sale as bound copies.

<http://www.cokesbury.com/forms/search.aspx?ddlSearchScope=&txtSearchQuery=mission>

This is a current list of Cokesbury resources on mission.

<http://www.leadnet.org/>

The Leadership Network site highlights available resources in a variety of areas, including Mission, Externally Focused Churches, and more.

<http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/>

This website lists information and reflection on selected projects funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc. The site offers a wide variety of resources for congregations, including in the area of evangelism, mission and social service. There are also sections on grant making.

c. What other denominations say / do about mission:

United Methodist Church

http://www.umc.org/site/c.lwL4KnN1LtH/b.2295473/k.7034/Mission_and_Ministry.htm

United Church of Christ

<http://www.ucc.org/wcm/>

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

<http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/>

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

<http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Stories-of-Faith-in-Action.aspx>

American Baptist Churches USA

<http://www.abc-usa.org/WhoWeAre/Missions/OurMission/Missiology/tabid/155/Default.aspx>

Episcopal Church

<http://ecusa.anglican.org/mission.htm>

This page offers links to official homepages of over a hundred denominations in the U.S.

<http://hrr.hartsem.edu/denom/homepages.html>

d. World Council of Churches (WCC)

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/mission-and-unity.html>

This page has some information about the WCC sponsored June 2010 Mission Conference in Edinburgh. See the links at the bottom of the webpage for additional resources.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/mission-and-evangelism.html>

This page lists a number of online resources related to mission. The group reports offer helpful insights in the document entitled *02-07-02 Consultation on mission in secularised and postmodern contexts*.

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