



The Wider Circle E-News

Mark your calendars this week for:

- **Sept. 2-4** – Synod-wide Communicators Conference *Doing More with Less*, at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1975 Rahncliff Ct., Eagan, Minn. Registration is \$100 and includes all sessions, accommodations, opening dinner, two breakfasts and a lunch. If you'd like to attend, contact **Communications Director Kim Coulter** for carpool arrangements at 515-276-4991.
- **Sept. 3** – CROSS Ministries meeting, 7 p.m. at Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church, Des Moines
- **Sept. 4-11** – Westminster Presbyterian Church, Des Moines Delegation will be in Berlin, El Salvador

Joys and Concerns

This fall, **the Rev. Bruce and Nora Geise** of the **United Faith Parish (Diagonal United, Platte Center and Tingley United churches)** are welcoming foreign exchange student Lusekelo (Luse') Lwesya from Morogoro, Tanzania, who is 17 and a junior attending the Diagonal High School for 2009-2010 school year. He is here under the Iowa Resources for International Service (IRIS) program and speaks English well, as it is one of two national languages in his country. Luse' is a strong Christian. While he does not have a formal program, he is open to speaking to groups.

The **First Presbyterian churches in Chariton and Lucas Pastor Linda O'Connell's** sister-in-law, Elise Daniel, died Aug. 28 and funeral arrangements will be in Oklahoma City. Elise had COPD and was bed-fast and on oxygen for a year. Prayers go to Revs. Linda and Dale O'Connell during this time of loss.

Covenant Celebrates Children's Program

The **Covenant Presbyterian Church in West Des Moines** will celebrate and rededicate its partnership with Drake University's Head Start and Early Head Start program during morning worship, Sunday, Sept. 27. Five years ago, Covenant opened its doors and housed one class of 4- to 5-year olds and a parent advocate. Last year, Early Head Start's toddler class of 2- to 3-year olds and Head Start's Home Based Program teacher joined the Covenant-Head Start partnership. Now, on any given day, Covenant houses 60 children providing safe classrooms, playground, an indoor recess room, and a socialization room to enhance the bond between parent-child and to promote positive interactions. The Head Start programs are child-focused and have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families. All are invited to join them at the 10:30 a.m. worship service, Sept. 27, Covenant Presbyterian Church, 1025 28th St., West Des Moines, Ia.

Reformation Conference Set at Omaha Church

The Aug. 10 issue of *Monday Morning in the Presbytery*, the newsletter of the Missouri River Valley Presbytery, noted that a Presbyterian Reformation Conference, featuring Richard G. Kyle, professor of history and religion at Tabor College in Kansas, Saturday, Sept. 26, at Wheeler Presbyterian Church in Omaha, Neb. Kyle is an authority on the Scottish reformer John Knox. Kyle's books include *The Mind of John Knox*, *The Ministry of John Knox: Pastor, Preacher and Prophet*, and *John Knox: An Introduction to His Life and Works*, co-authored with Dale Johnson. The conference begins at 10:30 a.m., and includes two presentations by Kyle and a free lunch. The conference is free, but registration is requested by calling 402-733-1525.

Iowa Religious Media Services Begins New 'eNews'

Iowa Religious Media Services recently announced a new communications vehicle, *eNews*. According to Judy Jaastad, editor of *eNews*, each edition will include "highlights about new resources, examples of resources in use, a story of how the staff solved a resource problem for a subscriber and more." Jaastad said the newsletter will be published near the 10th of every month.

Churches that would like to receive the newsletter should write to Jaastad at jwrite@city.net. IRMS can be found online at www.irms.org or at 3116 104th St., Urbandale, IA 50322-3818 (not far from our Presbytery office).

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www.presbyteryofdesmoines.org



We are located at:

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Office Hours are:

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

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PC(USA) Update

Labor Day Sunday Resources

The PC(USA) Campaign for Fair Food has prepared Labor Day Sunday prayer and preaching resources, encouraging mindfulness of the exploitation faced by farmworkers and the responsibility and power we have as people of faith to work together to create a new, more just food system. For a commentary on James 2:1-17 and prayers for worship, go to: www.pcusa.org/fairfood/resources.htm.

Get your Congregation Featured on the PC(USA) Home Page

Go to: www.pcusa.org/navigation/feature.htm.

PRESBYTERIANS TODAY Announces Harry Potter Bible Study

With the sixth film in the Harry Potter series just released, *Presbyterians Today* magazine has announced a companion Bible study and discussion guide for use with J.K. Rowling's popular book on which the film is based. This new resource is designed to help young people, especially in grades 5-8, draw connections between the characters and stories and their own personal life of faith. This study and discussion guide is the final installment in the 10-part series, "Biblical Themes in Children's Literature." Information about obtaining the materials can be found at:

www.pcusa.org/today/media/study-guides/book-list.htm.



Recognize Children's Rights

There are things that every child needs to live a good life and to grow up healthy. All children are born with the same rights — it's right for all children to have the things they need, it's not right for certain kids to have some things when others don't. Kids have the right to be healthy, to be safe, to be heard and to be kids. Visit the new *Kids 4 Kids* Web site at: www.presbykids4kids.org/, and learn how you can help recognize children's rights. Play games, get a toolkit full of resources and read stories about real children whose lives are being improved.

F.O.G. Task Force Approves Final Draft

The Form of Government (FOG) Task Force has unanimously approved and submitted to the stated clerk of the General Assembly the final version of its work to revise the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The 11 members of the task force spent a major portion of their Aug. 12-14 meeting in Dallas reviewing and refining their work before taking a final vote Aug. 13. The task force released the initial draft of its work last fall and invited feedback from across the church, which was taken into consideration as the group made final revisions to this portion of the PC(USA)'s Constitution. The complete story can be found at: www.pcusa.org/formofgovernment/.

Comparative Statistics 2008 Analyze 25 Years of Reunion

Comparative Statistics, an annual publication of the PC(USA)'s Research Services, provides a yearly snapshot for tracking denominational trends across a spectrum of statistical measurements. The current release takes this analysis a step further. For the first time and in one place, the new book gathers comparative data going back to Presbyterian reunion in 1983 on membership, congregations, baptisms, women in ministry, and financial contributions. In addition, the new publication traces trends in two categories dating back to when data were first reliably collected: attendance (1990), new church developments (1992), and race/ethnicity (1999). The complete story can be found at:

www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09718.htm.

GAC Officially Becomes GAMC

The General Assembly Mission Council is now officially the new name for the General Assembly Council of the PC(USA). The new name is a more accurate reflection of the work the council does as the mission agency of the PC(USA), in partnerships with the church's congregations, presbyteries and synods. Presbyteries voted 160 to 11 in favor of the change, which became official June 28. The complete story can be found at:

www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/gac09023.htm.

'Back-to-Church Sunday' Slated for Sept. 13

As many Americans head back to school this fall, organizers of a new faith-based outreach campaign hope that millions more will come back to church as well. The "Back to Church Sunday" campaign, organized by San Diego-based Outreach Inc., urges church members to invite friends and family to church for a worship service specifically geared toward visitors. The program kicks off with national "Back to Church Sunday" on Sept. 13 aimed at reaching the "un-churched" and "de-churched," people who used to go to church, but don't anymore. Complete information can be found at: www.backtochurch.com.

Emergent Psalter Blends Ancient, Innovative

The Psalms rank as one of Christianity's oldest liturgical treasures, while the Emergent Church movement ranks as one of its newest developments. Blend these two together and the result is a unique and original new take on church music: *The Emergent Psalter*, by Isaac Everett. The author is currently offering selections from the book in a variety of styles as a free weekly podcast on his Web site, www.isaaceverett.com.

Each week includes an interview with a guest and a recording of the psalm in a variety of styles, including rock, electronica, and a capella chant. There is additional information at: www.churchpublishing.org/products/index.cfm?fuseaction=productDetail&productID=6226.

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.
