



# The Wider Circle E-News

## Mark your calendars this week for:

- **March 15-20** – Southwest Regional Partnership delegation goes to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for a week of flood recovery mission work.
- **March 19** – Lunch & Learn Series, *(Re)Visioning Your Church*, Noon-1 p.m., Presbytery Office, Urbandale
- **March 19** – Khadamat Sudaniya meeting, 4 p.m. at Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church, Des Moines
- **March 27-28** – \*CANCELLED\* PW Spring Retreat, Jericho Hills, Lucas, Iowa
- **April 2** – CROSS Ministries meeting, 7 p.m. at Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church, Des Moines
- **April 3-4** – Spring Connection for Youth (6th-12th graders), 7 p.m. – 3 p.m. at United Presbyterian Church, Lenox, Iowa
- **April 4** – Social Ministries Task Force, 9 a.m. at the Presbytery Office

March 17, 2009

[www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org](http://www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org)



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**Office Hours are:**  
 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily

## 'Noisy' Offerings Conducted in some Churches

From The Valley Bridge, newsletter of the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys: "First Presbyterian Church, Willmar, Minn., designated a Sunday in February as "Noisy Can Sunday". Each household was invited to take home a decorated coffee can to collect loose change and dollar bills to help with the cost of the junior and senior high 2009 mission trips and other youth events. Cans were returned to the worship service where they made a 'joyful' noise unto the Lord by shaking the cans." **First Presbyterian Church in Oskaloosa, Iowa**, noted in its January newsletter that it has a "noisy offering" in which children collect spare change from the congregation for use toward church camp. "Heroes" from the congregation agree to match the "noisy offering" and add to it. In Oskaloosa, the offering raised more than \$100 in December. To learn more about this congregation, go to their Web site at: [www.oskalooasafirstpresbyterian.org/](http://www.oskalooasafirstpresbyterian.org/).

## This Week's Highlights

- Weekly Calendar Update
- IRMS Offers New Resources
- Noisy Offerings in Oskaloosa
- RAGBRAI Route Goes Through Presbytery of Des Moines
- Joys and Concerns
- Attend Concert for Sudanese Mission
- Educate Yourself about Joining Hands
- Synod Partners in Mission Program Grants
- Amendment B Vote is Close

## IRMS Offers Calvin Video, Wisdom from Women Resources

**Iowa Religious Media Services**, an ecumenical media resource center and lending library supported by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and six other covenanting denominations, has added video and a five-week study guide on John Calvin's life and legacy and the latest book by Presbyterian minister Diane Karay Tripp. In this work, Karay Tripp writes about 25 Reformed women whose stories have been discarded or suppressed. IRMS can be contacted at: [questions@irms.org](mailto:questions@irms.org) and is on the Web at [www.irms.org](http://www.irms.org).

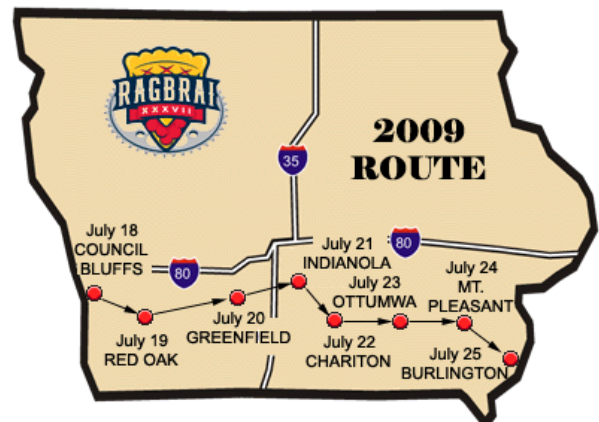
## RAGBRAI Route goes through Presbytery, July 18-25

RAGBRAI, *The Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa* is coming through our Presbytery of Des Moines! Any of our churches that are preparing for the annual overnight stops or day route participants, please contact the Presbytery Office. We are trying to help promote our church services and offerings, whether it is:

- Church dinner and water bottle or pie stand
- Shuttle to private residences for showers
- Laundry
- Tent set-up
- Relaxation in air conditioning of church buildings
- Restroom facilities
- Camping on church lawn
- Breakfast to go

We want to promote this information to all Iowa Presbyteries to pass along to our fellow Presbyterian community. Please send your church's RAGBRAI service list and contact information to

**Kim Coulter, Director of Communications** at [pbycommunication@presbyteryofdesmoines.org](mailto:pbycommunication@presbyteryofdesmoines.org) or 515-276-4991.



## Joys and Concerns

The **First Presbyterian Church in Grimes' Pastor Lynn Williams** reported that his son, Mike, has finished his studies and passed his Ordination Exams to join the United Church of Christ in Delaware. He was ordained this past Sunday, March 15. Congratulations!

Our Presbytery's **Missionary Co-work to El Salvador Kathy Mahler** has requested prayers for a young boy in Berlin, Cecilia's son, Marvin is recovering from an accident where he fell out of a pickup last week (surgery was not necessary, but he has a lot of swelling of the brain). They also took a scan and found a cyst or possible tumor is present from before the accident and they intend to watch closely. Prayers are very much appreciated.

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## Concert for Sudanese Mission

The First Presbyterian Church in Grinnell is sponsoring another fund raiser concert to benefit the **Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church in Des Moines**. The Cottage Grove Church serves the Sudanese refugee community in the heart of Des Moines. The concert will begin at 3 p.m. on April 5 at the **First Presbyterian Church**, 1025 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. in Grinnell and will be followed by desserts sold for a donation. Groups performing are: The Four Tones, Grinnell College Christian Student Choir, Damani Phillips and the Grinnell College Jazz Musicians.

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## Educate Yourself about Joining Hands

Members of Des Moines Presbytery tend to think EGYPT when Joining Hands is mentioned, but there are several Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) involved with several countries in this effort. Cameroon in West Africa is united with the Presbytery of Chicago and the Twin Cities. Christi Boyd, serving in Cameroon with her husband, Jeff, is the companionship facilitator for the network that has been developed there. She has facilitated a national network of mainstream churches, non-profit organizations and grassroots groups to develop programs that include cooperative grain banks in northern Cameroon, a micro-credit organization for small business loans, and an program that is addressing issues of economic justice and environmental degradation involving oil, gas and mining companies. There are fascinating stories from all Joining Hands countries about people networking to provide relief from situations that impoverish life. Please go on line to [www.pcusa.org/joininghands](http://www.pcusa.org/joininghands) to find what is happening through these networks. **Editor's Note:** Our Presbytery's Joining Hands Web site has recently been updated with links to the *Education for All* campaign that our Presbytery is participating in. Go online to: [www.desmoineswithegypt.org](http://www.desmoineswithegypt.org) to learn more or watch *The Wider Circle* for upcoming event information.



## Synod Partners in Mission Program Grants

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies continues to support church transformation, immigrant ministries and new church development through Mission Program Grants. This year alone the synod is providing more than \$70,000 to support five programs, including the immigrant ministries of Familia de Fe in Bloomington, Minn. ([www.cpconline.org/index.php?content=Familia\\_de\\_Fe](http://www.cpconline.org/index.php?content=Familia_de_Fe)) and Knox Indonesian Ministry in St. Paul, Minn. ([www.knoxpresbyterian.org/KnoxIndonesianMinistry.dsp](http://www.knoxpresbyterian.org/KnoxIndonesianMinistry.dsp)); the new church developments of Sun Prairie Presbyterian Church, Wis., ([www.sunprairiepresbyterian.org/](http://www.sunprairiepresbyterian.org/)) and Chain of Lakes Presbyterian in Blaine, Minn. ([www.colpres.org](http://www.colpres.org)); and a congregation transformation at **Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian in Des Moines, Iowa** ([www.cgpresbyterian.org/](http://www.cgpresbyterian.org/)). The Cottage Grove project extends the church's reach to Sudanese immigrants.

These projects also receive financial support from individual presbyteries and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Mission Program Grants provide supplemental, short-term, and start-up funding for new congregations, transforming congregations and congregational-based ministries that reflect the denomination's commitment to inclusiveness, diversity and ecumenicity. Additional information about Mission Program Grants can be found at [www.pcusa.org/missionprogramgrants/](http://www.pcusa.org/missionprogramgrants/).

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## With nearly two-thirds of the votes in, tally is 42-69, closer than last time by **Jerry L. Van Marter**, Presbyterian News Service

**LOUISVILLE** – With nearly two-thirds of the votes in, a hotly-contested proposed amendment to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Constitution is trailing. The amendment – officially dubbed “Amendment B” – would replace the current requirement that church officers live in “fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness” with a new G-6.0106b.

As of March 10, the unofficial tally is 42 presbyteries in favor, with 69 opposed. The final tally will be certified and announced by the Office of the General Assembly. The 111 presbyteries that have voted represent 64% of the PC(USA)'s 173 presbyteries.

A majority (87) of the presbyteries must vote to ratify the amendment proposed by last year's 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in order for the new language to become church law. If ratified, it would tie ordination decisions more closely to assent to the ordination vows currently in the church's *Book of Order* without singling out a sexual conduct standard.

All indications are that the vote will be much closer this year. To learn more or read the complete article, go online to: [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09195.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09195.htm).

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To remove your name from our mailing list, e-mail Kim Coulter [pbycommunication@presbyteryofdesmoines.org](mailto:pbycommunication@presbyteryofdesmoines.org).

Questions or comments? E-mail us at [officeinfo@presbyteryofdesmoines.org](mailto:officeinfo@presbyteryofdesmoines.org) or call 515-276-4991.

Learn more about the Presbytery of Des Moines at: [www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org](http://www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org).