

The Wider Circle



Presbytery of Des Moines 515-276-4991 / April 2008 Vol. 4, Issue 4



Equipping pastors and congregations with the tools to carry on God's awesome love.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

- Note on HIPPA Rules
- Presbytery Youth is YAV
- Presbytery Meeting is May 20 at Newton Churches

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Cracking a Tough Nut

A message to the PCUSA from the GA Moderator

by the Rev. Joan S. Gray, Moderator, 217th General Assembly

ATLANTA — Evangelism continues to be a really tough nut to crack for many Presbyterians. We worry about our shrinking churches, but we are not comfortable, by and large, talking with people outside the church (or sometimes inside it!) about our faith.

What can we do to help change this culture of silence into one that connects with people who need to hear good news? Here are a few suggestions I have picked up around the church.

Phil's Corner



Spring has finally sprung on us – I think – and with it come opportunities to get involved in a variety of activities inaccessible to us during the long winter – working in a garden or mowing a lawn, running or exercising, playing a spring sport or chasing that little white

ball, enjoying a deck or backyard, and so on. In some cases these will replace typical winter activities, in other cases they will simply be added to activities in which we are already involved. Either way, these will keep us busy – as if we needed to be more busy. Being busy is something we all complain about, some of us regularly. But being busy is a choice,

us get over our evangelistic lockjaw.

- Carry a give-away Bible.
- Buy several small, inexpensive Bibles or Scripture portions and mark with a highlighter some passages that are particularly powerful for you in terms of the gospel message. Carry one of these around with you in your car, purse, or in your carry-on bag when you fly. If you get into a religious discussion, give the person the Bible with your blessing and invite them to read the marked

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and choices often mean something else is not done or enjoyed.

This stream of thought was stimulated by a little ditty appearing in *The Epistle*, the newsletter of the **St. Paul Presbyterian Church in Johnston**. It struck me that all of us might take a closer look at the choices we make in our busy-ness. Here it is:

(Continued on page 2)



Rural Life Sunday April 27

Presbyterians are being encouraged to celebrate by learning about issues facing rural communities and congregations and to look for ways to support small farmers and ranchers.

As part of the annual observance, rural, suburban and urban churches are being urged to get to know one another by learning from each other and finding ways to be mutually supportive.

Small Church and Community Ministry office is providing a variety of online resources to help congregations plan services and other programs at

www.pcusa.org/smallchurch/ruralsundayservice.htm.

Small church and community ministry stories are featured as are a list of PCUSA General Assembly extra commitment opportunities for congregations that are considering allocating a portion of their offerings to support rural ministry projects.

The complete story may be seen at: www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08269.htm.

GA Moderators' Message continued from page 1

passages. You can even read the passages with them to open the door to further conversation.

- Pray that God will bring people across your path who need to hear of and experience God's love.

- Expect it to happen. Pay attention and be prepared to respond graciously and authentically. There really are people out there who are desperate to hear some good news about themselves and the

world. We have that good news! If we are willing, God will use us to plant seeds of the gospel in people's lives.

This story may be seen here: www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08218.htm.

Phil's Corner continued from page 1

- "Isn't it funny how much effort it takes to read a chapter or two from the Bible every day but how easy it is to read the newspaper?"
- Isn't it funny how much of a sacrifice it seems to spend an hour worshipping God, but it's easy to spend an hour watching TV?
- Isn't it funny how difficult it is to work a Bible Study at church into your sched-

- ule, but how easy it is to work in a social function?
- Isn't it funny now easy it is to teach your children how to play ball, but how difficult it is to teach them to pray, grow spiritually, or obey the gospel?
- Isn't it funny how easy it is to talk on the phone for "hours," but how difficult it is to have anything to say after two minutes to God in prayer?

- Isn't it funny how big \$20 looks when you take it to church but how small it looks when you take it to the grocery store?"

May you enjoy your upcoming activities, may this ditty stimulate some thinking as you choose your activities, and may God give you joy in all you do.

— *Rev. Phil Barrett is General Presbyterian and Stated Clerk of the Des Moines Presbytery*

A Note about HIPPA from Our Stated Clerk

The HIPPA Privacy Rules enacted by the government several years ago are confusing to many.

This is especially so for churches as finding out about and caring for its hospitalized members has become difficult as hospitals and other care facilities have tried to follow what was understood to be the rule.

In an edition of *Church Law and Tax Update*, Richard Hammar offers this short "True/False" quiz with the most common concerns or misconceptions.

- 1) The HIPPA privacy rules apply to every church.
- 2) A church has established a cafeteria plan allowing employees to pay for medical expenses with pre-tax dollars through salary reductions. The church is subject to the HIPPA Privacy Rule.
- 3) Hospitals may compile a patient directory that includes the names, room numbers, general condition, and religious affiliation, and make the directory available to members of the clergy.
- 4) A pastor asks a member of his church who is a nurse at a local hospital to forward

to him the name, room number, and medical condition of any new patient whose religious affiliation is listed as "Baptist" in the patient directory compiled by the hospital. Any compliance with this request by the hospital would violate HIPPA.

- 5) A weekly church bulletin lists the names of church members who are hospitalized. This practice violates the HIPPA Privacy Rule.

ANSWERS: 1) F; 2) T; 3) T; 4) T; 5) F.
For more information or questions about HIPPA, contact **Rev. Phil Barrett**, 515-276-4991 or pb1@qwest.net.

Events Calendar

2008

April 10 – New Pastors' Meeting, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., **Presbytery Office**

April 10 – Coordinating Council Meeting, 4 p.m. at **Calvin Community**, Des Moines

April 11-12 – Healthy Congregations Seminar, hosted by the **First Presbyterian Church in Creston** for more info contact crestonfpc@iowatelecom.net or 641-782-5938.

April 12 – Presbytery's Spring Gathering for PW at First United Presbyterian Church in Winterset. *Catch the Wind* is from 9:30 – 2:30 p.m. Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of PW.

April 13-20 Des Moines Westminster Presbyterian Church Delegation to El Salvador

April 15-18 – [Advancing God's Reign in Our Cities](#) Fourth Presbyterian Church, to be held at 126 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, IL 60611, Join the action at the 15th biennial Congress on Urban Ministry. For more information, sponsorships, registration or ways you can volunteer, contact Roger Johnson, Congress Coordinator, at 312-726-1200 or roger@scupe.com.

April 15 – The Association of Personnel Administrators (APA) is holding a one-day seminar at the First Presby-

terian Church in Kearney, Neb. This is a great opportunity for fellowship and to learn something new or refresh your memory about *Conflict Management* and *How to Run a Meeting*. For event details, contact Presbytery of Central Nebraska Office Manager Angie Palmer, 308-236-6996 or office@centralnepresby.org. Annual dues and certification fees must be paid before any classes count toward certification. For membership or certification, go to www.pcusa-apa.org or contact Regional President Judy Pickett at jpickett@glpby.org or Certification Chair Emily Holman at eholman@laduechapel.org.

April 15 – New Pastors' Meeting, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., **Presbytery Office**

April 16-17 – University of Dubuque Theological Seminary is sponsoring *Growing into Tomorrow... Today Seminar* on retirement planning for BOP Plan members age 50 and older. Registration is open for this two-day retirement planning seminar for clergy and lay Benefits Plan members age 50 and older, and spouses or fiancés. Information brochures mail this week to active clergy and lay Benefits Plan members age 50 and older in your presbytery. For details go to: [http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/info/summary.aspx?](http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/info/summary.aspx?e=de6eef2a-9f0b-4a86-b89f-793c1b4cbfc0)

e=de6eef2a-9f0b-4a86-b89f-793c1b4cbfc0. There is no registration fee. Presented by: The Board of Pensions of the PCUSA. Sponsored by: University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. Contact Nadine Monn, Coordinator, Education Programs, BOP, PCUSA, 2000 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19103-3298, Telephone: 800-773-7752, ext. 7223.

April 17 – Communications Lunch and Learn Series continues at the **Presbytery Office**, 2400 86th St., Ste. 20, Urbandale. Topic will be on writing press releases. See details in the February issue of *The Wider Circle*, or go to our Presbytery's new blog at: <http://presbyteryofdesmoines.blogspot.com/>.

April 18-19 – Presbytery of Des Moines Stewardship Training Event, at **Covenant Presbyterian Church in West Des Moines.**

April 19 – Social Ministries Task Force at the **Presbytery Office**

April 24-26 – The APA Greater Midwest Regional Conference is at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, 11100 College Blvd. Overland Park, KS 66211. Class topics include: *Church History I*, *Theology I*, *Angelogy*, *Financial Reporting*, *Presbyterian 101*. The 3-day event begins with registration Thursday at Noon and ends Saturday at 3

p.m. For details or to register, contact Linda Bridges, First Presbyterian Church, 2415 Clinton Pkwy., Lawrence, Kan. 66047, 785-843-4171 or fpcadministrator@sunflower.com.

April 27-29 – Synod Meeting in Edina, Minn. www.lakesandprairies.org/PDFFiles/SYNOD-MISSION-O8.pdf

April 30 – May 2 – PCN Regional Conference, Montreat Conference Center, N.C.

May 5 – PUP Task Force, 3-5 p.m. at the **Presbytery Office**

May 6 – CCD Committee Meeting, 1:30 p.m. at **Westminster Presbyterian Church**, Des Moines

May 6 – Compañeros Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at **Westminster Presbyterian Church**, Des Moines

May 6-8 – Great Plains Wee Kirk Conference, Sioux Falls, S.D., co-sponsored by Presbyterians for Renewal and Small Church & Community Ministry Office of PCUSA. The theme is *Life In Christ*.

Revs. Dale and Linda O'Connell, (Trinity Parrish in LeRoy and First Presbyterian churches in Lucas and Chariton), will be chaplains for the 3-day event. See brochure at: www.pfrenew.org/images/pdfdownloads/2008GreatPlainsBrochure.pdf.



MoM goes Cross-country to the 218th GA

June 13-28, 2008, the Health Mission on the Move (MoM) is taking a cross-country road trip on her way to General Assembly in San Jose, California. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s health mobile, MoM, will take off from national headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky on June 13th and make our way to San Jose, stopping in various cities along the way.

MoM will start out on I-64 and then onto I-55, stopping in **Springfield, IL**, on June 14 and 15th. MoM will then continue on I-55 towards **Des Moines, IA**, via I-74, I-80 and I-76, arriving in Denver, CO on June 17.

Reno, NV, will be MoM's final stop via I-80, on June 19, before pulling into **San Jose, CA**, on June 20.

Once in San Jose, MoM will be on display at the 218th General Assembly, and do three days of community outreach projects from June 20-28. If you live/work along the route and would like to plan a stop, contact Chandra at chandra.kearns@pcusa.org.

PCUSA Update

THE BOARD OF PENSIONS LAUNCHES NEW WEB SITE

The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has launched its new Web site, www.pensions.org. This new site offers increased functionality, expanded information, and intuitive navigation, creating an improved online experience.

A highlight of the new site is BenefitsConnect, an online tool that provides non-retired members who are currently enrolled in a benefit secure access to their personal and plan benefits information. Not only can members review their personal and benefit information, but they can also submit changes to their contact information and dependent status. BenefitsConnect also features online calculators that members can utilize to estimate their pension and death benefits. This tool makes it easier than ever for members to keep track of their benefits.

Members will also find a plethora of new information, making it the "go to" source for details on the plans, programs, and services the Board offers. Although the Member Services team continues to be available, members will find that in most cases, they can quickly find the details they are looking for on the new Web site. This self-service site makes

locating information and resources fast and simple.

The new look of the site makes navigating the site clearer than ever. Organized to be audience specific, Plan members, church treasurers, business administrators, and middle governing bodies will find it easy to locate the information they require. Logical categories guide members to specialized educational information and resources. For example, the new Life Stages & Events section breaks the information up based on various life circumstances.

The functionality, content, and navigation of the new site were designed to meet the needs of plan members and those who support them. The Board welcomes feedback through e-mail at Communications@pensions.org or by phone at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

NEWS FROM PRESBYTERIAN MEDIA MISSION

If you have plans to attend the PCUSA General Assembly in San Jose, June 21 – 28, you will also want to make plans to attend the PMM luncheon featuring actor and human rights activist Mike Farrell. You might remember him from the TV show *M*A*S*H*. He's also a human rights activist and author of "Just Call Me Mike" being released in paperback May 2008. (www.pmm4u.org)

GRATEFUL THREADS

In an effort to draw eye-catching attention to the PCUSA's evangelism efforts, the General Assembly Council's Evangelism and Church Growth ministry area is holding a contest to find the best graphic tee-shirt design in the denomination.

Only middle school or high school students from a PCUSA congregation, new church development or Bible fellowship are eligible to win.

The winning design will be unfurled at the Evangelism Breakfast at the upcoming 218th PCUSA General Assembly on June 26 in San Jose.

The winning designer will receive an IPOD Nano, to be presented at a local presbytery meeting in the summer or fall. Entries must reflect the Evangelism Breakfast theme: "Reclaiming the Gospel."

"I am interested in how we can reclaim the power of the Gospel and how the PCUSA can establish a new evangelism and church growth movement," said the Rev. Eric Hoey, the PCUSA's director of Evangelism and Church Growth. "We are looking for a design that will be a connection point for all who have a passion for evangelism, for church growth, and a desire to share the gospel message with all God's people."

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Designs may include up to three colors and must be received by April 14, 2008. Only one design per student will be judged.

Submit entries to Robert Klouw, Associate for Communication, by U.S. mail at Robert Klouw, Evangelism and Church Growth, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202.

This story may be seen here: www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08205.htm

PENSION BOARD OKAYS 3.8% 'EXPERIENCE APPORTIONMENT'

The PCUSA Board of Pensions (BOP) delivered some good news to plan members despite currently iffy financial markets — an “experience apportionment” of 3.8%, effective July 1, 2008.

Accordingly, retired plan members will receive a 3.8% boost in their pensions and active plan members will receive a 3.8% increase in their pension credits.

At its March 6-8 meeting here, the board also voted to increase the disability benefit by 4%. There are currently just under 350 disabled members in the BOP's benefits plan.

The apportionments are calculated each year on the basis of a formula that takes into account the pension fund balance, projected assets and liabilities and stock

market performance of the BOP's nearly \$8 billion portfolio.

The BOP “balanced” portfolio returned 8.4% in 2007, according to vice-president for finance Mike Fallon, but is “down a little” so far this year.

Judy Freyer, the board's senior vice-president and chief investment officer, noted that the BOP has “no exposure to the sub-prime lending crisis” that is plaguing the U.S. economy.

In a meeting that was generally quiet, other BOP officials reported enrollment increases in several board programs, including the Affiliated Benefits Program — which offers healthcare, death and disability benefits but not pension coverage to ministers not serving in installed positions and lay church employees, and the optional dental coverage program.

With 3% growth in 2007 in the optional dental plan — currently through Aetna — Stewart Beltz, the BOP's director of welfare benefits design and funding, told the board's Healthcare Committee that a study has begun to explore a BOP self-insured dental insurance program rather than participation in the Aetna program.

Linda Wilder, chair of the Healthcare Committee told the board that “the financial condition [of the BOP's medi-

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News Index for March 3–28

- Iraq war protest coincides with Ecumenical Advocacy Days www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08166.htm
- Presbyterians gather at United Nations to lift up women's issues www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08167.htm
- Presbyterian delegation returns from the Philippines www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08168.htm
- Bread for the World taking applications for 'Hunger Justice Leaders' www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08173.htm
- Living Waters ministry approved as non-profit site on YouTube www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08177.htm
- Conference will focus on evangelism in a multicultural world www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08174.htm
- Small Russian congregation demonstrates big heart for ministry www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08179.htm
- Russian Orthodox Church rapidly expands social ministries www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08181.htm
- Seminary news www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08184.htm
- Presbytery and synod news www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08186.htm
- Campaign threatens boycott of Burger King www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08187.htm
- New initiative digitally expands religion's reach in the world www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08192.htm
- 42 arrested for civil disobedience in Hart Senate Office Building www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08193.htm
- Energy, hope abound at Menaul School as its community is guided by God www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08188.htm
- Menaul School striving to build enrollment, increase fundraising www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08189.htm
- Presbyterian Communicators Network sets spring regional conference at Montreat www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08195.htm
- Notes about people www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08196.htm
- Debra Hepler is named Ghost Ranch director www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08197.htm
- New Covenant Trust Company pays \$1 million dividend to Presbyterian Foundation www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08200.htm
- Salvadoran-American pastor puts Christ at the center of new Houston congregation www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08201.htm
- Fresh approaches to stewardship needed, Easley says www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08204.htm
- One church, three locations, Elmwood Presbyterian Church in Newark www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08224.htm
- College news www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08225.htm
- BOP health risk assessment shows most participants more at-risk than they think www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08228.htm
- Appeal hearing in Spahr same-sex wedding case set for April 25 www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08229.htm
- Deadline nears for Presbyterian Writers Guild 'first book' award www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08230.htm
- Notes about people www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/2008/08235.htm
- National Workshop on Christian Unity set for April 14-17 in Chicago www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/2008/08228.htm
- Seminary news www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/2008/08238.htm
- PDA taps \$10,000 for flood relief www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/2008/08239.htm
- NJ Presbyterians host GA moderator candidates www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/2008/08240.htm
- Davidson College trustees to cover students' costs for attending NCAA tournament www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08241.htm
- Per capita Web site goes online www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08244.htm



Pentecost is May 11

Download a printable version of the worship service written for the Day of Pentecost, May 11, 2008. This download includes the Children's Sermon, a brief message to help children engage in and understand the Day of Pentecost.

Pentecost is an exciting time of year! It's the time we celebrate the birth of the church! We celebrate the Holy Spirit, who brings new life and hope. In keeping with this new life brought by the Spirit, plan to involve the children and youth of your congregation. Their energy and vitality will add a surprising and joyful element to the service.

For worship resources, go to:

www.pcusa.org/

pentecost/08images/

WorshipResource.pdf

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cal plan] is excellent right now and looks like it will be into 2009." However, she added, "It's always unpredictable.

John Cookson, the board's longtime medical actuarial, told the Healthcare Committee that "best estimate" projections show medical plan reserves gradually declining over the next three years but still within the BOP's target range.

BOP dues are currently 31.5% of "effective salary" — 19.5% for health care and 12% for pension, death and disability.

This story may be seen here:

www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08203.htm

KIRKPATRICK TO SERVE AS VISITING PROFESSOR AT LOUISVILLE

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary has announced the appointment of the Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick as visiting professor of ecumeni-

cal studies and global ministries, beginning next fall.

The announcement was made during the "Voices of the Church Dinner," which was held March 4 in conjunction with Louisville Seminary's annual Festival of Theology and Alum Reunion. Kirkpatrick was the guest speaker.

Kirkpatrick is currently stated clerk of the General Assembly of the PCUSA. He is also president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and serves on the governing boards of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and the Council of Presidents, United States Chapter, of the World Conference on Religion and Peace.

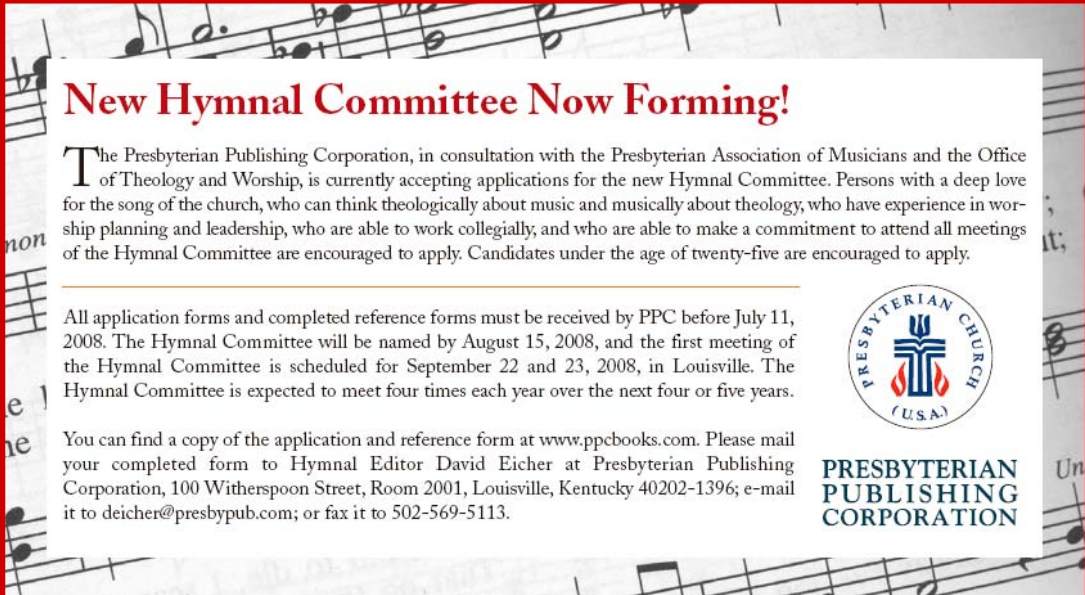
Last September, Kirkpatrick announced that he would not seek a fourth three-year term as stated clerk of the 2.3-million-member PCUSA. In a published statement addressed to friends and col-

leagues, he cited a desire for "more quality time with my family, to be able to devote myself more fully to the responsibility I have undertaken since 2004 to serve as president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and to share in the life of the church, both locally and globally, in new and creative ways."

Kirkpatrick's time as stated clerk will conclude at the end of the 218th GA (2008) in San Jose, Calif., in June. He was first elected to the office in 1996 and is only the second GA stated clerk elected since Presbyterian reunion in 1983.

At Louisville Seminary, Kirkpatrick will teach up to two courses per year in areas of his expertise, including the ecumenical church, Presbyterian studies, the global church, Presbyterian polity and governance, con-

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New Hymnal Committee Now Forming!

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, in consultation with the Presbyterian Association of Musicians and the Office of Theology and Worship, is currently accepting applications for the new Hymnal Committee. Persons with a deep love for the song of the church, who can think theologically about music and musically about theology, who have experience in worship planning and leadership, who are able to work collegially, and who are able to make a commitment to attend all meetings of the Hymnal Committee are encouraged to apply. Candidates under the age of twenty-five are encouraged to apply.

All application forms and completed reference forms must be received by PPC before July 11, 2008. The Hymnal Committee will be named by August 15, 2008, and the first meeting of the Hymnal Committee is scheduled for September 22 and 23, 2008, in Louisville. The Hymnal Committee is expected to meet four times each year over the next four or five years.

You can find a copy of the application and reference form at www.ppcbooks.com. Please mail your completed form to Hymnal Editor David Eicher at Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 100 Witherspoon Street, Room 2001, Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396; e-mail it to deicher@presbypub.com; or fax it to 502-569-5113.



**PRESBYTERIAN
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gregational leadership and ministry, and practical theology.

"We at Louisville Seminary are deeply grateful for Cliff's wise, humble, and unselfish service in the PCUSA and among ecumenical and Reformed communities throughout the world. We look forward to his new and promising relationship with our dedicated faculty and students," stated LPTS President Dean K. Thompson.

Kirkpatrick's appointment will run three years and will also allow him to offer his services in Doctor of Ministry degree seminars and in Lifelong Learning events, which address the ecumenical and global church, middle governing body leadership, and church leadership. Kirkpatrick said he welcomes the opportunity for interaction and conversation with faculty and students and of becoming an active member of the seminary community.

The complete story and photo may be seen at: www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08180.htm.

'SOUPER BOWL' SCORES RECORD \$9.5 MILLION

Souper Bowl of Caring officials say Presbyterian churches collected more than \$1 million in last month's annual anti-hunger campaign.

As of March 5, organizers say, 2,356 Presbyterian

churches nationwide had raised \$1,001,523 — and collections haven't been fully reported. The total marks the second straight year that Presbyterian collections broke the \$1 million mark.

So far some 14,654 organizations and congregations from a variety of U.S. religious denominations have reported collecting a record \$9.5 million, according to Souper Bowl officials.

Donations from Presbyterians made up more than 11% of the total, the second most contributions behind the Roman Catholic Church. The PCUSA had the second-highest number of churches participating, behind the United Methodist Church.

The Souper Bowl program was inspired by a prayer the Rev. Brad Smith offered at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, S.C., on Super Bowl Sunday in 1988.

Since then the campaign has raised nearly \$50 million for charities like food banks and soup kitchens. Participating groups phone in totals, then send donations to charities of their choice.

Last year more than 14,000 organizations and congregations raised \$8.1 million in all 50 states for the Souper Bowl of Caring. The total was up from \$5 million in 2006.

More than 2,450 Presbyterian congregations took part in Souper Bowl 2007, gener-

ating \$1.1 million. It was the first time that Presbyterian collections broke the \$1 million mark.

About 2,387 Presbyterian churches participated in Souper Bowl 2006, generating \$921,616.

So far this year's top-contributing PCUSA congregations are Sunrise Presbyterian Church in Salina, Kan., with \$25,869, followed by Second Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis with \$24,483 and Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church in Houston, \$14,926.

In another phase of the Souper Bowl program, young people are urged to serve a charity in their community on Super Bowl weekend — a task that more than 12,000 youths performed this year, including 1,966 Presbyterian youth.

Overall, 277,678 youth participated in the 2008 Souper Bowl of Caring in some capacity, including 19,024 Presbyterian youth.

Organizers encourage churches that have not yet reported 2008 Souper Bowl totals or wish to register for the 2009 campaign, to log on or call 800-358-SOUP (7687).

This story may be seen here: www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08178.htm.

www.Presbyweb.com

Daily News for Presbyterians

For News that has an Impact on Ministry...

To make sure you understand what their up to, *Presbyweb* offers daily PCUSA news, from left to right, official and unofficial.

For those wanting national church news, *Presbyweb's* general section deals with all churches in the U.S. and around the world, and the churches' interaction with the cultures.

As is sometimes said, *Presbyweb* is an adult web site. A publication for people who like to think for themselves, based on being fully informed on what's "out there."

Recently, *Presbyweb* asked the four candidates for Moderator of the upcoming 218th General Assembly to answer one question:

"What is the Gospel?"

Carl Mazza, Bruce Reyes-Chow, Roger Shoemaker and Bill Teng's answers have been posted on *Presbyweb*. Find their answers and more in the archives, at: www.presbyweb.com/2008/Archive/0401.htm.

How are you doing on your "One A Week?" It's not too late to start.

When Renovations Go Bad: Prepare for the Unexpected.



by George Abadie of
[Your Church, March/April 2008](#)

Renovation projects can be full of surprises. Some are welcome; many—such as discovering asbestos, lead paint, or mold—become unhappy discoveries. Surprises like these can drain a budget and seriously disrupt building plans.

With careful planning though, you can identify problem areas before you begin and minimize the cost and inconvenience of fixing them. The following tips will help avert some common renovation problems.

BRING IN PROFESSIONALS RIGHT FROM THE START

Long before you begin your project, hire an environmental inspector to perform a site survey and test for possible hazardous materials. This type of inspector has the ability to check for specific hazards that the naked eye can't see. He will take samples to test for lead paint and asbestos and will even bring in an X-ray machine to test for hidden mold. This inspector will

also test your soil, as well as the strength of your concrete and other building materials.

You should also bring in an architect or contractor who has expertise in renovations to perform his own study. This type of professional can identify any potential problem areas just from researching the materials that were popular during the year the structure was built. He can also find any out-of-date wiring or structural abnormalities such as a weak roof or hollow walls.

It is important that you call upon both types of professionals to assess your situation prior to beginning your renovation, as they perform separate but equally important functions.

PREPARE FINANCIALLY

Several years ago I was in charge of the construction team renovating and restoring St. Mary's Cathedral, built in the early 1900s as the archdiocese's showpiece in Miami, Fla. The day before we were to begin, a site inspection revealed that the cathedral's dome was infiltrated with asbestos. It was further discovered that some of the ceiling and bathroom tiles also contained asbestos. The repair costs for these items alone totaled approximately \$500,000.

This example illustrates why it is so critical to reserve

some money for any necessary but unplanned repairs. The bottom line is that you just don't know what issues will turn up, and being financially prepared will put you in a much stronger position to deal with the situation.

SPEND UP FRONT TO SAVE LATER

As expensive as the St. Mary's case may seem, it would have been a lot more so had the church administrators not done their due diligence beforehand. The cost to do the site assessments was minimal (approximately \$5,000) but saved the church a considerable amount of money. Because the asbestos was detected before construction on the dome began, we were able to keep that area within a contained environment so the rest of the church could still be used.

However, if we had already knocked down the ceiling in the dome for the renovation, asbestos particles would have been released into the air and the entire church would have had to be shut down. This would have crippled the church's ability to operate, creating a huge loss in revenue. In addition, the situation would have become an emergency case, resulting in a large expenditure due to people working around the clock to fix the problem.

The lesson here is that any upfront expense to identify potential problem areas is minimal compared to the expense of halting a project to contain the area and remove the problem.

NEGOTIATE THE FEES

If you are hiring an architect or contractor to oversee your job anyway, you can negotiate his survey fee into the total job cost. And, if it only requires a few hours of work, he might even forego the survey fee altogether in order to secure the entire job. Again, this really is a minimal upfront cost, but can result in huge savings down the road.

There is no guarantee that even a trained professional will identify every problem situation before-hand, but site surveys will minimize the unexpected and promote a smooth renovation process.

George Abadie is president of Miami, Florida-based Seacoast Construction, Inc. He can be reached at yceditor@yourchurch.net.

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Synod of Lakes and Prairies Update

IOWA GERIATRIC NURSE MISSION WORKER SET TO GO TO EGYPT

The Presbytery of Des Moines received confirmation Feb. 19 of the approved geriatric nurse mission co-worker position of **Denise England, First Presbyterian Church, Audubon, Ia.**, in Egypt. She is scheduled for deployment in July. According to the announcement, \$70,114 is still needed to assure complete fulfillment of her 3-year term. More about England, her calling and ways to contribute can be found at www.pcusa.org/joiningheartsandhands/calledtoserve/deniseengland.htm.

ARSON SUSPECTED IN IOWA CHURCH FIRE

A Saturday, March 8, fire severely damaged First Presbyterian Church in Monticello, Ia., located within the

Presbytery of East Iowa. Arson is suspected. The Cedar Rapids Gazette opened its story as follows: "Members of the congregation of First Presbyterian Church, 211 W. First St., will hold their 9:30 a.m. fellowship and 10 a.m. worship at the United Church after a Saturday morning fire damaged their church. Afterward, the church board will get together to discuss their next step. "I'm in shock," said the Rev. Al Polito, who has been pastor at the Presbyterian church 17 years. "It's something you always think about and see on the news, but you don't expect it to be your church." A fire recovery fund has been established and contributions can be addressed to Fire Recovery Fund, 211 W. First St., Monticello, IA 52310-1451.

This complete story can be found at www.gazetteonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080308/NEWS/797226733/0/FRONTPAGE.

HOMESTEAD ELDER BECOMES GA MODERATOR CANDIDATE

Elder Roger Shoemaker, a member of Southern Heights Presbyterian Church in Lincoln, Neb., has become the fourth candidate to stand for moderator of the upcoming 218th General Assembly of the PCUSA. Shoemaker, 74, was endorsed Feb. 16 by Homestead Presbytery. The only elder in the race, he joins the Rev. Bill Teng of National Capital Presbytery, the Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow of San Francisco Presbytery and the Rev. Carl Mazza of New Castle Presbytery as a candidate for the denomination's highest elected office.

The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08158.htm.

SUMMER REGIONAL COMMUNICATORS EVENT SET IN ILLINOIS

The Presbyterian Communicators Network will conduct a summer regional conference at Stronghold Conference Center in Oregon, Ill., Aug. 25-27. The event will feature interactive workshops, stimulating plenary, reflective worship and lively conversation with others who have similar communication responsibilities. The fee is \$250, and includes all programs, group meals and two nights lodging. Commuter rates and scholarships are also available. For details, go to: www.pcusa.org/comnet or contact: **Kim Coulter, Des Moines Presbytery**, 515-276-4991, pbcommunication@qwest.net.

Catholic Peace Ministry Hosts Dingman Dinner

Catholic Peace Ministry, an independent faith based peace and justice organization based in Des Moines, is hosting its 13th Annual Bishop Maurice J. Dingman Peace Award Dinner, Saturday, April 12, at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church, 510 First St. in Ankeny.

Held in memory and in honor of Maurice Dingman, the late bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Des Moines revered for his commitment to justice, peace and equality, the

Dingman Dinner has grown into a tradition.

The 2008 keynote speaker is Elizabeth "Liz" McAlister, writer, artist, mother, and long-time peace activist, who will address the question, "What is it about 'Thou Shalt Not Kill!' that you don't understand?"

Each year the Bishop Dingman Peace Award is presented to a person or community in Iowa. This year the Des Moines area JustFaith group will be honored.

The event begins with a reception at 6 p.m., dinner follows at 6:45. Reservations and a \$35 donation are requested for the dinner and reception (515-255-8114) but the keynote address and award ceremony beginning at 7:30 p.m. is open to the public.

Please call Catholic Peace Ministry, 515-255-8114, for more information or to arrange for an interview with Liz McAlister.

Two Tickets Available

The Presbytery's Social Ministries Task Force has two tickets to the Bishop Dingman Peace Award evening at OLIH Catholic Church in Ankeny Saturday evening.

If you would like to attend the event, contact **Moderator Nancy Lister-Settle**, 515-992-4127, 515-992-3639, neitherthecat@aol.com. With advance notice, you'll be able to pick up the tickets at the door.

Living with Grief®: Children and Adolescents



On April 16, this live teleconference will be shown via satellite and webcast from Noon – 3:30 p.m. in the Virginia Thompson Auditorium, 1200 Pleasant St., Des Moines. The moderator is Frank Sesno, professor at The George Washington University and CNN special correspondent.

The event is hosted by: Iowa Health Hospice and The Pastoral Care Services Department at Iowa Methodist, Lutheran and Blank Children's Hospital, and is followed by discussion with a local panel of medical, counseling and education professionals. Cost is \$25. HFA's 2008 teleconference focuses on the experience of grieving children and adolescents and the ways that hospice professionals, educators and counselors, parents, social workers, physicians, funeral directors, and clergy can best offer support. The teleconference and accompanying book will examine the newest theories and practices, providing hands-on ideas for support groups. CEU hours are available for nurses. To register, contact the Pastoral Care Services, Iowa Health-Des Moines at 515-241-6411 or BredbeSD@ihs.org.

Nishioka to be Keynote at IRMS Conference

Did you miss hearing Rodger Nishioka because you couldn't get to San Diego for the 2008 APCE (Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators) Conference? Nishioka will be the keynote speaker at Iowa Religious Media Services' second *RE:IMAGE* conference on Saturday, Aug. 16, in Des Moines.

"Pay attention to trends," Nishioka advised the Presbyterian Communicators Network last August. "Fads are what toss us... but trends are worthy of your attention."

A vital voice in today's Presbyterian Church, Nishioka's focus on youth and young adults and why they leave the church led him to inter-

view young people in their 20s and 30s all across the country – including in the Des Moines area. In his keynote, he will share his insights into how to approach young people in this Reformation-like age, as society shifts in its allegiance to mainline Christianity.

You may gather information about Nishioka from web sites, but nothing will compare to hearing him in person – and having the opportunity to ask him questions during the afternoon break-out sessions following the keynote.

In addition to Nishioka, you'll have the opportunity to explore with other forward thinking experts how to cap-

ture attention and present effective worship and educational program with digital technology, how to re-energize volunteer Christian educators, how to get young children involved in prayer, how to make music magical, and more.

For complete information and breaking news, visit the Iowa Religious Media Services web site at www.irms.org. There you'll find detailed information about presenters as they are added, a registration form (once all are finalized), maps, and all the information you need to attend the conference and to walk into fall 2008 enlightened and energized.

May 20 Meeting on Older Adult Ministry

OAM THINKING AHEAD For the next Presbytery Meeting on May 20 the emphasis will be on Older Adult Ministries!

Being good Presbyterians, most likely all of our churches have some type of program for the older generation.

Write up a bit of history of how your church functions in this area, and send it to **Kim Coulter**, pbycommunication@qwest.net. We all can use fresh ideas that have worked, as well as ideas that didn't work so well.

The May 20 Presbytery Meeting will be at First Presbyterian Church in

Newton and noon meal will be served across the street in the **United Presbyterian Church**.

Watch for information on where the Nursing Facility displays will be set up, and a representative to answer any questions about their facility. They all are similar, yet each is unique in its way. All are Presbyterian supported.

Look into the website www.PAHSA.org for more information on the facilities.

TOUR IDEAS FOR YOUR GROUP

Our area is geographically close to four of the Presbyterian Nursing Facilities in Iowa. **Calvin Community**

in Des Moines, Mill Pond in Ankeny, the U.P. Home in Washington, and Highland Ridge in Williamsburg. Each facility offers the same care, but each is individual in doing so. Two facilities a little further away are Presbyterian Village in Ackley, and Bethany Home in Dubuque.

Is there a 'ministerial association' in your town? If so, contact the group and find if there is interest in having a seminar of interest to all. Possibly the 6-hour older driver's seminar by AARP, or a shorter time of Advanced Directives and Wills. Let your church needs guide the topic.

Presbytery Student is Young Adult Volunteer

CONGRATULATIONS!

Michael Sinklier, member of **Westminster Presbyterian Church in Des Moines** and co-director of the 6-7th grader's Group (Michael also represented the **Presbytery** at the 2007 Presbyterian Youth Triennium in Indiana), recently applied to become a Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Michael received the good news that he has been accepted into the program!

The Young Adult Volunteer Program offers exciting opportunities in Christian service for young adults (19 to 30 years of age). The program has 18 sites in the United States and abroad,

and requires a commitment of one academic year. Young Adult Volunteers serve in communities of need. The job descriptions for the volunteers depend both on the needs of the community and the skills of the Young Adult Volunteer. In their placements, volunteers work with a church or organization as well as develop Christian community and meet regularly for prayer and Bible study with other Young Adult Volunteers. Although specific activities and information are unique to each site, all volunteers will receive on-site orientation, work closely with mentors in the program, and have an opportunity to integrate the experience at an end-of-term conference.

Michael will attend a placement event in Louisville, Kentucky, in late April to determine where his ministry as a YAV will take him. His first choices are Peru and Guatemala.

Funding of this program is shared by the PCUSA, the volunteer, and his/her supporting congregation and presbytery. Michael must raise \$10,000 before August 29, the day the YAVs depart for their mission locations.

If you would like to help Michael in this endeavor, your donations are most welcome. Make checks payable to **Presbytery of Des Moines** and write "Michael Sinklier" on the memo line, or call the Presbytery office.

CE Directors and Youth Workers, Help is Needed!

Congregational Ministries Publishing is looking for six curriculum writers for the new cycle of *We Believe* for older and younger youth. If you are interested in applying, please request a copy of the application packet from the Congregational Ministries Publishing of the General Assembly Council of PCUSA. Contact Kirstie Johnson at 888-728-7228, ext. 5037 or e-mail kirstie.johnson@pcusa.org.

We are very excited about our new cycle of curriculum and look forward to hearing more about it in the near future and about ways you can be involved with our development process!

Invitation to See Lamplighter Touring Choir Perform in Ottumwa



The **First Presbyterian Church in Ottumwa**

will host a concert on Sunday, May 4 during the 9:30 a.m. worship service. A Sunday afternoon concert will take place at the church at 1:30 p.m. The Waynesburg University Lamplighter Touring Choir is comprised of 28 members including faculty and students under the direction of Anne Phipps, instructor of music at Waynesburg University and director of the Lamplighter Touring Choir. The tour includes nine concerts through Indiana, Iowa, Missouri and Tennessee and the Choir will perform a wide range of pieces both classic and contemporary.

Located 50 miles south of Pittsburgh, Pa., in southwestern Pennsylvania, Waynesburg University is a private, comprehensive Christian university offering doctoral, graduate and undergraduate programs in more than 70 academic concentrations. For details, contact **Gail Masinda** at the **First Presbyterian Church** at 641-684-5465.

Community Resources Directory for Polk County Available Online

You know that the referral you make for a war veteran suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is probably not the same referral you should make for a teenage girl suffering from an eating disorder, but how do you know what the options are?

Do you or your staff waste time on the telephone trying to make a referral only to be told the patient/prisoner/student/parishioner doesn't qualify?

The Healthy Polk 2010 Mental Health Workgroup wants to alert pastors to a comprehensive resource directory available online at www.vnsdm.org (click on "Links" and click on "Community Resource Directory.") This resource is regularly updated by Visiting Nurse Services and includes listings for mental health services as well as other areas of need such as food pantries, health care, housing, dentists, optometrists, etc. It is free! You may view online or download as a pdf. This referral to this site is being provided as a community service under a Polk County mandate and is not a project of VNS of Des Moines.



Personal Hygiene Pantry Needs You!

The CROSS Ministries Personal Hygiene Pantry is urgently in need of donations of supplies.

We have families coming to us every day asking for basic personal hygiene and household cleaning items that make it possible to go to work and school. Imagine the challenge a parent faces if they must

choose between buying food for the family or buying laundry soap so that they have clean work clothes. We are in need of: toilet tissue, paper towel, kleenex, shampoo, deodorant, laundry soap, floor cleaner, disposable razors, diapers and feminine hygiene products. Any donations would be greatly

appreciated. If you have items, drop them off at Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church or contact Dr. Roberta Victor at

515-279-8877,

rjvictor@msn.com

CROSS Ministries Update

In the beginning of March I asked the **Presbytery of Des Moines** office to send out an e-mail request for personal hygiene and cleaning items since our pantry shelves were growing quite bare. (See ad in left column.) The faith community came through for us and I am happy to report that we have been able to meet the needs of many more families than in previous months. We have also been able to provide larger quantities (e.g. an entire package of toilet tissue versus a roll or two). Another blessing that has occurred this month is that we have been accepted as a member of the Food Bank of Iowa. Although CROSS Ministries does not have a food pantry (only a personal hygiene pantry) we can purchase some dry goods, when available, for \$0.14 per pound. The items they have are random, but we recently purchased 13 cases of diapers, 4 cartons of deodorant, 1 carton of tub and tile cleaner, and 4 cartons of shampoo for a total of

\$48.16! The majority of our personal hygiene pantry items will continue to come from the faith community but what a blessing to be able to supplement our supplies with such reduced costs.

Now, with the onset of April, comes another challenge.

The end of March brings an end to the Winter Moratorium Law that prevents utility companies from disconnecting the services of low-income households who have not been able to keep up with the high costs of heating. Most of the families who were protected by this law were in households that qualified under the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Still others were protected from utility disconnections during the winter months as a result of Iowa's cold weather rules that state that while temperatures remain 20 degrees Fahrenheit or colder, the utilities must be left on. With this year's exceptionally cold winter, utility company credit departments were at a stand-

still. As of April 2, all of that comes to an end as the disconnect notices go out to those who have been struggling the hardest.

While the majority of the households served by CROSS Ministries receive help with rent, deposits, or mortgage costs, April is a month in which utility concerns will be overwhelming. The extremely cold winter weather has brought higher utility bills at a time when many CROSS families are experiencing layoffs due to a slow economy. While some households will be able to establish utility payment arrangements, still others may not be eligible and will end up turning to social service programs, such as CROSS Ministries, for financial help.

During the next few critical months, please keep these families in your thoughts and prayers, as well as with CROSS Ministries, as we struggle to meet their most basic of survival needs.

*– Dr. Roberta Victor,
Director, CROSS Ministries*

Prayers and Concerns

Please keep in your prayers the following:

Margaret Welsh of **Heartland Presbyterian Church in Clive**, is our Synod's representative on the PW Churchwide Coordinating Team (CCT) and was attend-

ing a Child Advocacy hearing at the UN when she fell outside her hotel. She continued with her responsibilities in New York and went to a CCT meeting in Virginia that followed. After returning home, it has been discovered that Margaret broke her pelvis.

She is using a walker at this point and not able to drive. However, she does plan on being at the PW Spring Gathering where she will be speaking on "Justice and Peace", as well as being recognized as a past moderator of our Presbytery's PW.

Employment Opportunities

Program Coordinator, Central Presbyterian Church, Des Moines, Ia.

Position open for a main office program Coordinator with a focus on member recruitment and assimilation. The ideal candidate will develop a thorough awareness of the life and programs of the church; possess strong human relations skill, a level of computer proficiency and the ability to develop creative internal and external publicity. Balance of time will be spent in supporting general office responsibilities. Approximately 28 hours/week Monday through Friday. For more info contact **Rev. Jim Wallace** at 515-279-3759 ext. 12 or view job description at www.dmcentralpresbyterian.com.

Office Manager – First Presbyterian Church, Newton, Ia.

Opening for a part-time Office Manager. Duties would include serving as receptionist and secretary to the minister, as well as data management and financial accounting. A more complete description will be available during interview. Hours would be flexible. Vacation time and paid holidays offered, but no medical benefits. The person needs to be patient, reliable and possess good listening skills. The position also requires a high level of efficiency, flexibility and discretion. If interested,

contact **Rev. Tiare Mathison-Bowie**, First Presbyterian Church, Newton, Iowa 50208.

Youth Director – First Presbyterian Church, Mason City, Ia.

Applicants should have a passion for youth ministry, a minimum of one year experience in youth ministries, and a bachelor's degree or equivalent at an accredited college or university is preferred. Applicants should have theological understanding compatible with that of the PCUSA. Ability to work responsibly, to establish and grow Christian relationships, possess the ability and experience to work effectively and positively with parents and adult volunteers. If interested in applying for this full-time position, send a current resume, a minimum of three references and a cover letter. Send to: First Presbyterian Church, 100 S. Pierce, Mason City, IA 50401 or e-mail firstpresbych@msn.com.

Questions may be directed to 641-424-4273. To learn more about the congregation and

to find a full job description and Youth Ministry Mission Statement, check out their website at:

www.firstpresbymc.com.

Summer Intern—Southwest Regional Partnership

Don't forget the summer ministry intern opportunity for 10-weeks with six churches of the **Southwest Regional Partnership**. Contact **Rev. Tim Maxa**, 641-333-4214, lenoxupchurch@frontier.net or **Rev. Ken Rummer**, 641-322-4917, rev.rummer@mchsi.com.

Attend Style Show Luncheon in Johnston

In need of a pick-me-up to get ready for spring? A Style Show and Salad Luncheon will be held Saturday, April 26 at 10 a.m. at **St. Paul Presbyterian Church**, 6426 Merle Hay Rd, **Johnston, Ia.**

Bring a friend and your favorite salad to share. Fashions courtesy of *T.J. Maxx*. Contact **Lisa Stange** at 515-251-7241 or stange@mchsi.com.

FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO

A Documentary Film by Daniel Karlslake

This award-winning movie offers healing, clarity and understanding to anyone caught in the crosshairs of Scripture and sexual identity.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11
6:30 P.M. DOORS OPEN
7 P.M. SCREENING
WESTMINSTER HALL
FREE ADMISSION

With insights from many respected voices, including:



Former House Majority Leader Richard Geishardt



Bishop Desmond Tutu



Rabbi Steve Greenberg



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Attend Annual PW Spring Gathering, April 12

The Presbyterian's Presbyterian Women will



meet April 12 at **First United Presbyterian Church in Winterset**. Registration is at 8:45 a.m. with opening worship at 9:30 a.m. Closing worship is at 2 p.m. "Catch the Wind" is the theme and they will celebrate the 20th anniversary of PW as it is known today. Speakers will be **Jodi Tymeson**, a delegate to the Iowa legislature; **Margaret Welsh**, representative to the Churchwide Coordinating Team, and **Denise England**, designated missionary to Egypt. Past moderators will be recognized, and the newly elected Coordinating Team will be installed. Attendees are encouraged to bring personal hygiene items for CROSS Ministries pantry. Offering recipients will be Denise England and CROSS Ministries. Reservations must be made by April 9. Contact Ruth Reed, at 515-462-2233. Cost of the meal is \$5.

Joint Maundy Thursday Services a Success!

THREE OTTUMWA CHURCHES
The members and friends of the three **Presbyterian Churches of Ottumwa (East End, First, and Westminister)** worshipped together on Maundy Thursday, 2008. Sharing lay and clergy leadership from all three churches, worshippers heard scripture recalling the



last night of Jesus' life on earth; were gifted with six readers portraying significant people in Jesus' life at the time of his death (his mother; Peter; Mary Magdalene; Thomas; Martha; and Legion); offered a joint choir in praise to God; and celebrated the Sacrament of

Communion by intinction. The offering received was forwarded to the *One Great Hour of Sharing*. This was

the fourth joint worship time these congregations have shared in the past 18 months.

HWY 2 CHURCHES MEET IN ALLERTON

The congregations of the **Allerton, Centerville, and Leon** Presbyterian Churches observed Maundy Thursday together. They gathered at the **Allerton First Presbyterian Church** for a 6:30 p.m. potluck supper and fellowship, followed by a worship service. The **Rev. Jack DePond of Leon** gave the message, and the **Rev. Ross Blount** of Allerton officiated at communion. This was

Marriage Retreat Experience in Ankeny

What's a strong marriage worth? The weekend of June 6-8, **Ankeny Presbyterian Church** is sponsoring a marriage retreat in conjunction with National Marriage Encounter. The emphasis of Marriage Encounter is on personal reflection and communication between husband and wife. There are no group discussions. The content is aimed at benefiting marriages regardless of whether you're newlyweds or have been married over 50 years.

The team of couples who lead the M.E. process are volunteers who have found Marriage Encounter benefi-

cial to their own marriages. Team members share experiences from their own lives and suggest techniques and questions that will help you reflect and write personal thoughts which you will share only with your spouse through dialogue.

The weekend will be held at a local hotel, with participants staying at the hotel. This will be time for you to focus on your marriage, so don't plan on scheduling anything else during the weekend. The program starts Friday at 8 p.m. and ends Sunday at 4:30 p.m. A small, non-refundable fee of \$25 is charged to confirm your reservation. At the end

of the weekend you will be asked to make a free-will donation based on the actual cost of the weekend. However, no couple is expected to pay more than they feel the weekend is worth or can afford.

This event is open to the public and will be limited to no more than 15 couples, so please get your registration form in soon. Brochures and information are available by contacting Rich Holst (Iowa Marriage Encounter) at 515-278-0298, r.holst@mchsi.com or **Rev. David Braak**, pastor@ankenypresbyterian.org. Information about National Marriage Encounter is available at: <http://marriage-encounter.org>.

Congregational Connection

March 13, 2008

Dear Covenant Friends,

Covenant Presbyterian Church in West Des Moines

has long taken the position of outreach to our community and especially to those who are most at risk. The current Head Start program, housed in our church building, provides an important support to families in need and children who might otherwise grow slower in their educational development. Research indicates at-risk children going through a Head Start program have decreases in grade retention and special education placement and measurable increased growth in social skills, emotional development and school achievements.

Following many meetings and discussions with Drake University's Head Start Director, Georgia Sheriff, and planning with church committees like Property and Christian Education, the Session voted at its March meeting to approve expansion of the Head Start program at Covenant Presbyterian Church to now include a toddler program.

From Drake's press release to be distributed soon, "The new classroom will help meet the high demand for child development programs for two-year olds on the west side of Polk County.

There will be morning and afternoon sessions offered year round...."

The class rooms for the Early Head Start Toddler program will be the currently unoccupied E-9 and E-10 in the building wing already housing Head Start. The wall dividing the two rooms will be removed, and capital investments of \$50,000 will be done such as adding a kitchenette, children's sinks, cabinetry, and possible replacement of egress windows in the room. Of significant importance will also be asbestos abatement of the floor and new flooring installed. In addition, this new program increases Covenant's cash flow up to \$7,000 annually.

The long-discussed use of the large room immediately off the sanctuary is now finalized to be a new church nursery where Early Head Start will install a bathroom with two stools for use by the EHS program during the week and the church's nursery use on Wednesday evenings, Sunday mornings and other occasions required by the church.

There is some cost to the church concerning the rearrangement of room use. The Session voted to provide up to \$5,000 for enhancements to the new nursery room which will include installation of an adult-size sink, asbestos

abatement of the floor, new flooring and any cabinetry needed. Having a child-friendly facility close to the sanctuary will be very supportive of young families and visitors who attend morning worship services or who participate in Wednesday evening programs.

Radon testing will be completed by the end of March, a sewer service study is being done and construction and timetables are being worked out for the summer.

The issue of whether radon abatement of either the Head Start wing or the entire church structure is still to be decided by the Session following testing.

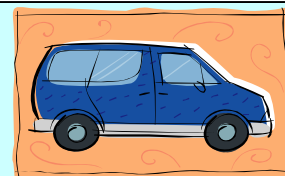
Very soon you should read in *The Register* or hear over television this important Covenant/Head Start announcement affecting families in need and children at risk. While this letter can not begin to answer all of your questions, a copy of the floor plan for the renovations will be available from the church office for your review.

Please feel free to speak with me, Georgia Sheriff, or any of the elders about this newest development in the mission of Covenant Presbyterian Church.

— *In service to Christ,*
Rev. Jan Scott, Pastor
Covenant Presbyterian Church, West Des Moines

Attention Des Moines Area Churches

We have a request from a church in a neighboring presbytery. One of their members is moving to the Des Moines area and is looking for a Presbyterian church that has a contemporary worship service. If that church also has an AA group meeting there, that would be extra helpful. If this request fits you, please contact **Rev. Phil Barrett** in the Presbytery Office at 515-276-4991 or pby1@qwest.net.



For Sale:

1990 Ford Club Wagon XL, F350, handicap accessible van with 56,000 miles. Has 138" wheel base, overdrive transmission, power windows and door locks, am-fm radio, new tires (LT 235-85-R16), front and rear air conditioning and heating. Back door wheelchair lift, will hold up to 3 wheelchairs. Side door has an electric fold out stair step. Well maintained. Asking \$3,800 OBO. Contact: Barbara J. Keninger, CEO/Administrator, The Presbyterian Village, 502 Butler St., Ackley, Iowa 50601, bkeninger@presbyterianvillage.com or 641-847-3531.

Presbytery of Des Moines
 Phone: 515-276-4991
 Fax: 515-276-7596
 E-mail: pbymcommunication@qwest.net
 Editor: Kim Coulter
 General Presbyter:
 Rev. Philip W. Barrett
 Office Manager: Betty Dyer
 Coordinator of Sudanese Ministries:
 Rev. Goanar J. Chol
 Hunger Action Enabler:
 Nancy Lister-Settle
 Mission Co-Worker to Egypt:
 Denise England

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PRESBYTERY OF DES MOINES
 OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)
 2400 - 86th Street, Suite 20
 Urbandale, IA 50322-4306

Serve the Church this Summer: Opportunities for Young Adults and College Students



College students interested in serving the church should

apply now for 2008 summer service opportunities available through the National Volunteers Office. Participants will explore Christian vocation and experience diverse cultures as they work at Presbyterian camp or conference centers or serve local communities across the United States.

Go online to: www.pcusa.org/nvo/summerservice/summerservice.htm.



The Young Adult Volunteer Program is an opportunity for persons

between the ages of 19 and 30 to explore their call to the work of Jesus Christ. Explore YAV opportunities within the United States. Go online to: www.pcusa.org/nvo/youngadultvolunteers/yav.htm.

Don't forget the summer ministry intern opportunity for 10-weeks with six churches of the **Southwest Regional Partnership**.

Contact **Rev. Tim Maxa**, 641-333-4214, lenoxupchurch@frontier.net or **Rev. Ken Rummer**, 641-322-4917, rev.rummer@mchsi.com.



This leadership

development program provides young adults with the opportunity to experience the expression of mission at the General Assembly level of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Young adults who are 20 to 35 years of age are eligible. See information provided on each opportunity for specific requirements. Go online to: www.pcusa.org/nvo/youngadultinterns/yai.htm.

**HOW ARE YOU DOING
 WITH YOUR
 "ONE A WEEK?"**