

Clerk's Report to the Congregation
Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday, February 7, 2010

At the Annual Congregational Meeting in 2008, our Clerk of Session, Ken Krall reminded us that *God will provide*. (We also proclaimed this message today as we read together Psalm 138.) In 2009, the Clerk of Session, Julie Seipel, spoke of *stepping out in faith as our response to what God provides*. Now, as I looked back at 2009, many thoughts ran through my head, and then I thought about hearing of the new book by former eBay CEO, Meg Whitman, titled *The Power of Many*. Ms. Whitman's version of the power of many proclaims that eBay's success came from the commitment of the company, using technology and networking, to trust, value, and engage the many buyers and seller in the cyber marketplace of eBay. This does not deny the notion from several years ago that touted the *power of one*, but in my mind it makes me think how the *power of one* can be multiplied in the power of many.

KGPC has adopted *Every Member in Ministry* as a goal—we can always do better in achieving our goal, but I think we have evidence today, that in 2009, Kings Grant Presbyterian Church accomplished much in the name of Jesus Christ with the power of individuals, the *power of one* combining into the power of many. In the New Testament, there are stories of individuals—of Peter, of Paul, and many others, but Jesus called not a single assistant to help in His Ministry, he called twelve disciples and proclaimed in Matthew 18:20 “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.”

I don't think the power of many can only exist in a 2000 member church. I think the power of many is wherever each person shares their individual *power of one*, creating the power of many to get things done. The power of many is the force of Kings Grant Presbyterian Church: many individuals bringing together the talents and gifts they have received from God. To see the results of the power of many, we only have to consider that KGPC continues to stay strong financially even with the realities of today's economy; we continue to grow programs even during times of staff transitions.

In 2009 we gained 20 new members even as 4 members of our Congregation joined the Church Triumphant. There were 3 baptisms and 8 of our young people completed our Confirmation Class, each mentored by a member of our Congregation. We had an average Sunday attendance of 223 at Worship services. We had a total of 142 persons participating in our choirs, including our children's choirs and the Men's Chorus. There are 16 individuals in our Music Team for our 8:45 Contemporary Service and 30 in our Sanctuary Choir. Thirty-seven individuals participate in Bell Choirs. The average Sunday School attendance for the fall was 75. Over 90 children and 20 adults attended Vacation Bible School each night with the help of over 70 volunteers!

And that last number I cited couldn't be a clearer example of the power of many...let me cite that number again: 70 volunteers! We don't rely on the Moderator of Christian Education or a Director of Christian Education to conduct Bible School. Bible School resulted from the power of many working together. Now I'm sure the perception of some is that there is a small core of volunteers who run it all---that only Session is responsible for programs and activities at KGPC. It is true that we have super

volunteers at KGPC who seem to rival the “energizer bunny” in the hours they give to the work of KGPC and to the well-being of its members and friends. Notwithstanding, everywhere I look I find different faces and different hands joining to plan, host, or participate in a program or activity.

In addition to our Worship Services, Choirs and Sunday School, perhaps the traditional programs one expects of a church, for which I have already cited 2009 statistics, God has called volunteers to KGPC and many have responded to create youth programs, a fine arts academy, a program which has grown to 3 classes and now has a Program Coordinator and an Advisory Council. We have a “Golden Guys and Gals” program, a book club, a community garden, special fellowship activities, volunteers who host “game nights” at Seton House, and a Wednesday night supper with programs for all ages (CHOW.) We had a Family Retreat at Makemie Woods. During the week there are also small group bible studies, and we have small groups that fellowship together through common interests from quilting to basket weaving. We have members called not just to plan or participate in a class or program, but who come to share their skills and strength to paint and perform other maintenance tasks, those who plant and tend to our landscaping and participate in field days to improve our grounds. We have communication volunteers who prepare our eNews and send out weekly Highlights. We have a WebMaster who keeps KGPC.org interesting and up to date. We have a volunteer who each night comes by this building to insure its safety and security.

The programs and activities I have listed do not cover all that is KGPC but they do illustrate the power of many and the grand scope of God’s calling here at Kings Grant Presbyterian, the reality of our goal for *Every Member in Ministry*. Worship and Christian Education, as well as our many other programs which proclaim the Glory of God and seek to fulfill the Ministry of Jesus Christ His Son to serve each other and our community, these programs are not just the task of our Pastor and our wonderful Staff at KGPC. It’s also not just our Session; it’s not just those super volunteers God has provided to this Congregation. It is truly the task of all of us responding to God’s individual call to each of us to come together to create the power of many to share the love of God here on Little Neck Road and to the far reaches of our world.

An abundant example of our ministry to the world through the power of many is that, in 2009, despite our concerns over the economy, many in this Congregation came together to provide \$10,000 for each for four (4) missionaries: one in Mexico, one in Indonesia, one in South Africa, and one in Haiti. We also have sent missionary teams from this Congregation – many of our college, high and middle school youth, and their adult “mentors.” In 2009 our PYF Team went to Morehead City, NC and rehabbed houses damaged by Hurricane Ophelia. The PJ Missionary Team traveled to Marion, VA to work with Project Cross where they also rehabbed houses.

Our Outreach Ministry Team led the way to welcome the Kubba family from Iraq and many others from our Congregation have served to help with all the details of settling a family in a new community and a new country. Many of us also participated in sheltering and feeding our homeless neighbors. Led by our CE Ministry Team, many of us donated shoes to the *Shoes4Souls* project and gathered in 395 pairs of shoes with a total shipment weight of 400 pounds.

There was also the power of many in our fellowship events that were held throughout the year. We came together as a family for Rally Day, a quickly reorganized barbeque in the Fellowship Hall when the weather didn't cooperate, and Commitment Sunday. Other events for fellowship, prayer, and Christian growth included our Presbyterian Women, and our Men's Prayer Group that eats breakfast together early each Wednesday morning. Our Faith Community Nurses and Deacons also exhibited how the power of many can provide for our members in need. And, there is no greater evidence of the power of many here at KGPC than in the work of our Bereavement Committee and the many who contribute food and plan receptions for family and friends following the death of a loved one.

So, whether we see evidence of the power of many in events attended by great numbers such as the Patriotic Picnic and Bethlehem Walk which, by the way, added to the power of many with volunteers from our neighbor, St. Nicholas Catholic Church, or we experience the power of many in the participation of our members, family by family, in the lighting of the candles of our Advent Wreath or sharing the meaning of the symbols of Lent. Whether it's singing in a Choir, teaching a Sunday School Class, raking leaves, serving as a "counter," participating in a youth group, working in the kitchen to prepare for a fellowship event, hosting a Presbyterian Women's Circle Meeting, participating with your pledge on Commitment Sunday, praying with the prayer chains for each other and those in need we may not know, serving dinner during Winter Sheltering Week, or giving to help support a missionary, you are building the power of many, the power of Kings Grant Presbyterian Church to accomplish the Mission Statement we print on the cover of our Sunday bulletin: *Celebrating Gods' presence in our midst, this congregation worships God in the Reformed Tradition, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, teaching through the study of God's word, reaching out to serve the needs and concerns of our neighbors, ...and listens... for the leading of the Holy Spirit in our life together.*

It's now 2010 and, although this report is meant to focus on 2009, I don't think I can really complete a picture of God's Work at KGPC through the power of many without mentioning two power of many events that have already occurred here at KGPC in 2010, during what I'll call KGPC's "power weekend." On Saturday, January 23rd we hosted the meeting of the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia and followed that on Sunday January 24th with a *Stop Hunger Now* Event for which we raised over \$20,000 and brought together approximately 700 volunteers to pack meals for Haiti.

KGPC often receives calls asking how their Church can start a contemporary service, plan a youth event, energize a congregation to create an event such as packing relief meals; yes, we can provide instruction, it is good for us to be a teaching church, but action steps alone are not the source of our strength, our strength is the individuals of this Congregation who are willing to listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit, giving their talents and gifts, and many hours, in coming together in the power of many.

**Let us leave today, knowing that God has provided, trusting we have stepped out in faith, and moving forward with the POWER OF MANY!
To God Be The Glory!**