

The Wider Circle

Presbytery of Des Moines 515-276-4991 / June 2006 Vol. 2, Issue 6



**PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH (USA)**

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

Of Special Interest

Kirkpatrick's Top Ten
Overtures

217th GA Update

Mission Updates

Contents

Men Of the Church	2
Events Calendar	2
PW Gathering	3
Synod School	3
AMOS Gets PC(USA) Grant	4
PC(USA) Communicators Conference	4
Prayers and Concerns	5
PDA Reports Available	5
Congregational Connection	6
RAGBRAI Update	6
SC Regional Partnership Celebration	6
Presbytery Happenings	8
Transformation Conference and Moments	8
Employment Opportunities	9
Kids Against Hunger	9
Sudanese Ministries	9
CROSS Ministries	10
CE Funds Available	10
El Salvador Update	11
217 th GA Update	12

Stated Clerk Kirkpatrick's Top Ten issues for General Assembly

Before each General Assembly, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shares what he considers to be the top ten issues coming to the assembly, based primarily on overtures that have been submitted and his travels and conversations with Presbyterians across the denomination. Here is Clifton Kirkpatrick's non-prioritized list for this year's assembly:

- Justice and peace in the Middle East
- Building bridges in the Presbyterian family
- Significant anniversaries for women in ministry
- Financial and organizational concerns
- Confirmation of a new executive director of the General Assembly Council
- Economic justice concerns
- Peace, unity, and purity of the church
- Constitutional revision
- Agency and permanent committee reviews
- G-6.0106b

To read more on this article and other issues about the overtures go online to:
www.pcusa.org/ga217/newsandphotos/top10.htm
or www.pres-outlook.com/tabid/792/Article/1690/Default.aspx.

Phil's Corner



June 15-22 is an important week in the life of our denomi-

nation. Our General Assembly (GA) gathers in Birmingham, Alabama, for its biennial meeting.

Information, connecting with others, learning more about the denomination, fellowship, worship and, oh yes, making decisions that impact all of us in the Presbyterian Church (USA) are all part of this lively and

active week. People come from all over the world to experience GA.

Added to the excitement of this coming together is the fact that we will be meeting concurrently with two sister denominations: the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.

It will be fun and interesting to have all these Presbyterians under one roof, including the

Sunday evening worship service. I look forward to the opportunity to attend assembly meetings for all these reasons.

Some people say that this will be an important GA as some of the issues coming before it could have a major impact on the future of our denomination. Adding to the other major items is the injection of the long-awaited report from the Peace, Unity and Purity (PUP) Task Force. Those of us attending the May

continued on page 5



Men of the Church Sunday is June 18

Designated as the Sunday that is usually recognized as "Father's Day." Men of the Church Sunday was an intentional act of the General Assembly to recognize the contributions of men, but not be limited only to those who have children, but to be inclusive of single men, stepparents and men who are unable to be with their children on this day. Regardless of their family situation, all men of the Church have been called by God to share their time, talents, spirit and energies in fulfilling their call to be disciples of Jesus Christ. To learn more about Men of the Church, go online to:

www.pcusa.org/men/mensunday.htm

Events Calendar

2006

June 15-21 – *Face-to-Face Event*, Birmingham Convention Center, Birmingham, Ala. Church Leadership Connection (CLC) is sponsoring a Face-to-Face opportunity during General Assembly, open to all PC(USA) clergy and lay professionals who have an active PIF in Church Leadership Connection, and to churches, entities, or organizations with open positions for which there is an active CIF. This includes educator, interim, and governing body staff positions. For details, go to: www.pcusa.org/clc/facetoface.htm. To register, contact Shirley McDade, Sr. Administrative Assistant, at 888-728-7228, ext. 5731, or smcdade@ctr.pcusa.org.

June 15-24 – *217th General Assembly*, Birmingham, Ala. After Birmingham, the next two Assemblies will be in San Jose, Ca., in 2008, and in Minneapolis in 2010.

June 21-29 – *Small Church Clergy Conference*, Alexandria Va., All expenses paid. Sponsored by Virginia Theological Seminary's Center for Lifetime Theological Education. Applications due by Dec. 15.

June 25 – 150th Anniversary of **First Presbyterian Church in Chariton**, 10 a.m. worship

and potluck, festivities to follow.

July 3 & 4 – **Independence Day (Holiday)** Des Moines Presbytery office is closed.

July 3-9 – Peacemaking Week, 2006 Ghost Ranch Seminars, *Guide Our Feet in the Way of Peace: Nurturing the Journey for the Long Haul*. Registration is \$230. For information, go to: www.ghostranch.org/catalog/product_info.php/cPath/93/products_id/333.

July 5-8 – *The Hope of the Church: Celebrating Common Ground*, Montreat Conference Center. Join others in dialogue with church moderators, seminary presidents, national leaders, seasoned pastors, elders, and deacons, as well as young pastors and clergy just entering the pastorate, as we reflect on and strive to discern our Christian identity in and for the 21st century. Cost is \$175; Auditor's fee for panel discussions on Thursday and Friday is \$75. To register go online to: www.montreat.org/2006_hop_e_of_the_church.htm.

July 5-9 – *Disciples: Milestones Along the Journey*, 2006 Christian Education Conference, Montreat Conference Center. Conference fee is \$220. For more info, call: 800-572-

2257, ext. 339 or www.montreat.org/2006_CE.htm.

July 7-8 – Promise Keepers event, *Unleashed, Releasing the Raw Power of Your Heart*, at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines, Ia. Cost is \$89 for adults; \$69 for youth. Get the latest information at: www.promisekeepers.org/desmoines06, or phone: 866-PROMISE.

July 7-11 – *Creation! Celebration!, God's Word—Light for the Journey*, 2006 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women in Louisville, Ky. Celebrate the following anniversaries: 100 years of women as deacons, 75 years of women as elders, 50 years of women as ministers of Word and Sacrament and 50 years of the Fellowship of the Last Coin. Go online to: www.pcusa.org/pwgathering/index.htm.

July 12-19 – 50th Annual Omaha Presbyterian School for Pastors, in Hastings College, Hastings, Neb., Details and applications are available through the Presbytery office. Remember this event fills up early, reservations were suggested by March 15.

July 21-23 – **St. Paul Presbyterian Church in Johnston** will host a

Events Calendar continued from page 2

LOGOS Training School. If you have attended a training previously and want a refresher and new ideas, you are encouraged to join in the fun. Opportunities are ample to meet people from other churches, better understand the LOGOS program and its

goals, and learn new ideas. We guarantee you will leave feeling excited to kick off your program this coming fall. For details, contact church members Debbie Wych or Sandy Orth at 515-276-2818, or stpaulpres@juno.com.

July 22-27 – 2006
 Peacemaking Conference, *Unmasking Power: Seeking the Faces of Peace*, YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, CO, <http://pcusa.org/peacemaking/conferences/2006.htm>.



Attend the Churchwide PW Gathering, July 7-11

It's not too late to register for the Presbyterian Women's Creation! Celebration! God's Word—Light for the Journey for fellowship, Bible study, renewal, workshops and more in Louisville, KY, July 7-11. To register, go online to:

www.pcusa.org/pwgathering/.

If you are attending order your Presbytery of Des Moines button through PW Moderator Emily Seeger, with Atlantic Presbyterian Church, 712-243-4519 or seeger@metc.net.

If you are riding the bus to Louisville, Kate Dukelow will have your button on the bus. If not, e-mail or call Emily and she will mail you one.

Synod School, an annual midsummer ministry of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is for laity, clergy, families, and singles. It's fun and mind-stretching courses, worship and singing you'll long remember, and times for both fellowship and private reflection. Discover Synod School and you'll know why so many people keep returning.



Choose among 50+ courses. Examples include Bible studies: *Villains and Other Naughty Biblical Characters*, *Pathways to Bethlehem* and *Perspectives on Genesis*; body and mind renewal classes: *Woodworking Stained Glass*, *Baskets*, and *Just Eating Ultimate Sports*; classes for living faithfully in the world: *Faith and Business*, *Modern Science and the Christian Faith*, and *Great Decisions and Global Issues*; classes for leader development: *Communal Discernment*, *Personnel Committee Training*, and *Congregational Transformation*.

Daily convocation speakers: Alex Thornburg and Ted Foote are Presbyterian ministers and authors of *Being Presbyterian in the Bible Belt* and *Being Disciples of Christ in a Dot.com World*. Some have said they are much like the characters in the story of the country mouse (Foote) and the city mouse (Thornburg). During convocation, Alex and Ted will encourage us, as 21st century disciples of Jesus, in the exploration of how God's grace is experienced, recognized, and shared with others through humility, gratitude, community, and courage.

July 23-28, 2006

Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa

Discover Synod School!

Go to www.lakesandprairies.org/events.html or phone 800-328-1880, ext. 207

**The Color of Grace
 in a Black and White World**



Attention Church Communicators: Need Help?

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies,

along with PC(USA) are

*sponsoring at **Presbyterian***

Communicators Network

regional conference to be held

Aug. 2-4. This 3-day event will be

at the Westminster Presbyterian

Church in Minneapolis, Minn., with

lodging a block away in downtown

Minneapolis at the Millennium

Hotel.

For more information or to

register for this conference go

online to:

www.pcusa.org/comnet/.

There will be a possibility of

carpool, coordinated by Kim

Coulter, Director of

Communications at the Presbytery

Office, 515-276-4991 or

pbycommunication@qwest.net.

Grants Awarded to Congregation-Based Community Organizations

\$157,500 GOES TO 21 ORGANIZING GROUPS

by Evan Silverstein

LOUISVILLE — [The Presbyterian Hunger Program](#) (PHP), in

partnership with PC(USA)'s [Urban Ministry Office](#),

recently allocated \$157,500 to 21 congregation-based community organizations (CBCOs) in urban and rural areas across the country.

CBCOs are broad-based coalitions of congregations, faith-based groups and grass-roots organizations that address quality-of-life and family issues such as affordable housing and access to quality health care.

Grants are provided to support training for lay leaders, pastors, middle-governing body staff and seminarians to develop the skills for congregational-based community organizing.

"CBCO's are bringing about positive change both for the life of the congregations involved with CBCOs, and with the communities they serve," said the Rev. Phil Tom, associate for urban ministry in the PC(USA)'s National Ministries Division. "Presbyterian congregations engaged with CBCOs are learning how to reach out

and to work in partnership with their neighbors in responding to the quality-of-life issues impacting their communities."

Other examples of CBCOs' concerns, Tom said, are crime, safety, public health and public education.

Funds for the grants come from the Community Development portion of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. Recipients were chosen during a March 28 meeting of the Presbyterian Hunger Program Advisory Committee.

"We are very excited about the strategy," said Andrew Kang Bartlett, PHP's associate for National Hunger Concerns. "CBCO's approach to fighting poverty is to call on government to play its proper role, and its power comes from people of faith themselves."

PC(USA) has long been a supporter of the community organizing movement pioneered in Chicago in the late 1930s by Saul Alinsky, who adapted labor-organizing strategies to community organizing.

The movement today includes more than 170 church-based community organizations across the

country. Most are affiliated with major national training networks, such as the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and the Gamaliel foundation, both in Chicago; Direct Action and Research Training Center (DART) in Miami; and the Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO) in Oakland, Calif.

One example of a congregation-based community organization is A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy, or AMOS, which for years has involved members of **Central Presbyterian Church in Des Moines, Ia.**

The non-partisan, church-based group tackles social injustices in central Iowa by bringing together a variety of activists and people of faith from various churches and synagogues.

"It's doing public ministry," said the **Rev. Jim Wallace**, pastor of **Central Presbyterian Church.**

"Meaning: how do we help others that may not be able to act on their own to bring about change? How do we make a community more caring for all participants? Those kinds of things."

continued on page 7

Phil's Corner continued from page 1

Presbytery meeting had an opportunity to hear first hand from two members of the task force about the process, how decisions were made, and what their hopes were.

Without wanting to minimize the importance of the major issues, this is not the first time such weighty issues have faced the PC(USA), nor do I think these will be the last. No matter what the issue or what side of a position is taken, we take our work seriously. This regularly leads to intense conversations, disagreements, concerns and joys as an GA works through them.

As our Synod Executive, Phil Brown, shared in his letter distributed to you last week, there is a lot of attention being given to this year's GA and therefore a need for a lot of prayer for those attending and making decisions. Please

keep Elder Commissioner **Ray Peters** (Ankeny), Clergy Commissioner **Rev. Sue Babovec** (Ottumwa, First) and Youth Advisory Delegate **Cassandra Decker** (Corning, First) especially in your prayers as they travel and serve on your behalf. I will be there as well to learn, network with others and offer support to our folks.

As one who attends many such meetings, I am usually pleased, and at times concerned about how we Christians deal with each other during intense times. Recently I was reading through the "Stories of Mission Work" in our current Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study and came across these words from Mary Wire Ramsey. Along with her husband, she was a missionary in Bombay, India, from 1830-1834.

On Nov. 7, 1830, from on board a ship to Bombay, she writes: "We have heard

worship this morning on deck. Brother Jones spoke from these words... 'if ye have not the Spirit of Christ, ye are none of his, Romans 8-9.' It was an excellent discourse. He showed us very plainly what was our duty as the professed followers of Jesus—meekness, beneficence, patience, forbearance, always ready to forgive injuries, and above all a prayerful disposition to pray without ceasing, and without ostentation..."

It seems to me that, whether at an assembly, a presbytery meeting, a session or congregational meeting, or any other place we are as Christians, it would serve us well to remember and follow these words from scripture. May it be so for all of us.

May Christ richly bless you in all that comes your way during this summer season.

Peace, Phil



PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Reports Now Available

[Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/Assistance) (PDA) has announced a 7-year \$14.4 million budget for funding relief efforts in the aftermath of last year's devastating Gulf Coast hurricanes. To read more about the PC(USA)'s response in Mississippi and Louisiana, go to: www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2006/06260.htm

Secondly, the 2005 PDA Annual Report of Activities was mailed to every PC(USA) congregation. This report lifts up the theme of water, a powerful image that drove much of their work last year and includes work in Sudan (South Sudan), the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Indonesia tsunami response. To order, go to:

www.pcusa.org/pda or call Presbyterian Distribution Service at 800-524-2612, request item #74340 06 001.

Also, the new *PDA Mission Mosaic* publication focuses on PDA's response in the Gulf Coast. It is expected to be available June 16.

Prayers and Concerns

Please keep in your prayers the following:

Rev. Lynn Zimmerman, (LeRoy, First), pastor at LeRoy is leaving to pursue a position with the Adair Methodist Church.

Chi Hofer, wife of deceased Rev. Andy Hofer, is recuperating at home

after a brief illness.

Welcome to 7½-year-old Jazelle, who arrived June 8 at **Rev. Denise Group's** home in Chariton. Jazelle, who had been living in a foster home in Sioux City, will be in 2nd grade this fall. Denise has begun the adoption process which generally takes 6-12 months.

Congratulations to **Rev.**

Denise Group, (Chariton, First).

Simeon Jude Stipp-Bethune was born May 25, at 10:16 a.m. Parents and baby are doing well and big brother, J.R., is excited too!

Congratulations to **Rev.**

David R. Stipp-Bethune (Des Moines, Park Avenue).



RAGBRAI Update

The towns of Audubon, Waukee and Newton are planning summer activities around the Register's Annual Bike Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) event July 23-28. Presbyterian churches in these overnight towns for the annual bike ride will host a variety of activities:

July 24 – First Presbyterian Church in Audubon is hosting a dinner and offering riders lodging in members' homes. If you're in need of housing, e-mail: housing@aududboniowa.org.

July 25 – Heartland Presbyterian Church in Clive is offering participants the following services: dinner, shuttle to private residences for showers, laundry, air conditioning, restroom facilities, tent set-up with camping on church lawn, and breakfast to go for riders the next day.

July 26 – Both the First Presbyterian and United Presbyterian churches in Newton are offering a baked potato supper.

Congregational Connection

Presbytery congregations have a reason to celebrate:

Congratulations to **Rev. Dr. Beverly Leonard** upon her honorable retirement recognition at the May 16 Presbytery Meeting in Chariton.

Nathan Williams, son of **Rev. Lynn Williams at Grimes Presbyterian church** graduated in June from Harvard Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree.

The Presbytery is invited to attend the First Presbyterian

Church in Chariton's 150th Anniversary celebration of service to our Lord, Sunday, June 25, beginning at 10 a.m. worship. A potluck and special recognition festivities will follow, come share your memories with them. For details, contact **Rev. Denise Group** at 641-774-2436 or presby@lucasco.net.

A "wall of churches" was completed at the Presbytery of Des Moines office! **Eagle Scout Matthew Ewing**, son of **Rev. David and Kathi**

Ewing and of **First Presbyterian Church in Dallas Center** recently completed his Eagle service project for becoming an Eagle Scout as part of the Eagle Rank requirements of the Boy Scouts of America. The 64 church photos are also available electronically through the **Presbytery office**. Among the people honored at the June 3 ceremony were: Rev. Tim Maxa (Lenox-Sharpsburg), Dennis Britson (Dallas Center, First), Jennifer Hines (Clive, Heartland) and the Presbytery office staff.

SC Partnership Celebrates Women

On the evening of April 27, about 60 members of the South Central Partnership and guests gathered to honor and celebrate the gifts of women. Special recognition was given to those women in the congregations who have been ordained the longest.

Observed were the 100th anniversary of the ordination of women as deacons (1906-2006), the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women to the Office of Word and Sacrament (1956-2006), and the 75th anniversary of the ordination of women as elders (1930-2005).



Attendees celebrate ordained women's anniversaries at Humeston Christian-United Methodist Church. (Photo taken by the Clerk of Session and Secretary of the **First Presbyterian Church of LeRoy** and United Parish member, **Amanda Wetterling**.)

The **Rev. Sara Speer Palmer (HR)**, shared an inspiring message that chronicled her own journey towards ordination. General Presbyter, **Rev. Phil Barrett**, also brought

greetings from the presbytery. Naturally, Presbyterians rarely gather without some food and so enjoyed a splendid meal and a time of musical entertainment.

PC(USA) Update continued from page 4

A \$7,500 CBCO grant will allow AMOS, whose membership consist of about 30 religious institutions, to help pay the salary of a full-time organizer who is assisting in building and expanding the organization.

"It's allowed us to move forward," **Wallace** said. "The grant has helped enable us to hire an organizer who is trained in this process and because of that we're able to tackle these issues and continue to grow."

The organization includes a range of faith traditions from Baptist and Catholic to Jewish and Methodist. Together they are building a reputation for success.

Last year AMOS — formerly called A Metropolitan Organizing Strategy — persuaded administrators who control 13 Iowa hospitals to change how much they charge uninsured patients. Those patients often pay higher fees because they don't have big insurance companies negotiating discounts on their behalf.

Among other AMOS efforts: pushing for a statewide sales tax that would go toward improving school district infrastructure, and rallying support for keeping

a homeless shelter from being moved out of downtown Des Moines.

AMOS has proven it can inspire hundreds of concerned people to gather on any given day. For example, 650 people, including 400 Latinos, showed up at the Capitol building in Des Moines last year to rally for driver's licenses for immigrants and for a tobacco tax increase to cover Medicaid expenses.

"It's not to be out there protesting and hacking at people," **Wallace** said. "An important part of this is that we study the issues and come up with some solutions and then seek to work with government, private business, hospitals or whoever it might be."

The other 20 grant recipients are:

- **ACTION Network**, Gainesville, FL: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **Anchorage Faith and Action – Congregations Together (AFACT)**, Anchorage, AK: \$7,500 in start-up support.
- **Brower Interfaith Sponsoring Committee**, Coconut Creek, FL: \$7,500 in start-up support.
- **Charlottesville Area Interfaith Sponsoring**

Committee, Charlottesville, VA: \$7,500 in start-up support.

- **Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together (CLOUT)**, Louisville, KY: \$7,500 to work on an affordable housing trust fund campaign.
- **Cortland Interfaith Sponsoring Committee**, Homer, NY: \$7,500 in start-up support.
- **Ecumenical Ministries – All Congregations Together**, Fairhope, AL: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **Federation of Congregations United to Serve (FOCUS)**, Orlando, FL: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **Greater Milwaukee Sponsors**, Milwaukee, WI: \$7,500 in start-up support.
- **Helping Empower Local People (HELP)**, Charlotte, NC: \$7,500 to develop a broader metro strategy.
- **In The Hopeful City**, Wheeling, WV: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **Interfaith Action**, Rochester, NY: \$7,500 to work on a neighborhood affordable housing trust fund campaign.
- **Kansas City Church Community Organization (KCCCO)**, Kansas City, MO: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **Lake County Sponsors**, Libertyville, IL: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **Long Island Congregations, Associations and Neighborhoods (LI-CAN)**, Valley Stream, NY: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good (MACG)**, Portland, OR: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **Peninsula Interfaith Action (PIA)**, San Carlos, CA: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.
- **PICO Flint Area Congregations Together**, Flint, MI: \$7,500 in start-up support.
- **Pinellas Organizing Committee (POC)**, Safety Harbor, FL: \$7,500 in start-up support.
- **VOICE**, Buffalo, NY: \$7,500 to work on affordable housing.

For more information about CBCOs, contact Eva Slayton in the Urban Ministry Office by phone at 800-728-7228, ext. 5244, or eslayton@pcusa.org; or contact Phil Tom by phone at 800-728-7228, ext. 5845, or ptom@pcusa.org.

Go online to read details: www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2006/06275.htm.



The Presbyteries of Des Moines and the Missouri River Valley are sponsoring a Transformation Conference for pastors and church teams of four to five people at the Downtown Marriott Hotel, Des Moines, Oct. 6-8. The goal is to assist congregations in finding new ways to respond to God's calling in the midst of a changing culture and community.

Early bird registration before June 30 is \$150 or \$175 if registering after July 1. For more information go online to: www.trinityupc.org/transformation.htm. Or contact: [Rev. Phil Barrett, General](mailto:Rev.Phil.Barrett@desmoinespresbytery.org) Presbyterian, 515-276-4991, e-mail: pby1@qwest.net. (For more information, see the June 14 flier on the Transformation Conference.)

Presbytery Happenings

HURRICANE RELIEF WORK TEAMS UPDATE

Don't forget the upcoming Presbytery mission trips to the Gulf Coast region:

Heartland Presbyterian Church in Clive has coordinated two trips. The first trip, June 11-16, was to Pearlinton, Miss. which is an unincorporated town of 1,700 where the eye of the hurricane and storm surge badly damaged or destroyed virtually every home and business. Pearlinton has been described as the "poorest of the poor" and is on the border of Louisiana, not far from New Orleans. Ten individuals left on Sunday from various churches including Clive Heartland, Des Moines Westminster, Ottumwa First and Ankeny.

The second team is leaving June 18-23 and will be traveling to the PDA village in D'Iberville, Miss. This team of eight people consists of members from Clive Heartland, Dallas Center First and Des Moines Westminster. D'Iberville is a middle to low income area and residential community for the main industries of Biloxi where over half the homes were badly damaged or destroyed.

If interested in helping, contact **Anna Williams**, espanda@msn.com or **Jeff Gumm**, 515-987-2326, jsgumm@yahoo.com.

The **First Presbyterian Church in Centerville** is sending a mission team Sept. 10-16. If interested, contact **Marilyn Vanderlinden** at vander926@mchsi.com.

The **First Presbyterian Church in Creston** is sending work team(s) scheduled for Oct. 14-21, and/or Oct. 21-28. If interested, contact **Marion Hargin**, 641-782-7265, crestonfpc@tiowtelecom.net.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS

The **Social Ministries Task Force** is looking for examples of justice ministry in the Des Moines Presbytery congregations and communities. They want to share what is happening to educate congregations about social justice issues; to empower them as advocates for neighbors in need; and to provide opportunities for greater service. Please let us know! Contact SMTF through the Presbytery office at 515-276-4991 or pbydesmoines@qwest.net.

A Transformational Moment

First Presbyterian Church, Greenfield – Elder Lori Armstrong, attended the Jan. 21 Presbytery meeting, where she heard of the need in the Des Moines area for toiletries and other items for lower income folks. Realizing that their local food pantry does not provide these items for people in Greenfield and the surrounding communities, the Greenfield session decided this was a need they could help meet.

Now, church members have planned for a personnel hygiene pantry to be housed in the church for the Greenfield community. Items in the pantry include: laundry and bar soap, basic cleaning supplies, toothpaste, toothbrush, toilet paper, tissue, disposable diapers, baby wipes, disposable razors, shaving cream, shampoo, deodorant, etc.

Everyone will be screened through the Adair County Neighborhood Center and then sent on to the church. The service is not funded through a government agency and it is a mission not being met by any other church or organization in Adair County. This is not only a valuable service for the community, but a great outreach program to transform the Greenfield congregation!

If you'd like to submit a moment, contact *The Wider Circle* editor Kim Coulter, at 515-276-4991 or pbycommunication@qwest.net.

Employment Opportunities

Youth Director – First Presbyterian and First Christian churches in Perry, Ia., are looking for a full-time Christian youth director and/or an ordained minister in either of the denominations supported by this joint parish. If interested, send resume and cover letter to: Attn. **Don Van Houweling**, P.O. Box 575, Perry, IA 50220, 515-240-7964, donvh@vanwall.com.

Christian Educator/Youth Coordinator –

The First Presbyterian Church of Mt. Pleasant, Ia., needs a full-time person to serve in the leadership ministry of this 350+ member congregation. A job description is online at: www.firstpresbyonline.org. Send resume and cover letter to: Rev. Dr. Jerry Kelly, 902 S. Walnut St., Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641, 319-986-5851 or e-mail to: frstpsby@lowatelecom.net

Hurricane Relief Positions – The Presbytery of Mississippi and PDA are urgently looking for skilled individuals to help

with the hurricane recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast. Most positions are compensated (see list below); for more information, contact George Bates, 228-604-2424, www.pcusa.org/pda.

- Presbytery of Mississippi:
- Site Manager (Compensated)
 - Assessor (Compensated)
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance:
- Financial Officer (Long-Term Volunteer)
 - Village Manager (Volunteer)

Kids Against Hunger®

A program of Feeding Children International

Each day around the world 17,000 children die of starvation or malnutrition related diseases. Kids Against Hunger's mission is to end that tragedy. Packages of nutritious meals are shipped to malnourished children in countries such as Haiti, Liberia, and the Philippines. The meals are formulated by Cargill and

General Mills food scientists to provide a rich source of easily digestible protein, carbohydrates, and vitamins. Since its launch in 1999, Kids Against Hunger has fed over 29 million meals to children in 32 countries.

Kids Against Hunger of Des Moines exists to help you actively join the fight against world

hunger. To learn more go online

to: www.feedingchildren.org/whatismain.php, then e-mail

kidsagainsthungerdm@hotmail.com to learn how your family or church group is

can help.

*– Rev. Goanar Chol
Sudanese Ministries
Coordinator*

Sudanese Ministries Update



We need to remember that extremist Muslims are also extremist Arabs, not only in Sudan but in Egypt, Lebanon, Algeria in which Al Musa originate and also in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iraq. They want the whole world not only to be Muslim – but Arab.

In April, President Bush's response to the Darfur situation showed concern about the death of innocent people, carried out by the Islamic Arabs extremists, "we're deeply concerned about the humiliation, rape, and murder that is taking place... against the citizens of Darfur. This is serious business... we're just not playing a diplomatic holding game, but that when we say, genocide, we mean that the genocide needs to be stopped."

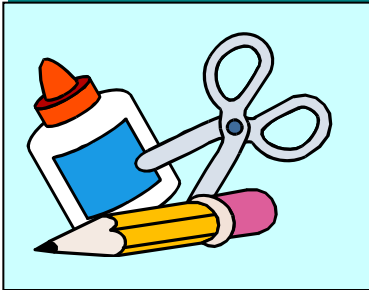
In Sudan, the second stage of extremists is that they want to be the leaders in Mosques and expand the Arab culture. Muslims in Darfur who are Africans, have differences with the Arabs, thus they feel the only way to get rid of the Muslims, is to kill them and take their land.

In Morocco, the same thing is happening where Muslim Africans are working in the farms of Arabs called them

"my master" or "sidi" in Arabic language.

For these reasons, the killings are identified as genocide. The same in South Sudan but the UN cannot agree because the information did not go to the rest of the world.

Please pray for **multilateral involvement of the European Union, African Union, and United Nations Security Council** with the **United States** in taking a stronger stance to stop the continuing genocide in Darfur and to enforce the peace in South Sudan. Thank you.



CROSS Ministries Back-to-School Give-Away in July

Donations are needed by July 21 for the annual school supply give-away. If you can help with money or items, contact CROSS Ministries at 515-279-8877 or

rjvictor@msn.com.

The free school supplies will be available July 27 from 5–8 p.m. and July 28 – 10 a.m. – Noon (or until supplies are gone), for Des Moines area residents' children in grades: Headstart through 12th, at Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church, on the corner of 24th St. and Cottage Grove Ave. in Des Moines.

Those eligible include families with a combined income at or below 150% Poverty Level. You must bring ID's for all members of the family. If supplies have already been received from other programs the family will be ineligible.

C.R.O.S.S. Ministries Update

It is hard to believe that this will be the 14th Annual CROSS Back-to-School Giveaway for the children living in low and no income households. Even though we have offered this program for many years now, it is as vital today as it was when we first began. I remember that first year and how stunned we were when hundreds of families lined up outside the door and down the alleyway just waiting to receive the children's school supplies. Little ones hopped about talking in loud, excited voices as they waited to see what supplies they would be given. The mothers and fathers attempted to maintain some semblance of control in the midst of such excitement. Even though that was 13 years ago, it was true of every single year that followed.

It is interesting that such a simple program consisting

of providing a backpack filled with the supplies needed to begin school could make such a difference in the lives of so many. But imagine for a moment what would happen if the children did not have the supplies to begin school. Imagine arriving at school with the other children who were carrying backpacks, pencils, crayons, glue, scissors, and paper but you did not have anything to bring. Perhaps Mom or Dad had lost a job or someone in the family became ill and missed work resulting in less money for "non essentials." Imagine how you might feel if that were you or your child. CROSS Ministries does not want any child to have a poor start to school. We know that education is the way out of poverty. When you help a child with school supplies, you are making an investment into the future of us all.

As in previous years, we will be needing volunteers for packaging and distribution. We are also critically in need of both money and donations of supplies. If we have cash then we can purchase the items in quantity over the internet at a greatly reduced cost, just as we did last year. We also value the donations of items that you take the time to shop for and bring to the church.

When summer hasn't even begun, it is hard to wrap our minds around this project. However, this year, we will be holding the Giveaway on July 27 and 28 since we are hosting the Presbytery meeting in August. This means we have to work a little faster – harder to get things ready for all those children. Please look in your heart and help us with this vital ministry. Thank you.

– Roberta Victor,
CROSS Ministries Director

Get Funds for Christian Education Efforts

Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education each year awards congregations in the Presbyterian Church (USA) for outstanding programs in early childhood education, excellence in Christian education, effective youth ministry and outreach and social

concern. These four awards are presented at the annual Association of Presbyterian Church Educators Conference (APCE).

Since 1991, 60 churches in 26 states have received these awards. Each award carries a \$1,000 contribution to assist the congregations'

ministry. If your church would like to apply for one of the Union-PSCE Congregation Awards, call April Swofford for an application at: 804-254-8047 or 800-299-2990, ext. 747 or e-mail at: aswofford@union-psce.edu. The deadline for the 2006 Awards is Nov. 1, 2006.

Orphans Get A Home in El Salvador

It was been dubbed *God's Project*.

The naming of the project came from a conversation with Fr. Jim Laurenzo of St. Catherine Parish at Drake University when he visited in



March with a delegation of Drake students. The seed for *God's Project* was planted Feb. 12 when, at no fault of my own, I hit Reyna Marisol Sandoval Flores with my car. She tried to run across the highway when I was going 60 mph and was no more than 15 or 20 yards from her. She died instantly. That left Christian Ernesto, age 5, and Reyna Elizabeth, age 8, without the love of their mother. They lived with her in an adobe hut in a canton near San Salvador.

The night of the accident, their family talked about a hope to construct a decent home for the two children to live in. There was no doubt about the need, and so I sent a message to friends and family asking for donations to pay for the construction. The response was wonderful, and today the house is ¾ finished. On May 28, the contractor told me that it will be ready for habitation within three weeks.

The children will have a room of their own and the house will have a bathroom (which means there needs to be running water), and a gas stove for cooking.

We have cost overrun because we decided that we need to include a water holding tank, as there is no water in the canton plumbing about half the time. Without a water reservoir, they would not be able to use the bathroom when there is no water. We also changed the roof from ordinary tin commonly used in construction to a material that repels the heat and diminishes the noise of rain.

At this writing we are within \$1,200 of having enough to finish the construction. If you are led to donate, please make a check to Presbytery of Des Moines and with the memo line note: Robert Cook's Orphan Fund. Send it to: Presbytery of Des Moines, 2400 86th St., Suite 20, Urbandale, IA 50322-4306.

Christian and Reyna are doing well. One of the students from St. Catherine Delegation that was here in March provided money for psychological

help for the children. The family tells me they are working through their mother's death, and seem happy. Though, once in a while they are pensive and talk about how they miss her. Your donations have helped them to know life

goes on, and they are not alone. Your donations have also helped me to feel better, and to relegate the sadness caused by Reyna's death to a corner of my heart. There it will always remain as a reminder of the saddest day of my life. I too have noted life goes on, and I am not alone.

I want to thank all who donated to this project and that made it possible.

– Rev. Robert Cook
El Salvador Missionary



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Copy deadline is the last day of the month. Please submit articles in Microsoft Word or compatible format; digital images and photos are both acceptable.

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217th General Assembly Update

GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE:
Here is **Elder Commissioner Ray Peters'** update:

Since last month's article, there have been 52 more overtures forwarded to be considered, bringing the total overtures to 137. Each will be assigned to a committee, discussed, and recommendations will be sent to the General Assembly for a vote. The outcome of these votes will guide the PC(USA) into the future. These later overtures, in many cases, are duplications of previous concerns expressed by presbyteries and re-affirmed by other presbyteries.

Nearly all of the overtures are related to Stated Clerk Cliff Kirkpatrick's top 10 issues (see page 1 of this newsletter). If you'd like to follow GA business in the next two weeks, you can log on to www.pcusa.org/ga217 and follow the action.

Our own Stated Clerk and General Presbyter Rev. Phil Barrett will be sending daily reports to the Presbytery office and these will be posted at www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org and sent weekly to our Presbytery churches by e-mail.

Churches in the Des Moines

Presbytery are beginning prayer vigils during the two-week period. Please keep the General Assembly in your thoughts and prayers. (See the page 1 of this newsletter for specific issues that Stated Clerk Rev. Cliff Kirkpatrick suggests you pray for.)

Also, if you are interested in reading our Synod of Lakes and Prairies Executive Phil Brown's Pastoral Letter in anticipation of the 217th General Assembly, contact the Presbytery office, 515-276-4991 or pbycommunication@qwest.net.

– Ray Peters,
Elder Commissioner

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org