

Monday Morning in the Presbytery

A weekly news update from the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley in Iowa and Nebraska

Distributed by e-mail only to the churches, Clerks of Session, ministers, Presbytery officers and committee members and others who wish to be on the e-mail list.

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News from our E.P., Kevin Keaton

The US Congregational Life Survey

The US Congregational Life Survey offers a free tool that enables leaders to identify the particular strengths of their local communities of faith. Developed by the PC(USA) Research Services office, the survey is a quick and easy way to understand your congregation's assets and begin planning new directions. More information may be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/uscongregations/survey.htm>

"I don't know the first thing about church."

One Sunday a man and his son visited the early service confessing beforehand, "We don't know much about church." Assuming he was meaning the particular church, a brief story was offered about the history of the congregation.

Again, "What I mean is," the man implored, "I didn't grow up with church people. I don't know the first thing about church. I don't know what to do."

After being reassured they would be welcomed, the man and his son were seated toward the back of the sanctuary. As discreetly as possible, an elder slid in behind the man and his son to explain the service as it went along, to show them where the hymnal was located, to give them a Bible to take home, and to help them feel like they would not be treated as strangers ... even if they didn't "know the first thing about church."

This was not an issue of a visitor who might pray the Lord's Prayer using "trespasses/ trespass against us" instead of "debts/ debtors". This was a wake-up call about the deep cultural chasm between those who are comfortable with church and those who are terrified to enter the doors!

And why should a person want to visit a church? Consider that if one can locate the correct building and navigate the parking puzzle, much more about any church is unclear: where one should enter; where are the bathrooms, where is the nursery located, or where should one sit?

Compound all that with the nuanced intricacies of the service itself (in the Creed, if there is one, does Jesus "descend" or it omitted?), the social stratification of coffee time, or if it is permissible for a visitor to stay for Pot Luck even if they didn't bring anything to share. It is little wonder that many feel much more comfortable attending Sealy Posturepedic Presbyterian!

Some congregational leaders go as far as inviting a "secret visitor" to provide an honest appraisal of those aspects of the church that are welcoming and those that are not. Instead of being defensive about the findings, they use this information to make improvements to the facilities, service, and their processes for welcoming guests that will foster hospitality ... especially those who "don't know the first thing about church."



Kevin

Missouri River Valley Presbytery Prayer Team Meetings

When and Where: May 15, 10:30 a.m. at Walnut First Presbyterian.

This team is praying for revitalization, re-development, and new church development within our presbytery. Everyone is invited to attend or join us in prayer by becoming a part of our internet-based prayer team. Send your email address to walnutpres@walnutel.net and ask to be included on the PMRV Prayer Team list and we will send you the specific prayer requests for our team.

Positions Available

Editor's Note: *Please share these opportunities with individuals you know who may be interested in working with youth or children in our congregations.*

Full Time Youth Director

Dundee Presbyterian Church of Omaha is seeking a Youth Director.

This position is a full time position with benefits. Candidates must have a love for Christ and Bachelors level degree or equivalency in Christian Education experience.

The Youth Director is not an ordained position. This position will report directly to the Senior Pastor of Dundee.

Please send your resume to: David Daisy, Director of Operations, Dundee Presbyterian Church, 5312 Underwood Ave, Omaha, NE. 68132

or by email to: ddaisy@dpcomaha.org

Part Time Youth Leader

NEW HORIZON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 30 Valley View Drive in Council Bluffs is looking for a **Youth Leader**. This position will be part time, approximately 4-6 hours a week for 40-45 weeks a year and can start within the next few months. Experience in organizing and executing church ministries is preferred. Salary will depend on experience with a starting hourly rate of \$15.

Responsibilities will be to (1) Plan and lead two weekly youth group meetings. One group is grade school students and the other is middle school and high school students. These meetings should include group building, worship, discipleship, mission and outreach. (2) Communicate with pastor, church staff and leadership, youth, parents and congregation. (3) Develop meaningful relationships with the youth, encouraging them to grow in their faith.

Characteristics of applicant must be (1) Well grounded as a follower of Christ, having a personal theology consistent with the Bible and Presbyterian beliefs. (2) Live a Christian life embracing Christian disciplines, ethics and morals to be a role model for our youth. (3) Have strong inter-personal skills, working well with youth and adults. (4) Be able to create, plan and execute youth ministries. (5) Be able to provide faith based counseling to youth and adult volunteers.

Contact: Donna Pritchard, Personnel Chair at 712-325-8192 or e-mail dj.pritch@cox.net.

Part-Time Director of Children's Ministry (25 hrs per week)

First Presbyterian Church of Bellevue is currently seeking a part-time director of children's ministry to resource, administer, and lead the ministry to young children (infants-sixth grade).

- Qualified candidates should possess love and appreciation for children and their faith development, an ability to empower and give ownership to volunteers, an ability to be organized, and a personal faith in Jesus Christ.
- Some experience, either paid or volunteer, in children's ministry is preferred.

Interested candidates should send a resume to Don McCon, Personnel Chair, First Presbyterian Church, 1220 Bellevue Blvd S., Bellevue, NE 68005 or by email to donmcccon3@cox.net. Job description is posted at 1stpresbvue.org.
Application deadline is April 20.

News from our Congregations

Central Presbyterian Church

Hastings College Handbell Choir Concert.

When: Wednesday, April 14 at 7:00 p.m.

Where: In the church sanctuary. (726 S. 55th St)

For information, call: (402) 553-4500.

The Presbytery is invited attend.

First Presbyterian Church, Omaha

Electronics Recycling Drive

When: May 1, 2010 ~ 8am -noon (Rain Date: May 8th)

Where: First Presbyterian Parking Lot (34th and Farnam)

For complete information on what to recycle, special fees for tv's and computer monitors, and a flier to promote the event in your congregation or business.

See: attached pdf "Electronics Recycling Drive"

New Horizon Presbyterian Church, Council Bluffs

Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University

When: Beginning Sunday April 11 6-8pm for 13 weeks

Where: New Horizon Presbyterian Church, 30 Valley View Dr, Council Bluffs, IA

This program, taught by financial expert Dave Ramsey, incorporates small-group discussions to encourage accountability and discipleship. Learn how to achieve your financial goals by eliminating debt via a unique combination of humor, informative financial advice and biblical messages. Find out if this program that has helped millions can do the same for you.

The first week's program is free and there is no obligation.

Cost: \$100 (for an individual or couple).

If you want to register, please call Bob Karcher at 657-2417, 614-0911 or 328-9733.

Mission and Ministry Opportunities in the Presbytery

Presbytery Mission Trip: Meet our Nicaraguan Partners!

When: October 29 - November 5, 2010

Who: Everyone!

Informational Flier: Click on link on [PMRV Mission Page](#)

Contacts: Lyle Franzen at lyl.franzen@yahoo.com or 210-6845, or
Joyce Serenil at 345-6093 or blackcat100@cox.

The Great Presbyterian Disaster Kit Haul

You are invited to participate in the Great Presbyterian Disaster Kit Haul!!

There will be drop off sites in Homestead Presbytery and Missouri River Valley Presbytery for area churches and / or PW's to deposit "**Gift of the Heart disaster kit boxes**" **prior to April 26**. A truck would then stop at those churches on the 26th and deliver all kits gathered to the disaster kit collection site in Arkansas. Kits will then be delivered to Haiti, Chili, and other disaster sites around the world. **Joining this effort would alleviate shipping costs for your group or congregation.**

HOW YOUR CONGREGATION or PWCAN PARTICIPATE:

- **Invite** individuals and groups within your congregation (i.e., Sunday school classes, Presbyterian Women, youth group, Bible study groups) to donate items and containers for hygiene kits and baby kits (***see attached Gifts of the Heart flyer***).
- **Arrange** times to put together your kits.
- **Package** kits according to flyer directions, placing kits of like types in shipping boxes, being sure to include name of church, type of kit and number of kits on outside of box.
- **Choose** a drop-off site near you, and call to make an appointment for delivery.
- **Take** labeled shipping boxes to selected site prior to April 26 pick-up date.

Drop-off sites in our presbytery: *Please call ahead and schedule a time for one bulk delivery per church (all kits packed in cartons and labeled).*

- **Central Presbyterian Church, Omaha**
726 S. 55th Street
Omaha, NE 68106-1364
553-4500†
- **Bethany Presbyterian Church, Council Bluffs**
1900 S. 7th Street
Council Bluffs, IA 51501-7240
(712) 323-0901†

Pick-up date: April 26, 2010- so all kits should be completed and at the drop-off site prior to April 26

For more information, Contact:

- Barbara Hipple, 402/802-2703, barbarah@homesteadpres.org
- Darin Bentzinger, 402/788-2847, therevs@windstream.net (Darin will be driving the truck.)

Please note: Let us know if your congregation has already sent disaster kits or contributed money to PDA for Haiti or Chile, by contacting Barbara at the above email address or phone number.

Financial donations to help offset the cost of our coordinated shipping program would be appreciated. Make checks payable to Homestead Presbytery, memo field "disaster kit shipment" and mail to: Homestead Presbytery, ATTN Barbara Hipple, 1135 Eastridge Drive, Lincoln, NE 68510. We will credit your church with the donation.

Older Adult Ministry in the Presbytery

OWLS EVENT SPREADS ITS WINGS

The committee, which plans the yearly major retreat event (**OWLS** -Older, Wiser, Livelier, Saints) for older adults in Missouri River Valley and Homestead presbyteries, has recently expanded the scope of its mission to those adults, voting to become **Presbyterian Older Adults Ministry** (POAM). It is the hope that **POAM** can provide information to and encourage participation by churches in the presbyteries, since older adults make up a high percentage in most congregations.

Each church has been given the 2010 *Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide* to use in seeking helpful activities and ideas for older adults. The Presbyterian Church (USA) has designated May 2 as Older Adult Sunday and the *Planning Guide* has suggestions for honoring older members on that day. However, it's ALWAYS the right time to honor and encourage these faithful saints in our churches. A survey will be circulated and picked up at the Presbytery meeting, which indicates how older adults serve and are served in our churches.

The **OWLS** Celebration is the main event for the fall and is booked to be held at Calvin Crest Camp Conference Retreat Center September 15 and 16.

Scholarships

For Synod School. Calvin Crest Summer Camps or Special Needs Camps

Missouri River Valley Presbytery is offering a variety of scholarships for Synod School (July 25 - 30); for Camp Calvin Crest summer camps: or for Special Needs camps, to be attended in 2010.

See the attached application form, to apply, and return the completed application to Linda Reffert at Hope Presbyterian Church.

These scholarships are administered through the Faith Education & Leadership Development Committee of the Presbytery.

For Seminary Students

A reminder:

Apollos Scholarship Program for those enrolled in one of the 10 Presbyterian seminaries. Applications are due by April 30th. Online applications are available at Omaha Seminary Foundation website:

http://www.omaha-sem-found.org/studentaid_apollosprogram.html.

Organist Seeking Position

Is your congregation in need of an organist?

An organist / pianist from the Federated Church in Columbus NE is going to school in Omaha and is interested in serving as an organist / pianist for a local congregation. If you are interested in her services, contact Jessica Muhle, jmuhle1@hotmail.com (from the Communications and Resource Coordinator, Homestead Presbytery)

Social Justice Opportunities

Benefit Concert for Every Baby Matters ~ One World, Omaha

When: Sunday June 13, 5-9 PM

Where: Arthur's 222 North 114th St Omaha 68154

Local Bands are volunteering their talent for the event.

Consider coming together to support weekly prenatal clinics in South Omaha for One World's expectant moms.

- Plan to attend the concert.
or become a sponsor of the event along with Westminster, Omaha

For more information, contact: Howard Dotson hr_dotson@yahoo.com

Continuing Education Opportunities

Crisis Care Responder Training Courses

Individual Crisis Intervention and Peer Support

When: May 7 & 8 (Friday and Saturday) ; 8:00 – 4:30 both days

Where: Salvation Army Division Headquarters (3738 Cummings St., Omaha)

Cost: \$115.00 or if CCR Member \$100.00

Prerequisites: None

This course is designed for anyone who desires to increase their knowledge of individual (one-on-one) crisis intervention when dealing with individuals who are working their way through the grief cycle, recovering from a crisis in their lives, or suffered loss.

CEU's: Provides 13 hours

This course is required to serve as an Emotional & Spiritual Care Provider with CCR (<http://www.crisiscarerresponders.com>) and it is a required course to obtain a Certificate of Specialized Training with the International Critical Incident Foundation. (www.icisf.org)

International Fellowship of Chaplaincy Training

When: June 14-18, 2010

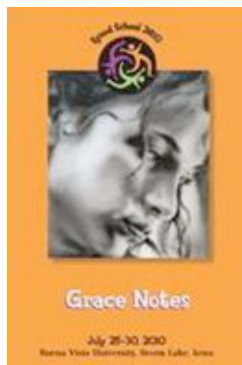
Where: Omaha, NE ~ Monday through Friday (a total of 47 hours)

Registration and Fees: \$295.00, includes training, materials, and workbook

To Register: go to <http://www.ifoc.org>

Course Description: IFOC Chaplaincy Certification Training is necessary for Emergency Service Personnel, Law Enforcement, Industrial Chaplains, and those who wish to become Chaplains and includes training in: Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, depression, Grief and Loss, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Spirituality and Trauma, Suicidology, and Worker Burnout.

For a complete listing of courses offered in 2010 and a registration form please email Marcia Flom: mflom@cfc.org or call her at 402.408.6888.



Synod School
July 25-30, 2010
Buena Vista University ~ Storm Lake, Iowa

Synod School is a special learning and personal enrichment experience for all ages. The week is designed for laity and clergy, individuals and families. Classes and activities are available for adults, youth and children – some separately, some intergenerational – to stretch the mind, nurture the soul, and offer hope.

For more information: For more information contact Diana Barber at the synod office, 1-800-328-1880, ext. 207, or visit the synod Web site at <http://www.lakesandprairies.org>.

Montreat Conference Center

<http://www.montreat.org>

New Center for Faith & Life

Presents Great Summer Adult Conferencing Line-Up

THE WOMEN'S CONNECTION 2010 - Take advantage of a special offer!

July 6-10, Eugenia Gamble heads a stellar cast of leaders for the third annual [Women's Connection](#) at Montreat Conference Center. This year's theme, "Named, Redeemed and Called," incorporates timely workshops, lively worship, and life-changing fellowship designed to empower and rejuvenate the daughters of God.

New this year, the conference offers a money-saving special:

register with a daughter, niece, friend, neighbor - any woman younger than you - and she can attend for a reduced program fee of \$100.

[Learn more](#) when you register online.

BEING "CHURCH" IN A CHANGING WORLD: Two Timely Conferences

New in 2010

[FAITHFUL POLITICS](#), August 8-11.

If God Doesn't Quit When Things Get Political, Why Do We?" For all the talk about faith and politics in the media, there are precious few conversations in our congregations about faithful political engagement. It is time to do better.

Back by popular demand

[CHURCH UNBOUND](#), August 11-14.

The dialogue continues ~ take part in fashioning a new vision for the church are invited to join the conversation.

For more information or to register online, click on the links above.

Fifteenth Annual Daniel W Nelson Lectures

When: Tuesday, May 11, 2010 ~ 9:30am – 2:30pm

Where: Thompson Alumni House, University of Nebraska Omaha

Speaker: Dr. M. Craig Barnes "The Pastor as Minor Poet"

Cost: \$25.00

For more information and to register: see attached brochure

Annual Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation School for Pastors

When: June 16-23, 2010.

Where: Hasting College

The four faculty members who are participating this year are:

Dr. James E. Cobble, Jr., Christian Ministry Resources, NC

Dr. Mike Graves, Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City

Dr. Bonnie Sue Lewis, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary

Dr. Paul Allen Williams, UNO at Omaha

More information and an online application are available at:

<http://www.omaha-sem-found.org/PastorRegistration.aspx>

Conference on Presbyterian History

What: *Christianity and Liberalism*

When: April 21 and 22, 2010

Registration begins at 11:30am and will begin with worship at 1pm

Where: Covenant Presbyterian, 15002 Blondo Street

Featured speaker: D.G. Hart. *Dr. Hart serves on the editorial board of the PC USA's Journal of Presbyterian History, has taught at several seminaries. He edited the Dictionary of the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition in America (IVP) and has published biographies on two leading Reformed churchmen. Co-author of a historical survey of American Presbyterianism, Dr. Hart will be giving four talks on Presbyterian history. Rev. Parker Williamson will also be speaking at the conference.*

Cost: The cost to attend is \$30.00.

Dinner on Wednesday and Lunch on Thursday are included in the cost.

Reservations: by mail ~ Christianity and Liberalism Conference, 15002 Blondo St.
By phone ~ 402.498.9000

For further information: <http://www.cpcomaha.org/CPC/Conference.html>

Announcing: Presbytery Youth Ministry Newsletter

The Committee on Youth Ministry has developed a "somewhat monthly" e-newsletter. It will be sent to those working with youth in the Presbytery.

If you are working with youth did you receive our first newsletter ~ sent out March 21st using Constant Contact. If not, check your spam folder.

If did not receive the newsletter and / or would like to request the newsletter for yourself or for someone else who works with our youth, please contact: Kris Adler at kris@centralpresby.org. Our goal is to get the information out to as many people as possible!

Spotlight on Crossroads Connections

Reflections from Hank Davidson, member and elder of Underwood Hills Church

It has been an exciting and growing time for me these last 2 plus years after being "called" to mission as a transportation sponsor for Crossroads Connection. We at Underwood Hills had adopted the Crossroads Connection ministry as one of our mission priorities and in addition to helping prepare and serve an occasional meal for the Sunday night Crossroads worship service, I really had little idea how I might participate in that mission. One evening, Roy Fox called and asked if I might help by serving as a transportation sponsor. It would just entail occasionally driving some "ex-offenders" from the Community Corrections Center to UHPC and return them back after worship and dinner. That sounded like a good answer to my question of how to serve.

I attended a training session at the Center to gain approval to be a transportation sponsor and learned many of the "rules" along with a wide variety of other people - family members of those incarcerated who line up outside the Center every other Monday evening hoping to get a space in the training session. That was quite revealing and my attitude of uncertainty began to be reduced.

Before long, Roy Fox called and asked me if I would pick up a particular person for Sunday night. That was the beginning of a long relationship with Mike and the start of many other relationships. For me, the people I met as a sponsor became my friends and I began increasing my involvement with them as a friend and mentor. I drove them to school from time to time on education release, job hunting and evening passes for dinner and 12 hour furloughs to my home as they earned those privileges. Most of those people have been paroled or released over that time frame. Another friend is again due for a parole hearing after a 6 month delay the last time. There have been successes and disappointments but my understanding of Christ's love and service to those in prison has changed me, perhaps more than my service to them has helped them prepare to be successful when released. I now better understand Crossroads mission for redemptive service and mission as opposed to vindictive punishment so often still present in our criminal justice system.

Crossroads Connection is a ministry to inmates and their families to help heal wounded hearts and minds. We do this not by predicting the future, but rather helping inmates to prepare for the future by calling them to experience God's grace in Jesus Christ.

If you or your church want to be part of this ministry, or expand your involvement, please visit our website for more information:
www.crossroadsconnectionomaha.org or contact Becky Balestri at 397-4318 or bkillion@hotmail.com

Spiritual Formation and Growth Opportunities

Great Plains Presbyterian Pilgrimage #7

It is life-altering. It is empowering. It is inspiring. It is a body of believers, knit together by God, coming together for the sole purpose of nurturing one another on a personal journey with Christ, and then charging them to go home and impact their own churches"

Great Plains Presbyterian Pilgrimage is a three-day renewal retreat:

Where: Camp Calvin Crest in their comfortable Retreat Center.

When: The weekend begins at 5pm on Thursday the 22nd of April and concludes by 4pm on Sunday the 25th of April.

Cost: \$230 per person (*scholarships available upon request.*) The weekend is all-inclusive, and every guest need is met.

Who: Everyone. All are welcome!

For further Information and Registration Materials: See

[http://www.gppilgrimage.org](http://www.gpppilgrimage.org)

Presbyterian Women

Synod of Lakes and Prairies' Gathering of Women

When: June 16 – 19, 2010

Where: Buena Vista College, Storm Lake, Iowa.

Highlights:









- Worship and Music
- Workshops & Focus Groups
- Soul Desires Book Store
- Ten Thousand Villages – Gift Shop

For more Information or to Register: see attached PW Synod Gathering pdfs.

Event Calendar (Calendar begins on Monday)

April	12	13 3PM EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP ((MOSHER PILGRIM) 6PM HISPANIC WORKING GROUP (CASTELAR)	14	15 12:30 FAITH, EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP (CENTRAL)	16 NOON RETIRED PASTOR/SPOUSE LUNCH (OLD COUNTRY BUFFET , 75 TH / DODGE)	17 10AM SUDANESE WORKING GROUP (CLIFTON HILLS) 10am - 3pm GA Commissioner Training (Calvin Crest)	18
April	19	20 9AM STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES - (PRESBYTERY CENTER) 5PM SOCIAL JUSTICE PEACEMAKING - (WESTMINSTER- OMAHA)	21 Great Plains Pilgrimage #7 (Calvin Crest) April 21-25	22 Great Plains Pilgrimage #7 (Calvin Crest) April 21-25	23 Great Plains Pilgrimage #7 (Calvin Crest) April 21-25	24 10am-3pm Presbytery Meeting - Florence P.C., Omaha Great Plains Pilgrimage #7 (Calvin Crest) April 21-25	25 Great Plains Pilgrimage #7 (Calvin Crest) April 21-25

Prayer Calendar (Calendar begins on Monday)

<p>Apr</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Keep this congregation in your prayers throughout the coming week: Essex</p> <p>Rev. Jerry Lamb is serving as pastor of this congregation.</p>  	<p>13</p> <p>Pray for Rev. David Paul. David serves as associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Omaha.</p>  <p>Pray for Rev. Jody Filipi, chair of the Presbytery's Mission Committee</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Celebrate the call of Rev. Howard Dooley, ordained in 1942. Howard is retired and lives in Aurora, NE.</p>  <p>Pray for Rev. Gale Prentice. Gale is retired and lives in Omaha.</p>  <p>Pray for Bev Macek, member of the Presbytery's Mission Committee</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Pray for Rev. Nancy Profit. Nancy is serving as Moderator of the Sidney IA Presbyterian Church.</p>  <p>Pray for Rev. Bill Osick, member of the Presbytery's Mission Committee</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Pray for Rev. Carl Ratliff. Carl is serving as pastor of United Faith Community in Valley NE.</p>  <p>Pray for Rev. George Moore, member of the Presbytery's Mission Committee</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Pray for Rev. Gregory Reid. Gregory is retired and lives in Omaha NE.</p>  <p>Pray for Leslee O'Bradovich, member of the Presbytery's Mission Committee</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Pray for the Presbytery's Spirituality, Theology, and Worship Committee. Rev. Caryn Pedersen is the chair of this committee.</p> <p>Continue to remember the people of Haiti in your prayers</p> <p>Pray for our neighbors in North Omaha as they say "Enough is Enough" to Violence</p>
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- Please send dates, times, locations of events to: pmrv.mondaymorning@gmail.com. However, to plan and schedule events talk with Joan Royer (joan@pmrv.org or 402-553-8300 or 800-603-8980).
- Please report email address changes to please send your new address to: pmrv.mondaymorning@gmail.com.
- To stop receiving Monday Morning drop an e-note to: pmrv.mondaymorning@gmail.com

Editor's Note: Please send announcements of events, opportunities for spiritual growth, ministry and mission or continuing education and other items of interest to members of the presbytery to: pmrv.mondaymorning@gmail.com.