



The Wider Circle E-News

Mark your calendars this week for:

- **Dec. 22** – Roasted Pork Loin Dinner at **Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Des Moines**, from 5-7 p.m. Cost is: \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids ages 6-12, and children under 5 are free. To get your tickets, contact the church Office Administrator Kris Robinson at 515-288-5703. Funds from this dinner will go towards a new video project at the church.
- **Dec. 24** – *Christmas Eve*, **Presbytery Office is closed for Winter Break and reopens Monday, Jan. 4.**
- **Dec. 25** – *Nativity of Jesus Christ/Christmas Day*
- **Jan. 1** – New Year's Day Holiday, Presbytery Office is closed for winter break.
- **Jan. 4** – Presbytery Office reopens
- **Jan. 8-9** – Winter Youth Retreat for leaders and youth (grades 6-12), join us for fun and tubing at Sleepy Hollow Sports Park, 4051 Dean Ave., Des Moines. Sponsored by the **Camping/Youth Ministries Task Force**. *IgeekGod!* is the theme. Activities begin Friday, 7 p.m. and kids can be picked Saturday, 2 p.m. If you would like to participate, Registration materials are online at www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org/resources.htm. Or contact **Task Force Moderator Dennis Britson** at dnbritson@aol.com or 515-988-1360. The total cost is \$30 and includes meals and snow tubing.
- **Jan. 16** – Presbytery Meeting, First United Presbyterian Church, Atlantic, Ia.

Reformed, Reforming— Nurturing Presbyterian Identity

With the goal of providing a high quality training and support experience for pastors and commissioned lay pastors serving churches on the Great Plains, a workshop for those serving congregations in the reformed/Presbyterian tradition is slated April 18-19 at the Maryvale Spiritual Life Center in Valley City, N.D. The cost of the workshop, *Reformed and Reforming: Nurturing a Presbyterian Identity in Our Congregations*, is only \$60 and includes a Sunday evening meal, overnight lodging and all Monday meals. Registrants will also receive a copy of Donald

McKim's book, *Presbyterian Questions, Presbyterian Answers*. Those who would like to register should contact Laurie Elhard, communication coordinator in the [Presbytery of the Northern Plains](http://www.presbyteryofthenorthernplains.org), at 701-772-0783 or at pnoffice@gmail.com. (Information drawn from the December issue of *Light of the Northern Plains*, a publication of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.)

December 22, 2009

www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org



We are located at:

2400 86th Street, Suite 20
Urbandale, IA 50322-4306
515-276-4991

officeinfo@presbyteryofdesmoines.org

Office Hours are:

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

From the Presbytery Staff:

Rev. Phil Barrett,
General Presbyter and Stated Clerk

Rev. Goanar Chol,
Sudanese Ministry Resource Person

Betty Dyer,
Office Manager

Kim Coulter,
Director of Communications

Nancy Lister-Settle,
Hunger Action Enabler

Kathy Mahler,
Designated Missionary Co-Worker to El Salvador

Denise England,
Designated Missionary Co-Worker to Egypt

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Joys and Concerns

Through an interesting set of twists and turns, people from **Monroe Presbyterian Church** learned that the Mitchellville Elementary School has a rate of 60% of students on free and reduced lunch. This fall Principal Joe Nelson sent out a notice asking if any child needed outerwear for the season. The response was amazing to the invitation to receive warm weather clothing. The distance from Monroe and Mitchellville is short, yet our knowledge of this need was news to us. On Sunday,

Dec. 13, the Sunday School kids did their annual Christmas program. It is a custom to receive a special offering during this service with the funds going to a family or a cause. This year the Christian Education Committee supported having the Mitchellville Elementary Clothing Fund as the recipient of our offering. In addition to the monetary offering, members and friends of the church gathered hats, scarves, mittens, other head gear as well as some coats and other warm weather gear. Principal Nelson presented a moment for mission on Sunday, Dec. 6 as a part of making the congrega-



tion aware of the need in this near-by community. On Friday morning, Dec. 18, the delivery of the items took place along with a check for just under \$300 for the clothing fund. Joe Nelson thanked us profusely for the gifts and told us an amazing fact, "By 3:30 p.m. today, all of these hats, scarves, and mittens will be gone. For some of these kids, this will be one of the few Christmas gifts they receive." Nelson went on to explain they don't have any storage for these winter items as there isn't a need to store them. The items are immediately used.



Attend *Emergence NOW* at Columbia Theological Seminary, Jan. 26-29

Decatur, GA — *Emergence NOW*, Columbia Theological Seminary's annual January seminars, takes place Jan. 26-28, 2010, on the seminary campus in Decatur, GA. Leaders include acclaimed editor, author, and lecturer Phyllis Tickle, along with pastor and moderator of the PC(USA) Bruce Reye-Chow, and author/theologians Tony Jones and Philip Clayton Jones. Barbara Brown Taylor, renowned preacher and author, will lead worship on Tuesday afternoon and Thursday morning. Offered by the Center for Lifelong Learning, *Emergence NOW* will feature plenary sessions, daily worship, and workshops. The \$265 program fee includes two lunches. More information and online registration for the event and housing is available [here](#). You may also register by calling 404-687-4587. The Columbia Theological Seminary, located in Decatur, Ga., was established in 1828 and is one of 10 theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Submit Salary Changes and Confirm Salaries Online at www.pensions.org

Church treasurers and business administrators can now submit salary changes or confirm salaries online through a new feature on Benefits Connect, the Board's secure benefits Web site. Once a church treasurer or business administrator registers on Benefits Connect, he or she will be granted access to this new feature. Changing or confirming salaries will be completed through an easy-to-follow online process. To register, go to the www.Pensions.org homepage. Under the Benefits Connect logo, click "Register." Then follow the step-by-step instructions for creating your user profile and establishing your password. If you have questions about registering for Benefits Connect or the new online salary change and confirmation feature, please contact the Board at 800-773-7752.

Parsons to Visit Milwaukee Presbytery in February

The Rev. Gradye Parsons, stated clerk of the General Assembly of the PC(USA), will be in [Milwaukee Presbytery](#) Feb. 9-11. Parsons speaks of "Dangerous Elders" in a presentation at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 3302 N. Sherman Blvd., Milwaukee, Wis., Tuesday, Feb. 9, and will take part in a light supper and discussion at the Gail and David Henderson farm Wednesday, Feb. 10, at 6 p.m. Those who would like to attend the supper and discussion event, which is limited to 15 people, must contact Chris Halverson in the presbytery office at 414.475.4211. Additional events will be scheduled, according to the Dec. 4 issue of *Friday Notes*, the newsletter of the presbytery.

Seattle Team Develops Evangelism Resources

The Evangelism Ministry Team of Seattle Presbytery has developed a packet of evangelism resources entitled *Sharing Your Faith 101*. "When most of a person's time is spent with other Christians, or helping out in the world around us on the Lord's behalf, it's not difficult to fall into bad habits concerning verbally sharing the Gospel. In addition, many people are afraid to share their faith because they feel inadequate to do so gracefully and effectively," the team writes in introducing the new resource. [Sharing Your Faith 101](#) is designed to encourage and equip people so that they can confidently tell others about the great love God has for them and for all people. It can be used in a variety of ways by congregations or by individuals.

More Americans See GOP as Friendlier to Religion than DEMS

More Americans view the Republican Party as friendly toward religion (48%) than rate the Democratic Party that way (29%). President Barack Obama's administration, however, is seen as friendly toward religion by more people (37%) than is the Democratic Party as a whole. And all three get higher ratings for friendliness toward religion than the news media (14%), scientists (12%) or Hollywood (11%). The complete story can be found at [Pew Research](#).

To remove your name from our mailing list, e-mail Kim Coulter pbycommunication@presbyteryofdesmoines.org. Learn more at: www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org. Questions? Contact officeinfo@presbyteryofdesmoines.org or 515-276-4991.