



# Keeping in Touch

An e-newsletter for ministry partners in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies

## JANUARY 25, 2010

The synod can be found online at [www.lakesandprairies.org](http://www.lakesandprairies.org). Also check out the Presbyterian Neighborhood at <http://lakesprairies.pnnews.org>. A synod group can also be found at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

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- 7. SDOP approves grants totaling \$30,500**
- 8. CREM grants \$15,500 in scholarships**
- 9. Cedar Rapids Gazette features Presbyterian minister**



### 1. LOCAL PLANNING FOR 219TH GA CONTINUES:

Planning for the 219th General Assembly continues to gain momentum in the twin cities. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) meets July 3-10 at the Minneapolis

Convention Center and at least 8,000 people are expected to attend some part of the assembly. The presbyteries of Northern Waters and Minnesota Valleys are joining the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area as hosts. The Rev. Paula Sanders, executive coordinator for the [Committee on Local Arrangements](#), noted that to carry out such an event will require many willing workers. Those interested in volunteering to work with the Committee on Local Arrangements should contact Sanders at 612.839.7465 or at [paula.sanders@pcusa.org](mailto:paula.sanders@pcusa.org). ([Return to top](#))

**2. SYNOD ADMIN REVIEW TASK FORCE GETS CONTINUATION:** The Synod Administrative Review Task Force, put in place at the Synod of Lakes and Prairies' 2009 winter meeting, presented a preliminary report at the synod's winter meeting last week that asked for a continuation of its appointment until it prepares a final report. The report noted, "The work of this task force is relatively simple in its description and quite an ambitious undertaking in implementation." The complete story can be found on Presbyterian Neighbor News at "[Task Force](#)." ([Return to top](#))

### 3. BOUTON INSTALLED AS MODERATOR, KOCOUREK AS VICE



**MODERATOR:** The Synod of Lakes and Prairies installed the Rev. Bob Bouton (left) of the Presbytery of East



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Iowa as moderator of the synod for 2010 during its winter meeting last week in Farmington, Minn. The synod also installed Elder Ardeth Kocourek (right) of South Dakota Presbytery as vice moderator. The complete story can be found on Presbyterian Neighbor News at "[Installation.](#)" ([Return to top](#))

**4. SYNOD COMMITS FUNDS TO HAITI WATER EFFORT:**

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies committed the balance of accumulated receipts from the Peacemaking Offering, minus funds received from the 2009 offering, to [clean water projects](#) of the Synod of Living Waters and Synod of the Sun for the Haiti earthquake recovery efforts. The dollar amount of the accumulated receipts is approximately \$14,000. The synod made the decision to make the commitment during its winter meeting Jan. 17-19 in Farmington, Minn. Background information for the action stated, "We understand that long term infrastructure recovery in Haiti will take time and that clean water is a concern even beyond the immediate area of Port au Price and the area of greatest damage." ([Return to top](#))



**5. SYNOD TOLD THAT RACISM STILL EXISTS, GROWING:**

Racism still exists and data show that racism's indicators are appearing more frequently. "Hate crimes and hate groups are still around," said Rowzat Shipchandler (left), racial equity manager with [The Saint Paul Foundation](#), pointing out that the number of "hate groups" in the United

States has risen 54 percent since 2000. Shipchandler led the educational session Monday evening during the Synod of Lakes and Prairies' winter meeting in Farmington, Minn., last week. The complete story can be found on Presbyterian Neighbor News at "[Racism.](#)" ([Return to top](#))



**6. SYNOD MOVES IN NEW DIRECTION REGARDING DAKOTA PRESBYTERY:**

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies, when it met last week in Farmington, Minn., moved toward responsibility for "fulfilling the constitutional requirements" that Dakota Presbytery "is

unable to meet." Synod commissioners approved a

- language NCDs
- [21.](#) Racial Ethnic Ministries newsletter available through e-mail**
- [22.](#) Presbyterian musicians plan conference in July**
- [23.](#) Peacemaking seminar planned at Ghost Ranch**
- [24.](#) Kenya immigrant receives Presbyterian scholarship**
- And just 1 more**
- [25.](#) And what about a dress code**

four-step process for responding to the recommendations of its Dakota Presbytery Administrative Review Task Force, which presented its final report in September 2008. The complete story can be found on Presbyterian Neighbor News at "[Dakota.](#)" ( [Return to top](#) )

**7. SYNOD'S SDOP APPROVES GRANTS**

**TOTALING \$30,500:** The Synod of Lakes and Prairies' Self Development of People Committee reported that it approved \$30,500 in two grants when it met last fall. The committee's report came before the synod at its winter meeting in Farmington, Minn., last week. The complete story can be found on Presbyterian Neighbor News at "[SDOP.](#)" ( [Return to top](#) )

**8. SYNOD CREM GRANTS \$15,500 IN SCHOLARSHIPS:** The Synod of Lakes and Prairies' Committee on Racial Ethnic Ministry granted \$15,500 in scholarships to 12 students for the 2009-10 academic year. Elona Street-Stewart, synod associate for racial ethnic ministries and community empowerment, presented the report for the committee during the synod's winter meeting last week in Farmington, Minn. More than half of the funds went to students studying at seminaries, including Louisville, Dubuque, United and Luther. In addition, the committee distributed a total of \$2,000 in institutional awards to tribal colleges within the "boundaries of the synod and Cook College." ( [Return to top](#) )

**9. CEDAR RAPIDS GAZETTE FEATURES PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER:** Out & About, the newsletter of the Presbytery of East Iowa, provided a link to a Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Gazette story that featured the Rev. Bill Warhover. The story began: "The Rev. Bill Warhover sees the role as pastor in the Presbyterian Church as a changing one. And he's OK with that. 'What's happening is, as pastors we are stepping away from giving to people and instead are inviting people to participate in understanding the mystery of God,' said Warhover, pastor of Echo Hill Presbyterian Church, 9000 C Ave., Marion, Iowa." The complete story can be found at the [Gazette Online.](#) ( [Return to top](#) )

**10. WEE KIRK SET IN MAY IN SOUTH DAKOTA:** The Great Plains Wee Kirk Conference, "Little Flock, the Lord Delights in You," is on tap Tuesday through Thursday, May 4-6, at the Holiday Inn Sioux Falls, S.D., City Centre. According to the conference brochure, the purpose of the conference is "to inspire, equip, motivate, encourage and provide rest and refreshment" for pastors, commissioned lay pastors and leaders of small Presbyterian congregations. While the actual cost for room, meals, registration and tuition total approximately \$300 per person, the brochure states, "Most of the expense for the conference is underwritten by the generosity of individuals, and supporting congregations and governing bodies." Complete details can be found at "[Wee Kirk.](#)"

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**11. KEATON WRITES OF 'MAKING CHANGES:'** Kevin Keaton, executive presbyter in the Presbytery of the Missouri River Valley, suffered a broken hip during the Christmas holiday. He wrote about "making changes" in the Jan. 25 edition of Monday Morning in the Presbytery, the presbytery's newsletter. He wrote, "It is not a tremendous revelation that each of us has to adjust and make changes in life. Suffice it to say, with a broken hip, I quickly have learned how to navigate through the day in an entirely different manner. In the church, we constantly are confronted by events that call for change. Weather causes postponement of a meeting. Declining membership forces reduction in programs and the budget. These changes require what Ron Heifetz labels as "technical" solutions. In today's current environment, however, what is more often required is an "adaptive" change: solving problems in a totally different manner. Congregational leaders would do well to view and discuss an interview with Ron Heifetz conducted by Faith and Leadership. The clip is just under nine minutes long and would work well as part of an opening devotion to a meeting. To view the clip, click on: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfLLDvn0pI8>. Please do not forget that I am available at our "satellite office in Deep South Omaha." ([Return to top](#))

**12. WINNEBAGO PRESBYTERY GRANT SUPPORTS HOMELESS SHELTER:** The Presbytery of Winnebago recently received a thank-you letter from the [Fox Valley Warming Shelter](#) of Appleton, Wis., for a 2009 Emerging Needs Grant and a Local Mission Grant for 2010. The letter, from Brad Vivoda, executive director of the shelter, noted, "Your active support is heartening and helps us continue our work in providing shelter to the homeless. Since our opening last October, we have already sheltered and fed 97 different individuals which testifies to the urgent need of a warming shelter." The letter appeared in the Jan. 22 edition of News & Notes, the newsletter of the presbytery. The newsletter noted, "Application for these grants was made with the support and endorsement of First Presbyterian Church, Neenah." ([Return to top](#))

**13. UNITED SEMINARY SETS 'ACADEMY FOR VITAL CHRISTIANITY:'** United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, New Brighton, Minn., has scheduled a slate of classes this spring for its "Academy for Vital Christianity." The series, conducted in partnership with the Minnesota Conferences of the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church, offers a wide variety of classes designed for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the Christian tradition. Course details, instructor information and registration forms are located on the [seminary's website](#). ([Return to top](#))



**14. PDA PROVIDES UPDATES ON HAITI:** Presbyterian Disaster Assistance provides frequent updates on the response to the disaster in Haiti. PDA has a page with [current situation reports](#) as well as abundant resources (including worship aids). ([Return to top](#))

**15. GEORGIA PASTOR RECOUNTS HAITI QUAKE EXPERIENCE:** The Rev. Barnabas Sprinkle, a member at-large of the Greater Atlanta Presbytery, wrote a first-person account of his experience in the Haiti earthquake. He opened, "It started out as a loud rumble, as if a semi truck were driving next to our building. Then came the shaking: solid concrete rippling like water under our feet and all around us. As we looked at one another in pure shock, students across the walkway screamed - and suddenly we were running in a great mass, scampering down the stairs, seeking the safety of the courtyard below." The complete story can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2010/10058.htm>. ([Return to top](#))

**16. 'THE PRESBYTERIAN LEADER' GETS BOOST:** [The Presbyterian Leader](#), the new website produced by the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, received a big boost recently when a presbytery in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies announced that it was providing free annual subscriptions to all of its congregations. Ken Meunier, transitional executive presbyter for John Knox Presbytery, said, "We feel The Presbyterian Leader is a valuable tool for our church leaders and pastors so we have decided to purchase the first year's subscription for congregations that want the resource. The material on the website provides everything from a worship planner to materials for study. I am hopeful all our congregations will take advantage of this great resource." John Knox Presbytery will fund churches with initial memberships to The Presbyterian Leader through the end of 2010. In a related development, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation announced that it has forged a new partnership with the Office of Middle Governing Body Relations to provide free trial subscriptions to The Presbyterian Leader for all moderators and middle governing body staff. The free subscriptions to the popular new website began Dec. 1 and will continue through March 31. The complete story can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/ppc09008.htm>. ( [Return to top](#) )

**17. STEWARDSHIP KALEIDOSCOPE EVENT SLATED IN MARCH:** The [Stewardship Kaleidoscope](#) event, with this year's theme of "Funding Mission Today and Tomorrow," runs Monday through Wednesday, March 15-17, at the Hilton Indianapolis Downtown. Designed for elders, pastors, presbytery staff and volunteers, featured presenters this year are Brian Blount, president, Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian Schools of Christian Education; Kathryn Miree, nationally recognized planned giving consultant; and Maggie Lauterer, pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Burnsville, N.C. A [brochure](#) and [registration materials](#) are located online. ( [Return to top](#) )

**18. PRESBYTERIAN ED BOARD-PAKISTAN EXEC DIRECTOR PLANS VISIT:** Veeda Javaid, executive director of [Presbyterian Education Board-Pakistan](#), spends several months of the year in the United States to spread the news from the PEB schools and to seek support for its mission. This year she will be in the United States during spring and summer 2010, and she plans to attend the 219th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Minneapolis, according to Lynn Miller, administrative assistant for [Friends of PEB](#), St. Cloud, Minn. Those interested in scheduling an appearance of Javaid at their church or organization should contact Miller at [lynn.miller@friendsofpeb.org](mailto:lynn.miller@friendsofpeb.org) or by phone at 320-493-6243. ( [Return to top](#) )

**19. 10-YEAR TREND REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE:** [Research Services](#) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) now provides its popular "*Presbytery Ten-Year Trends*" report online, in addition to the existing printed format. The report, which provides the compiled data from the Session Annual Statistical Report for each congregation in the presbytery over the past 10 years, is highly valued by presbytery executives, as well as synod and congregational leaders. The complete story can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/gamc10006.htm>. ( [Return to top](#) )

**20. NEW RESOURCE OFFERED FOR SPANISH-LANGUAGE NCD'S:** "Just as the United States offers promise to many immigrants, new churches reflect hope and possibilities," says writer Héctor Rodríguez in the introduction to "[Handbook for Hispanic/Latino New Church Development: Going to Sow](#)." This new dual language, Spanish and English resource is written for pastors, presbyteries, church leaders and members working to build Spanish language new church developments. The handbook features inspiration, stories of successful NCDs and practical information on church planting, finances and models for ministries. [Excerpts](#) are available online. The [handbook can also be ordered](#) through the denomination's website. ( [Return to top](#) )



**21. RACIAL ETHNIC MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE THROUGH E-MAIL:** [The Racial Ethnic Torch](#), a newsletter published by [Racial Ethnic Ministries](#), offers news, events and issues of concern to racial ethnic Presbyterians and is now [available as an e-newsletter](#).

The Torch serves as a tool to connect readers to new resources and upcoming events, to equip readers with information that will bolster faith and ministry, and to inspire readers with its stories of racial ethnic Presbyterians in the church, such as the "[Barbershop Raps Ministry](#)" highlighted in the current issue. ([Return to top](#))

**22. PRESBYTERIAN MUSICIANS SLATE CONFERENCE IN JULY:** The 2010 Westminster Conference on Worship and Music is planned July 11-16 on the campus of Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pa. The conference, titled "A Psalm for All Seasons: Stewardship of the Earth; Lament; Peace; Thanksgiving; Praise," is organized by the Presbyterian Association of Musicians. Hal Hopson will be the conference's Routley Lecturer. Additional details and registration materials will be available soon on <http://www.presbysmusic.org>. ([Return to top](#))

**23. PEACEMAKING SEMINAR SLATED AT GHOST RANCH:** The prophet Isaiah promised, "you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace" (Isaiah 55:12). At the 2010 Peacemaking Seminar, "Re-Membering Peace: Still the Believers' Calling," generations of Presbyterian peacemakers from across the United States will gather for a joyful homecoming among the mesas of northern New Mexico, celebrating 30 years of Presbyterian peacemaking. The event will take place Aug. 25-28, at Ghost Ranch, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) conference center in Abiquiu, N.M. This event especially seeks to call forth a new generation of Presbyterians committed to building those things that make for peace. The complete story can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/gamc10005.htm>. ([Return to top](#))

**24. KENYA IMMIGRANT RECEIVES PRESBYTERIAN SCHOLARSHIP:** "I was fortunate enough to have parents who had a strong faith in God and who understood the value of education," says Tracy Gichohi, recipient of an academic scholarship from the [National Network of Presbyterian College Women](#) and the office of [New Immigrant Congregational Support](#), which jointly award a [scholarship](#) each year to a dedicated, Christian young woman who is a new immigrant enrolled in a two- or four-year college or university in the United States. "My faith is very much intertwined in my studies," says Gichohi, a student at Seattle Central Community College studying business. "I believe that there is a specific reason why I left my family back in Kenya and came all the way to the United States to pursue my education. I believe it is God's will." Gichohi plans on returning to rural Kenya to teach women financial and business skills and to encourage their entrepreneurship. [The story in Gichohi's own words](#) is available online. ([Return to top](#))

**25. AND WHAT ABOUT A DRESS CODE:** The following excerpt came from a blog link posted by a friend of the Keeping in Touch editor. The blog, by Lillian Daniels, opens, "I was speaking at a Methodist clergy gathering when a pastor told me that at first the hotel had not been excited about hosting the group, since its members weren't going to run up any kind of bar bill. But then the hotel manager noted that they had more than made that up in how much was spent on dessert. The Methodists were welcome there anytime." The complete entry can be found at "[Theolog](#)." ([Return to top](#))



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