



Synod of Lakes and Prairies
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Keeping in Touch

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

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February 22, 2010

News around the Synod of Lakes and Prairies

DONATION TO 'LIVING WATER' EFFORT IN HAITI GREETED WITH JOY: When the [Synod of Lakes and Prairies](#) met in January its commissioners voted to send accumulated receipts from the Peacemaking Offering to [clean water projects](#) of the [Synod of Living Waters](#) and [Synod of the Sun](#) for the Haiti earthquake recovery efforts. Last week Terry Newland, executive for the Synod of Living Waters, noted in an email exchange with Phil Brown, Lakes and Prairies executive, "We were all, as I said, blown away by your news. Interestingly, as I was reading your reply I heard a gleeful squeal coming from Emily's office. She had just opened the mail from Lakes and Prairies. Guess what she found? Yep, your check has arrived. I can't tell you how much we appreciate it and how much of an impact it is having on our 'Priority Plan of Action for Haiti.'" In an earlier email, Brown noted that the Lakes and Prairies donation of \$7,700 was smaller than originally anticipated, but Brown added, "I think we can come up with more when this year's special offerings show up. ... Hopefully, we'll make up the rest before too many months go by."



Church of All Nations

CHURCH OF ALL NATIONS RECEIVES FTE GRANT: The [Church of All Nations](#), a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation in Columbia Heights, Minn., within the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, is one of five congregations to receive a \$10,000 Cultures of Call grant from The Fund for Theological Education, headquartered in Atlanta, Ga. The grant was awarded for the

church's "Discerning Vocations Together," a program that integrates a resident internship program with congregational life, creating new opportunities for congregation members and resident interns to discern vocations together through forums, group meetings and community service. The complete story can be found on Presbyterian Neighbor News at "[FTE Grant](#)."

JOHN KNOX PRESBYTERY VOTES TO ORDAIN SCOTT

ANDERSON: The Presbyterian Outlook magazine reported that John Knox Presbytery voted Feb. 20 to ordain to the ministry Scott D. Anderson, a gay man who has been in a committed relationship for close to two decades. Anderson declared a conscientious objection to the requirement in the ordination standards of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that those being ordained practice fidelity if they are married or chastity if they are single. Meeting in Madison, Wis., the presbytery voted 81-25 to ordain Anderson, who currently is executive director of

the Wisconsin Council of Churches. The article stated, "He previously worked as a pastor and set aside his ordination in 1990 after two members of the congregation he was then serving in California publicly revealed that he is gay. There will be a challenge to the presbytery's action, said Whitman Brisky, a lawyer who has represented opponents to the ordination." The complete Outlook article can be found at ["Anderson."](#)

MEETING, WEBINAR SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH SYNOD:

The Web-based programs "[Go To Meeting](#)" and "[Go To Webinar](#)," both programs of Citrix Systems Inc., are available for presbytery use through the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. The "Go To Meeting" program enables collaboration with remote members for committee meetings and provides the capability of integrating online meetings into a regular meeting schedule. The "Go To Webinar" program enables the presentation of training, orientation and other seminars to all who have online access. Additional information is available at the respective websites. The synod's corporate license enables presbyteries to use these programs. However, only one meeting or webinar may be conducted at one time, requiring a coordinated calendar. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Duane Sweep, the synod's associate for communications, at dsweep@lakesandprairies.org or at 651.357.1148.

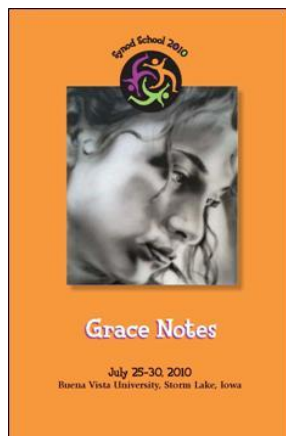
MISSION CO-WORKER VISIT PLANNED; ANOTHER TEACHING

ENGLISH: Kathy Mahler, mission co-worker to El Salvador, will visit Des Moines Presbytery April 3-19 and her calendar is already filling up with visits. [Mahler's blog](#) is at the website of Our Sister Parish. Visits by Mahler can be arranged through Nancy Lister-Settle, moderator of the presbytery's Social Ministries Task Force, who can be reached by phone at 515.992.3639 or through email at neitherthecat@aol.com. In the meantime, Alisha Lundberg, a member at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Des Moines, is in the middle of a six-week experience in Berlin, El Salvador, where she is teaching English. She wrote in [her blog](#), "There I will be teaching English in a local school and a community class, and trying to gain a better understanding of the school system. ... Most importantly, I will be spending time with some of the most loving and generous people I have ever met."



HILLCREST SERVES TRANSITIONAL ROLE FOR YOUNG ADULTS:

A recent story about Hillcrest Family Services, a social services agency in covenant with the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, opened this way: "Thousands of children in Iowa are a part of various foster programs. And growing up without a family can be difficult. But what happens when children turn 18 and phase out of a group foster home? Hillcrest Family Services in Dubuque is giving kids a chance to live independently. Seventeen-year-old Kenny has just settled in to his new apartment after living in a Hillcrest group foster home for the last year." The rest of the story can be found at the website of [KWWL in Dubuque](#).



SYNOD SCHOOL CATALOG NEAR

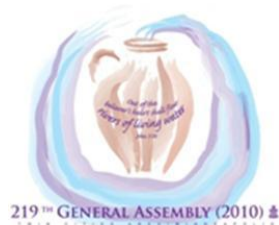
PUBLICATION: The catalog for Synod School 2010 will be published soon and that means that registration will soon open. The catalog's cover (left) features the work of Derrick Ogden, an art teacher in Des Moines, Iowa, who received his formal art education from Skidmore College in upstate New York. Ogden will be the artist-in-residence at Synod School. Rodger Nishioka, the Benton Family chair in Christian education at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga., will be this year's convocation speaker. Searching "Rodger Nishioka" on [YouTube](#) will produce a number of short video clips of Nishioka's presentations.

FOUR SYNOD PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOLS MENTIONED IN APCU'S 'UPDATE:' Four of the Presbyterian colleges and universities within the boundaries of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies were highlighted in the "February Update" of the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities. Three [Buena Vista University](#), Storm Lake, Iowa, students participated in an expanded January internship that is the capstone of a program launched last year with Buena Vista Regional Medical Center for pre-med students with an interest in practicing rural medicine. [Carroll University](#), Waukesha, Wis., and Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, North Chicago, Ill., will partner in a dual-degree program to meet the demand for pharmacists in Wisconsin. [Coe College](#), Cedar Rapids, Iowa, science students are assembling and testing solar-powered chlorine kits to send to Haiti to sanitize water. [Hastings \(Neb.\) College](#) hosted the Synod of Lakes and Prairies' 2010 "Winter Pastors' School."

CARROLL UNIVERSITY PLANS ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK: The Rev. Bill Humphreys, chaplain at Carroll University, Waukesha, Wis., informed Keeping in Touch last week that "at least 17 of us" from Carroll will travel to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for what Humphreys labeled the "Alternative Spring Break Cedar Rapids Flood Relief Trip" March 7-11. The group will be housed at Christ Presbyterian Church. Humphreys said the trip is being coordinated through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

PENSIONS REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE AVAILABLE FOR MEETINGS: The Rev. Doug Kelly, regional representative for the [Board of Pensions](#), noted recently that he is available to work with presbytery leadership by offering retiree luncheons, church treasurer workshops, clergy terms-of-call seminars, CPM/COM consultations, benefits-overview workshops and pre-presbytery workshops. He wrote that he is currently scheduling events for 2010 and encouraged contact by email at dkelly@pensions.org or by phone at 800-511-0132.

News about the 219th General Assembly



GENERAL ASSEMBLY ATTENDEES ASKED TO BRING GIFT: When the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) conducts its semi-annual General Assembly attendees from across the country are asked to bring a gift in their suitcase that will benefit a mission in the host presbytery or presbyteries. This year Presbyterian Women from the three hosting presbyteries of the

219th General Assembly are coordinating this gift project and asking attendees to bring new socks and underwear to be distributed to men, women and children living in homeless shelters. Hosting presbyteries

are Twin Cities Area, Northern Waters and Minnesota Valleys. Socks and underwear were selected as gift items because the items are easy to pack in a suitcase. More information on the shelters designated to receive items collected will be available in the future. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Ann Rock at acrock1@juno.com or Sylvia Swede at sylviaswede@aol.com. Additional information about General Assembly planning is available on the website of the [Committee on Local Arrangements](#).

Upcoming events, conferences

UDTS MISSION CONFERENCE SET MARCH 9-10: The [Spring Mission Conference](#) at the University of Dubuque (Iowa) Theological Seminary, with the theme of "Turning Missions Upside Down," will run Tuesday and Wednesday, March 9-10. This continuing education conference features lectures presented by the Rev. Jin S. Kim, founding pastor of [Church of All Nations](#), Minneapolis, and the Rev. Fletcher Matandika, founder of [Joy to the World Ministries](#), Malawi. The conference includes two days of worship, workshops and discussions.



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 (Ind.) Downtown. Designed for elders, pastors, presbytery staff and volunteers, featured presenters this year are Brian Blount, president, Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School 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.

UDTS PLANS DISCERNMENT CONFERENCE IN MARCH: The University of Dubuque (Iowa) Theological Seminary is trying to "identify gifted individuals who can lead others in service to Christ, the church and the world" for its twice yearly "[Exploring a Call to Seminary Conference](#)" for prospective students. The next conference runs Wednesday through Friday, March 17-19, beginning with dinner Wednesday and ending with lunch Friday. For only \$25, UDTS provides two nights' lodging and all meals. Participants have the opportunity to be in a discernment group setting while on campus, participate in worship, attend classes, meet one-on-one with a professor, and meet other students and spouses.

ASSOCIATE PASTORS CONFERENCE SLATED AT MONTREAT: The [2010 Associate Pastors Conference](#), "The Gift that is Within You," is planned at Montreat (N.C.) Conference Center Monday through Thursday, April 12-15. The conference is designed to assist and encourage associate pastors. The conference will feature a week of study, worship and community building. Conference leadership includes Susan Dewyngaert, Mahan Siler, Rodney Sadler, Dave VanderMeer and Brent Ivey.

IMMIGRATION CONFERENCE PLANNED IN APRIL: Ready for an honest conversation about immigration and border issues? "Crossing Borders: Encountering God," is an event for church members, church leaders and other interested individuals addressing border issues

confronting the church and the world. The conference will be held April 15-17 in Phoenix, Ariz. In advance of the event, Frontera de Cristo, a border ministry supported by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is hosting a border immersion trip to Douglas, Ariz., and Agua Prieta, Mexico. The complete Presbyterian News Service story is at "[Crossing Borders](#)."

PC(USA) MODERATOR TO SPEAK AT

CLEARWATER 2010: The Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow, moderator of the 218th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the Rev. Carol Howard Merritt, a minister in her 30s and author of "Tribal Church: Ministering to the Missing Generation," are two of the leaders of this spring's Clearwater 2010, titled "Finding Our Way in the Wilderness."



J. Andrew Dearman, a longtime professor of Old Testament studies at Austin (Texas) Presbyterian Theological Seminary and now director of Fuller Theological Seminary's regional campus in Houston, Texas, is also a conference leader. The conference is



planned Friday through Sunday, April 16-18, at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest, Deerwood, Minn. The [conference brochure, including registration information](#), is available on the Synod of Lakes and Prairies' website.

Disaster assistance, readiness



PDA'S HAITI RESPONSE CONTINUES TO GROW:

With the transfer of an additional \$101,500 to ecumenical partners in Haiti, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has now contributed more than a half-million dollars to immediate emergency relief in the island nation following the Jan. 12 earthquake that killed hundreds of thousands. PDA Coordinator Randy Ackley announced the most recent money transfer on Feb. 17. The complete Presbyterian News Service story is at "[Haiti Response](#)."

FLOODING RISKS NOTED IN IOWA, RED RIVER VALLEY THIS SPRING:

Several stories have already appeared in the mainstream media this month regarding the risk of floods this spring in Iowa and the Red River Valley. A story in the [Des Moines Register](#) noted, "At some of the highest risk for flooding are cities along the Des Moines River from the Minnesota border to the Des Moines area. ... At risk for moderate flooding are areas along the Mississippi River from the Quad Cities south." The [Grand Forks \(N.D.\) Herald](#) reported Friday, "The chance of major flooding this spring is increasing throughout much of the Red River Valley, according to the latest spring flood outlook issued today (Feb. 18) by the National Weather Service."

News of worship resources



IOWA MEDIA SERVICES OFFERS CREATION CARE ITEMS: [Iowa Religious Media Services](#), Des Moines, one of three ecumenical media centers supported by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, has a wealth of resources under the catalog topic "Creation Care." A sampling of resources on the topic

of creation care includes the DVDs "Garbage! The Revolution Starts at Home," the story of an average urban family who keeps every scrap of their trash for three months, then follows the trail to see where the garbage goes and what it does to the world; "Against the Grain," which shows the impact of bioengineered grain; "Green: The New Red, White, and Blue," in which New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman exposes the American home as a carbon dioxide factory; "Renewal: Stories from America's Religious-Environmental Movement," which presents an interfaith view on ecologically friendly living; and "Addicted to Plastic," with practical and cutting edge solutions to recycling, toxicity and biodegradability of perhaps the most ubiquitous and versatile material ever invented.



ECO-PALMS AVAILABLE FOR PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP: Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, accented by the jubilant waving of palm branches, is re-enacted each Palm Sunday in Presbyterian and other Christian congregations worldwide as Holy Week observances begin. Unfortunately for the

communities where these palms are harvested, palm fronds do not always represent the same jubilation they do for us. In 2007 the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) teamed up with Lutheran World Relief, Catholic Relief Services and the University of Minnesota to offer congregations the option of purchasing responsibly harvested [Eco-Palm branches for Palm Sunday](#). The palms come from communities in Mexico and Guatemala where workers are paid fairly and engage in sustainable harvesting in order to protect the local ecosystem. There are a variety of [ways to order](#), but check orders must be made by March 2. The deadline for credit-card orders is March 9.

LITURGY AVAILABLE FOR 'GIFTS OF WOMEN' SUNDAY: "Celebrate the Gifts of Women" Sunday is coming around fast - March 7 - and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is offering [liturgy materials](#). The Sunday is the day before International Women's Day, March 8. In addition to a liturgy, the materials include other worship, sermon and hymn suggestions. The materials were prepared by Kathryn Schneider, a clinical pastoral education resident in Colorado Springs, Colo.



News around the PC(USA)

COGA PROPOSES MIDDLE GOVERNING BODY COMMISSION: With dramatic changes occurring at all levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) is proposing that the upcoming 219th General Assembly create a commission to work with sessions, presbyteries and synods

"on the mission and function of middle governing bodies." The proposal - unanimously approved by COGA at its Feb. 22-24 meeting in Louisville, Ky. - calls for a 21-member commission to be appointed by the moderators of the 218th Assembly (the Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow) and the moderator to be elected by the 2010 Assembly, July 3-10 in Minneapolis. As a commission, not a committee or task force, the body would have the authority to take action. The complete Presbyterian News Service story is at "[MGB Commission](#)."

OHIO CHURCH EXPANDS COLLEGIATE MINISTRY WITH DORMITORY: How much easier might it be to conduct campus ministry if the students lived with you? Kent (Ohio) Presbyterian Church in Eastminster Presbytery will find the answer once its newest project is complete. The church will break ground in March on a new living and learning community that will house 320 students on church property. While they are not the first church to do residential campus ministry, it is far from commonplace, says Eastminster's general presbyter, the Rev. Dan Schomer. The complete Presbyterian News Service story can be found at "[Residential Campus Ministry](#)."

WRITERS GUILD CONFERENCE REGISTRATION STILL OPEN: Following up on its well-attended 2009 event, the Presbyterian Writers Guild has announced that the Presbyterian Writers Conference for 2010 will be held April 28-29 at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville, Tenn. Online registration is available at the Presbyterian Writers Guild website. The conference, which is aimed at helping writers produce marketable articles or books, develop a freelance career, and "impact the world with their words," will again feature prolific Presbyterian author Cecil Murphey. The complete Presbyterian News Service story is at "[Writers Conference](#)."

PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 'ymiLIVE' VIDEO CONTEST: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) youth groups across the country are invited to participate in the second on-line Youth Video Challenge as part of [Youth Mission Initiative Live](#) (ymiLIVE, pronounced why-em-eye LIVE). Sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, youth groups will compete to win one of two \$25,000 endowment funds established by the foundation to benefit their church youth ministry programs. The complete Presbyterian News Service story is at "[Video Contest](#)."

FOUR PASTORS REFLECT ON FIRST CALLS, SEARCH PROCESS: In the language of the fly fisherman, achieving the proper "balance and tension" is essential to mastering that elusive art. And, when that same fly fisherman happens to be a candidate for the ordained ministry, the same goes to finding that first call. Mindful of the delicate balance and tension needed to reconcile what he identified as two distinct approaches to the pastoral search process, the Rev. Karlin Bilcher, a 2007 graduate of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, approached seeking a call with a fly fisherman's patience and determination. The complete Presbyterian News Service story is at "[Reflection](#)."

And just one more

PRESBYTERIAN PANEL INDICATES OLDER MEMBERSHIP, MORE WOMEN PASTORS: Nearly half of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) members (43 percent) are age 65 or older and a larger-than-

ever percentage of pastors (27 percent) are women. These are two of the findings from a survey of representative samples of members, elders, pastors and ministers - known as the Presbyterian Panel - that the denomination assembles every three years. The fall 2008 profile survey found that the median age of members and elders has continued to climb, from 58 in 2005 to 60. The complete Presbyterian News Service story is at "[2008 Presbyterian Snapshot](#)."
