



LAS NOTICIAS

Weekly Missive

The Power of Transformational Education

I was first introduced to the phrase "Banking Model of Education" by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. I understood Freire's phrase immediately and intuitively, for I had spent the majority of my life to that point having knowledge "deposited" into my brain by brain-numbing lectures: information overload in 50- or 100-minute lectures. It was Freire who pointed me toward a better way, a deeper truth, a path to life: education as transformation.



Freire sought to transform the way Brazilian educators engaged their students. Rather than merely dumping knowledge from teacher to learner, Freire advocated for engagement with one another and the world. Freire argued that information be married to action and action be married to reflection.

When a word is deprived of its dimension of action, reflection automatically suffers as well; and the word is changed into idle chatter, into verbalism, into an alienated and alienating "blah." It becomes an empty word, one which cannot denounce the world, for denunciation is impossible without a commitment to transform, and there is no transformation without action.^[1]

Freire wrote persuasively that teachers must abandoned their "circle of certainty" to facilitate students and teachers together becoming "co-inventors of reality," able to transform their surroundings and allow themselves to be transformed through ever deeper engagement.

...the more fully he or she enters into reality so that, knowing it better, he or she can better transform it. This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them.^[2]

Freire sparked passion within me. I knew from my own life and the lives of my parishioners that we Presbyterians made for great Christians...from the neck up. We know how to think critically and expansively and concisely and incisively. We know how to argue our point into a sharp, two-edged sword and use it with brute force to compel our enemies into submission. Our knowledge is our glory.

And it is our shadow side, too.

The temptation to inflict a banking model of education upon our churches is ever-present. We possess such a wealth of information in the Scriptures, our confessions, our pastoral, personal, and church libraries, as well as our personal and communal experiences, that we are each a localized, mini-seminary. We can access any or all of these sources at the touch of our fingertips and yet remained undereducated. We will believe ourselves to be educated because we possess much knowledge, but without also experiencing the engagement of action and reflection in community we are merely overstuffed deposit boxes. True education seeks transformation of self, community, and the world.

The Big Event is my favorite presbytery meeting of the year. I love our worship. I love the workshops. I am amazed at the wealth of riches we possess between the two presbyteries. But how short a step is it to move from attending a workshop to believing we understand what "church" is all about? How quickly can we travel from listening to like-minded souls, who registered for the same workshop, to believing we have (all) the right answers? Such thinking is conditioned by the habits formed through a lifetime of experience: Once you make the knowledge deposit, then you know what you need to know, right?

Life doesn't work that way, of course. College students need internships. College graduates need a first job. Trade school graduates need an apprenticeship. Heck, even medical school graduates, (who are called doctors), need an internship, residency and sometimes more! So it is with the Christian faith. Reading the Bible and studying one's theological tradition are essential first steps but on their own lack the ability to transform.

Education as transformation comes in community as together we wrestle with information, prejudice, and perspective. Transformation comes as both majority voices are heard in their shouts and their minority voiced siblings are heard in their whispers.[3] Transformation comes as all voices are heard at the same volume, heard with mutual respect, heard as those seeking understanding of God's will not just for oneself but for everyone in the community.

I hope you enjoy the Big Event, but even more do I hope and pray that you want more than merely to know a wee bit more information. I hope, pray, and yearn that you be challenged, persuaded, compelled and, therefore, liberated by what you hear. Do you have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to *your* church?

See you there!
Brad Munroe

[1] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

<http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon2/pedagogy/pedagogychapter3.html>

[2] Ibid. <http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon2/pedagogy/pedagogypreface.html>

[3] The use of majority and minority here is used especially to highlight racial, gender and power differentials and also the common phenomenon of a homogenous group having a popular, assumed position and another, less considered opinion.

[Click here to read this and other missives](#)

ANNUAL MATTHEW 25 COLLECTION AT AUGUST 24 BIG EVENT

Items needed are:

- 32 oz Gatorade or Powerade
 - Vienna sausage or pop-top/vacuum-pouch tuna
 - Single-serve packs of nuts, trail mix dried fruit or cookies
 - Granola bars, cereal bars or energy bars
 - Peanut butter crackers or cheese/peanut butter crackers
 - Applesauce, pudding, or fruit cups (and a plastic spoon)
- (Bulk contributions of these items are also welcome!)*

Encourage your congregation to collect items for Emergency Food Kits and bring them with you to
The Big Event!

GOT PEWS?

Santa Rosa Chapel from Sells is in need of new (to them) pews. If there is a church who can donate pews or chairs, please contact Josefina Ahumada @ Josefina.Ahumada@asu.edu.

CHURCH NEWS

NORTHMINSTER

offers DivorceCare, Fridays, Aug. 16 - Nov. 8, 7-9pm in the Church Parlor- [Find out more](#)

ST ANDREW'S

Moms Group preview is Thursday, August 29, from 9:00 am - 11:00 am on the NE campus for our Preview Day where you will be able to grab a quick snack, meet some of other moms, and get registered for the year. Registration costs \$20 and includes all study materials. **This will be a kid friendly morning. For more information, please feel free to contact Erica Cornett at cornett0428@gmail.com.



Please keep the following in your prayers:

The upcoming Big Event

Upcoming Events

AUGUST

24-The Big Event/Presbytery- Mission del Sol

OCTOBER

4-6 PWS Fall Gathering- [Registration](#)

NOVEMBER

8-11- Responding to an Exodus Border Event- [Info](#)

THIS WEEK'S PCUSA NEWS

[Board of Pensions](#)

[Presbyterians Today](#)

[ACTIVE SHOOTER PLAN FOR CHURCHES](#)

[From our Partners Companeros en Mision](#)



Wanted: Teaching Elders for Pulpit Supply

Many of our churches need someone to fill in for their pastor from time to time at a Sunday service. Would you be willing to help out? If so, your name and contact info will be added to an updated list which will be posted to the de Cristo website. This a great way for HRs, Members At-Large, those in Validated ministry and CREs to contribute to the life of the Presbytery. The more names on the list, the better the chance that a fellow pastor will have a stress-free way to find qualified pulpit supply. Please email Beth Kath (pbyassoc@gmail.com) to be included on the Pulpit Supply List.

Job Opportunities- New listings

Goods and Services

Visit our Website