

Extract from a letter from Rev. Dr. William C. Browne, former Director of World Mission of PC(USA)



with us.

I am the Rev. Dr. William C. Browne, Director's Office, World Mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA). I have had oversight for our mission work with church partners around the world for these last nine years. I have been deeply involved in support of our partner churches and institutions in Pakistan. In this capacity I work with Mrs. Veeda Javaid Gill, the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Education Board (PEB) in Pakistan. We work to encourage her to take her present position and consider her work with PEB to be of the highest importance. Her competence and commitment have been amazing and she is a treasured partner in ministry

The Presbyterian Church USA works in Pakistan through mission personnel and in close cooperation with its church partners, engaging in development, educational, health and evangelistic ministries.

Forman Christian College, founded in 1864 by a Presbyterian mission worker, has educated many of Pakistan's leaders, including some influential leaders such as President Pervaiz Musharraf and a few other members of the cabinet. The college was nationalized in 1972 but returned in 2003 to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) after 31 years of government control.

Our mission personnel began founding Presbyterian schools in Pakistan in 1854 and this has been an important part of our work ever since. As our mission engagement changed it was no longer necessary or appropriate for mission personnel to directly manage these schools. The Presbyterian Education Board (PEB) was established and has been managing Presbyterian schools for over half a century.

In 1972 the government nationalized all Urdu medium schools and colleges in the Punjab. With passage of time, the quality of education imparted in the nationalized schools deteriorated. Since 1998, through the efforts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Presbyterian Education Board received back from the government 10 of its schools nationalized in 1972. PEB now manages 17 institutions with an enrollment of 4, 400 students: 2100 boys and 2300 girls; 4,890 Christian students, 510 Muslims, 231 staff members of whom 201 are Christian and 30 are Muslim. PEB manages schools for the education of children in Pakistan under Christian auspices and determines the policies of these schools with the goal of developing in students a spirit of service and high quality of character; training and providing new leaders for both the nation and the church.

Mrs. Veeda Javaid Gill has been the Executive Director of PEB in Pakistan since February 1998. As Executive Director, she has:

- Developed the overall vision for the program;
- Been responsible for oversight of recruitment and training of teachers;
- Kept schools compliant with regulations requiring the study of Islamiyat;
- Protected and modernized the physical plants of all of the schools;
- Kept in good communication with regards to PC(USA) property occupied by the schools;
- Related to the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan leaders and served on various other boards of the church;
- Led in the development of innovative teaching methods;
- Overseen the recruitment and appropriate use of expatriate (mostly from our church) volunteers and workers;
- Been involved in negotiations with officials on the return of schools;
- Done commendable funds development work on behalf of the schools; and
- Led in the church and institutions presenting a Pakistani loyal Christian presence in the midst of severe crises.

As Executive Director of PEB, she is required by PC(USA) to submit periodic audit reports and annual reports. We have face-to-face meetings and conference calls on an as-needed basis. Mrs. Veeda Javaid Gill has visited PC(USA) office and its affiliates, including the General Assembly, Women's Gathering, and Mission to USA programs in the United States on the invitation of PC(USA) and individual churches. The purpose of Mrs. Gill's visits is to bring awareness to the Presbyterian Church community about the educational programs in Pakistan and to develop financial support for the PEB schools.