



The Wider Circle E-News

Mark your calendars this week for:

- **Mar. 2** – Lectionary Study, 10 a.m.-Noon, Presbytery Office, Urbandale
- **Mar. 2** – Congregational Care & Development meeting, 2 p.m., **Westminster Presbyterian Church, Des Moines**
- **Mar. 2** – Compañeros meeting, 6:30 p.m., **Westminster Presbyterian Church**
- **Mar. 4** – CROSS Ministries meeting, 7 p.m., **Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church, Des Moines**
- **Mar. 5** – *World Day of Prayer*
- **Mar. 6** – Coordinating Council/Visioning Team Retreat, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., Camp Wesley Woods, 10896 Nixon St., Indianola
- **Mar. 6** – Social Ministries Task Force meeting, 10 a.m.–Noon, Presbytery Office
- **Mar. 7** – *Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday*
- **Mar. 7-9** – 28th Annual Rural Ministry Conference “Nurturing Generosity” at the Dubuque Best Western (Sunday evening) and Wartburg (Monday through noon on Tuesday.) Leaders in rural communities and congregations gather to gain insight and inspiration, to network and neighbor that our ministries might be empowered. Contact Stephanie McCarthy, Rural Ministry Conference at smccarthy@wartburgseminary.edu, or Wartburg Theological Seminary, 333 Wartburg Pl., Dubuque, IA 52003, ruralmin@wartburgseminary.edu.
- **Mar. 9** – Transformation Team meeting, 11:30 am, American Institute of Business, Des Moines



Liturgy Available for *Gifts of Women Sunday, March 7*

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

The Presbyterian Outlook News: Scott Anderson Approved for Ordination

[John Knox Presbytery](#) has voted to ordain to the ministry [Scott D. Anderson](#), a gay man who has been in a committed relationship for close to two decades, and who declared a conscientious objection to the requirement in the ordination standards of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that those being ordained practice fidelity if they are married or chastity if they are single... [Click here to check out the full story on The Outlook website.](#)



Interested in attending Youth Triennium this Summer?

Here is what **Lenox First Presbyterian Church member Naomi Maxa**, sophomore at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, had to say about her Presbyterian Youth Triennium experience a few years ago:

“...I would say that Triennium was super fun. :) We met with our small groups several times which was really fun because the people in the group were from all over the place. And the worship times were long (as in two hours) but everyone actually really liked them, and people lined up outside to get the best seats. There was also lots of chill time which was nice.”

Applications are still being accepted but space is limited. To learn more about PYT, contact **Registrar Sara Lamb** at yndsara@g.com or 515-418-6122. To sign up as a volunteer or youth participant, download applications at: www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org/mission.htm, complete and send to the Presbytery of Des Moines, 2400 86th St., Ste.

Presbyterian Panel Indicates Older Membership, More Women Pastors

Nearly half of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) members (43%) are age 65 or older and a larger-than-ever percentage of pastors (27%) are women. These are two of the findings from a survey of representative samples of members, elders, pastors and ministers – known as the Presbyterian Panel – that the denomination assembles every three years. The fall 2008 profile survey found that the median age of members and elders has continued to climb, from 58 in 2005 to 60. The complete Presbyterian News Service story is at [“2008 Presbyterian Snapshot.”](#)

March 2, 2010

www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org



We are located at:

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officeinfo@presbyteryofdesmoines.org

Office Hours are:

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

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- Iowa Is At Risk For Spring Flooding: Buy Flood Insurance
- PDA is Responding to Chile Earthquake
- Help Recruit Volunteer Managers for Gulf Coast Villages
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Statewide Long-Term Recovery Committee Seeks Your Help

A request has come in from the State Long-Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) regarding being on the lookout for unmet needs cases in the 40 counties that were part of the disaster declaration during the floods of 2008. (This includes all of the Des Moines Presbytery counties, except Wayne county.) Churches within these counties are asked to pass this information along to the ministerial associations in their communities. Funds are still available for those who still suffer some type of unmet need. The *Embrace Iowa* grant stipulates only that the funds be used for losses as a result of the 2008 event. Our grant was originally scheduled to terminate the end of June 2010, they graciously agreed to extend our time frame to June 2011.

Also, the *Ticket to Hope* Program, provides mental health counseling sessions to Iowans affected by the 2008 disasters, www.tickettohope.org. Or call the Iowa Concern Hotline at 800-447-1985. The Dept. of Human Services wants to remind people that only five months remain for this important service for eligible Iowans. For details, contact State-wide LTRC member **Don Hampton (Indianola, Trinity United)** at 515-490-6888 or dbhampton@att.net.

Iowa Is At Risk For Spring Flooding: Buy Flood Insurance Now!

Release Date: February 4, 2010 – FEMA Release Number: 1763-259

Des Moines, Iowa – Officials from the National Weather Service recently stated that Iowa is at risk for significant flooding this spring after winter storms produced excessive snowfall just before Christmas of 2009 and a January 2010 ice storm. In the wake of the National Weather Service announcement, officials at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), along with its state partners at Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD), are encouraging Iowans to purchase flood insurance now to protect their property from flood damage.

"State and federal disaster grants, even when they're available, are intended to help people start their recovery, not to replace entire households," said Kay Phillips, who is the Director FEMA's Iowa Recovery Office. "That's why flood insurance is so important. It's the best financial protection you can buy." Flood insurance is available to homeowners, renters, condo owners/renters, and business owners/renters in communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). "If you are considering purchasing flood insurance, I'd urge you not to delay," said Iowa's State Coordinating Officer Patrick J. Hall. "With the excessive snowfall this winter and with spring right around the corner, Iowans could be facing flooding in the very near future."

Generally, there is a 30-day waiting period for flood insurance to become effective once the full premium has been paid. The waiting period is waived when obtaining, increasing, extending or renewing a federally backed loan for a property. In cases where a property has been reclassified as high-risk because of a Flood Insurance Rate Map revision (now in a floodplain when prior to the revision, it was not), the waiting period is reduced to one day. Costs vary depending on how much insurance is purchased, what it covers and the property's flood risk.

To find an agent or to learn more about flood insurance, call the NFIP at 888-435-6637 or go online to www.floodsmart.gov. To read the complete article, go to: www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=50359.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is Responding to Chile Earthquake

A devastating magnitude 8.8 earthquake struck Chile on Feb. 27, 2010, shattering buildings and bridges and causing the issuance of tsunami warnings for much of Pacific rim. Damage was particularly heavy in Concepción. That city, Chile's second-largest metropolitan area, is located only 70 miles from the earthquake's epicenter. Reports list the death toll at over 700, with a potential of more deaths as tsunamis hit coastal areas. Approximately 1.5 million homes have been destroyed. PDA is working with our ecumenical partner Church World Service (CWS) in Chile to provide basic humanitarian assistance and to help local partners in assessing the needs. [One Great Hour of Sharing](#) funds will be used for an initial response. Gifts for responding in Chile may be designated for 'DR000185'.

CWS emergency response staff have been in contact with colleagues on the ground in Chile and is coordinating their response with two Chilean agencies: FASIC (Fundacion de Ayuda Social de las Iglesia Cristianas) and the Humanitarian Team of the Methodist Church of Chile, IMECH. PDA will also coordinate with PC(USA) World Mission and their work with CLAI (Latin American Council of Churches) and with ACT Alliance member Lutheran World Federation.

Help Recruit Volunteer Managers for Gulf Coast Villages

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance needs your recruiting talent to help us locate and entuse potential volunteer village managers to come to the Gulf Coast area. Those who have experienced being a worksite volunteer, and have met, greeted and cared for our weekly volunteers at one of our four volunteer villages (New Orleans, Houma, La, Port Neches, Tx and Texas City, Tx) can give testimony to other volunteers for a one and a half- to two-month terms serving Christ in supporting the volunteers in the rebuilding mission.



The managers are paid a per diem, allowed the use of a PDA truck for village business and have an on-site RV for living quarters. Our needs begin this April 2010. (For detailed brochure and an application, contact the Des Moines Presbytery Office) Three reference forms are needed to apply. Anyone interested can bring their spouse to accompany them, share the RV on site and join the volunteers for their in-village activities. To begin a very rewarding service, contact Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Volunteer Village Coordinator Richard Maag, 502-807 5487, (FAX) 504-733 3506, or Richard.Maag@pcusa.org.

Continued from above...

PC(USA) General Assembly Attendees Asked to Bring Gift

When the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) conducts its bi-annual General Assembly, attendees from across the country are asked to bring a gift in their suitcase that will benefit a mission in the host presbyteries. This year Presbyterian Women from the three hosting presbyteries of the 219th General Assembly are coordinating this gift project and asking attendees to bring new socks and underwear to be distributed to men, women and children living in homeless shelters in Minnesota. Hosting presbyteries are Twin Cities Area, Northern Waters and Minnesota Valleys. Socks and underwear were selected as gift items because the items are easy to pack in a suitcase. More information on the shelters designated to receive items collected will be available in the future. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Ann Rock at acrock1@juno.com or Sylvia Swede at sylviaswede@aol.com.



Volunteers are Needed to Help with 219th General Assembly, July 3-10

This gathering of Presbyterian brothers and sisters from across the country and around the world will need volunteers to help coordinate the 3,000-5,000 attendees and their needs. If you are available to help, sign up now! Contact Paula Sanders, paula.sanders@pcusa.org or 612-839-7465. Details are available at: [Committee on Local Arrangements](#).



Moderator minute for mission: PDA Haiti Update

From 218th GA Moderator Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow's Blog posted: Feb. 26, 2010

Throughout my travels as I have been attending conferences and visiting ministries, I have invited folks to send me short write-ups on their ministries and, with the understanding that, as I was able, I would post them on this blog. My hope in doing this is by no means to touch upon all ministries with a Presbyterian connection, but only to give glimpses of the breadth and depth in which we engage in ministry around the world.

At this very moment I am sitting in the Louisville Airport after a meeting of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and General Assembly Mission Council. There was quite a bit that went on during these meetings, but one of the most important was the update from the Haiti Disaster Response Team and [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#).

WE HAVE NOW RAISED \$4,000,000 for short AND long term recovery.

Previously, I had asked [Randy Ackley](#) to submit a few paragraphs for me to post to address some of the questions about PDA's disaster recovery strategies. But before you read his submission, please join me to say on behalf of the denomination, thank you Randy, other staff and Haiti mission co-workers who have been working diligently to provide a helpful presence in Haiti! Also, if you know of anyone fluent in French or Creole, [PDA is looking for trauma counselors](#).

Here is what Randy has offered up to us...

"Let me begin by saying, "Thank you." Your prayers and generosity are making a difference. One month after the earthquake, churches and individuals have given approximately \$3.8 million to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) for the relief and recovery work in Haiti. Within 24 hours of the event, PDA sent \$100,000 from *One Great Hour of Sharing* funds for immediate rescue and recovery needs. This was followed in a few days by the additional \$109,000 received online as a result of the quick and generous response of Presbyterians. We have also approved a \$200,000 grant to [Hôpital Sainte Croix](#) (Holy Cross Hospital) and an affiliated nursing school in Léogâne, Haiti. Over 35,000 hygiene and baby kits have been distributed with the first kits arriving in Port au Prince the day following the disaster. Just today we have transferred \$52,000 in emergency funding to our local partner, MPP in Haiti. Altogether, PDA has committed more than half a million dollars to immediate relief and recovery efforts in Haiti.

"These donations have helped us, along with our ecumenical partners, to establish 15 food and water distribution stations, distribute thousands of tents or shelters, and provide other needed services and supplies. In addition to providing immediate relief, we will continue to assess long-range recovery needs and develop a comprehensive plan to help the Haitian people as they strive to rebuild their lives over the next several years.

"PDA staff member, Carlos Cardenas, recently returned from assisting with an initial assessment of recovery needs with our ecumenical partners. Immediate next steps will include getting critical crops in the ground and community based psycho-social care. Our international and ecumenical partners are looking to PDA's experience and expertise to bring leadership to this area. Lionel Derenoncourt of the Presbyterian Hunger Program also visited Haiti recently to assess the earthquake's effects on our ongoing agricultural partnerships in Haiti.

"A coordinated response team from World Mission, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has been established to identify the needs of our Haitian partners and connect our church, including congregations and networks of support in addressing the long term recovery work to be done. A recent webinar, "Listen Up - Haiti!" was led by staff from these various ministry areas and welcomed 300 participants from across the denomination. Webinars are being hosted by the [Mission Crossroads project of World Mission](#).

"We are inspired and moved by so many generous acts and efforts from Presbyterians across the church... from school children raising awareness and funds, to high school students taking the lead in compiling hygiene and baby kits. From benefit concerts to a Valentine's Day love offering for Haiti. In the face of such a devastating disaster Presbyterians are bringing hope out of chaos. We are grateful for the many ways that individuals and congregations continue to stand in the "GAP" in Christ's name as they GIVE, ACT, and PRAY. We thank you for your compassion and faithfulness."

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.

Monday, Monday

Excerpt from El Salvador Intern Alisah Lundberg's (Des Moines, Westminster) [February 22 Blog](#)

"The Centro Escolar Doctor Alonso Reyes Guerra is an all-boys school and I am teaching grades 3-7. ...I left around 8:10 since my next class didn't start until 8:25. About halfway through my first class with the third graders the lights came back on. I didn't really think about the power being out when I got to school because there is so much natural light inside. You don't necessarily need the lights on all the time. I wish schools in the US had more windows and natural light. I think it's healthier for our bodies. It helps keep us in sync with the natural cycle of our environment.

"The kid's craving and enthusiasm to learn English never ceases to surprise me. They want to know how to say everything in English. As soon as the lights were back on in the classroom they all wanted to know how to say "light" in English. They also like me to write the date in English before each class. Or they'll see something in the room and ask me how to say it in English. It is wonderful to be surrounded by people who want to learn...



"...Since we were reviewing social phrases and greetings today in my classes I learned the ages of the kids a little better. My third grade class has mostly 8- and 9-year-olds with maybe a few 10-year-olds. My fourth grade class is mostly 9- and 10-year-olds with a few 11-year-olds. The kids in both my fifth grade classes range from 10-15 years old. My two sixth grade classes range from 11-16 years old. Not sure of the ages in my seventh grade classes yet.

"The fifth graders today were hysterical. The first class came to me again asking how to pronounce their names in English. One little boy told me his name was Miguel and asked how to say that in English. I told him it was Michael, to which he responded, "Michael Jackson" and proceeded to do the moon walk. The other fifth grade class kept shouting for me to give more and more examples of what I was teaching them and then laughed after I'd given it.

"For each class I've been trying to use examples to demonstrate how to use what they were learning. For learning, "Pleased to meet you" I went around and shook hands with the kids. They repeated it after me. For "What is your name" I randomly asked kids what their name was and had them respond in English. To learn "Excuse me" I went around pretending to bump into people, then saying excuse me afterward. To learn "I don't understand" I went around speaking English very quickly. They looked at me smiling and said I don't understand. It was a lot of fun! Hopefully learning English in different ways will help the kids remember it better.

"Later today, I had the opportunity to see the canton of San Lorenzo to pick up some books from Otilia's house. I'd never seen San Lorenzo before so I was glad I had the chance to tag along. I think sometimes when I'm down here with a delegation I forget about where the team members live. I'm used to seeing them in the Pastoral House (Casa), which is a pretty nice place. It has electricity, running water, tiled floors, plenty of space, an oven that runs on propane, pure water, windows and doors that can be closed tight, and much more. The canton "houses" are not as nice as the Pastoral house. The floors are dirt, there usually isn't running water, not always electricity, and the animals live near the house and are often inside. Washing themselves and their clothes may be done in a river nearby or a "river" that is actually a big pila (cement basin) in which runoff water is collected. This is also a source of drinking and cooking water for families.

"All the members of the Pastoral Team, with the exception of Aminta, live in the cantons. Blanca, Balmore, Idalia, Cecelia, and Jesús live in Alejandria, which is a part of the canton of San Francisco. It is about two miles away and takes around 35 minutes to walk. Miguel lives in the canton San Francisco, which is also about two miles away and takes 45 minutes to walk. Otilia lives in the canton of San Lorenzo. This canton is about two miles away and is a 45 minute walk. Aminta lives in the urban center of Berlin about 15 minutes from the Pastoral House. When Blanca or Aminta or Idalia arrive at the house in the morning, they've already walked quite a ways. They clean the floors, make breakfast, and start laundry often before I roll out of bed in the morning.

"A few days ago, Cecelia invited me to walk with her to her house sometime. We've tentatively planned on this Saturday to walk with her to Alejandria. I am looking forward to the experience; to be able to see what the walk is like for her. There is a saying, "Don't judge a man until you're walked a mile in his shoes". I think I disagree with this statement, because I will walk a mile in Cecelia's shoes on Saturday but that will only begin to touch the surface of what her day to day life is like.

"I came to understand a lot about El Salvador as a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Going down to El Salvador with a delegation taught me more. When I joined Compañeros I learned about a whole other side of the partnership. Being down here to teach in the school and live at the house has shown me another dimension of life here. I am extremely blessed to have the opportunity to experience and understand a little better the triumphs and struggles of the people here."