

# 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

### "Light"

**The most meaningful part of the Christmas Eve Service for me perhaps is the reading of those particular Scriptures associated with the congregational candle lighting.**

It is moving and reassuring to hear the intentional progression of God's illumination: starting with Genesis "In the beginning ... darkness covered the face of the deep", moving to Isaiah "The people who walked in darkness ...", and concluding with John "The true light, which enlightens everyone..."

Perhaps I find **these passages** so powerful because they **provide annual assurance of God's ability to deal with the darkness that seems to lurk at every corner and jump out at the most unexpected moments.**

If there is one thing I need to hear every year, it is the declaration of light! Light that will push back fearful darkness and will show a clear path into joyful hope.

**May God grant to all of us such light throughout this season and in the year to come!**

Kevin



Prague, Czech Republic

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

*May the Blessings and Light  
of the Christmas Season  
be yours at Christmas  
and in the coming year.*

## ***Celebrate the Christmas Joy Offering***

In this season when we celebrate the child born in Bethlehem, we realize that the birth of Jesus ushered in a new realm of God's love at work in the world. Presbyterians can respond to that love at Christmas by giving generously to the Christmas Joy Offering. The Offering helps thousands of students at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges to develop their gifts and find their calling to serve God. At the same time, the Offering helps families of both active and retired church workers to meet unexpected needs through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. Your gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering—joined with those of Presbyterians everywhere—celebrate the birth of God's Son by investing in the lives of all of these children of God.

### **Invitation to a Journey**

**Our Presbytery is excited to invite congregations to join us on a journey to see where God is leading us as the people of God.**

**This pilgrimage is not "one more pre-packaged program with pre-prescribed answers."** It is a voyage to help ordinary members dig deeper into the faith and wrestle with questions about God's call and claim upon their lives and the life of their congregations.

Each congregation that participates in the *Journey of the People of God* will be supported by members of our Presbytery who are trained through the Center for Parish Development. In addition, there will be ongoing leadership events to shepherd congregational leaders along the way.

**MRV is committed to supporting congregations that participate** through providing coaching support as well as paying for all administrative and organizational costs. The only expenses to a church will be for printed study materials provided by the Center and for travel and meals associated with training events.

We hope your family of faith will consider participating and exploring why the world needs the church and why your community needs your particular congregation.

**If you would like to learn more, please contact Kevin Keaton at 402-553-5300 or [kevin@pmrv.org](mailto:kevin@pmrv.org) so that he may arrange for someone to visit with your leadership about joining with us in this rewarding journey!**

## Available: Tape Dubber and Tapes

**Red Oak church has two items to give away: a tape dubber and a box of never before used cassettes.**

**If you'd like either of these items,** call 712-623-4751 and Caryn Pedersen will arrange a way to get them to you.

## Available: Wooden Baptismal Font



Central Presbyterian Church is interested in donating a wooden baptismal font to any interested congregation. It is no longer being used since we had a new one made for our sanctuary.

If interested, Contact:

Central Presbyterian Church by phone (402) 553-4500 or email Rev. Steve Plank [steve@centralpresby.org](mailto:steve@centralpresby.org)

## Invitation to a Conversation with the Faith, Education, and Leadership Development Committee

### Calling all Educators!

**If you are a paid educator or a pastor or volunteer who assumes the primary responsibility for the education program at your church, this message is for you.**

You're cordially invited to join members of the Faith Education and Leadership Development committee of Presbytery for a FREE lunch and conversation about how we can support you in the upcoming year.

**When:** Tuesday, January 18, 2011 at 11:30 AM

**Where:** Fellowship Hall at Presbyterian Church of the Master (10710 Corby)

**RSVP to Linda Reffert at Hope Presbyterian** (402) 895-4044 [lkreffert@aol.com](mailto:lkreffert@aol.com), no later than Friday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, so that we can ensure we have a lunch, just for you!

**Additionally, scholarships are available to help MRV educators attend the APCE conference in Albuquerque, NM in February. Contact Linda Reffert** at the number or address above, **if you are interested in more information.**

## Mission and Ministry Opportunities in the Presbytery

### Thank you to all Christmas Stocking Volunteers

#### Christmas Spirit!

**A special "Thank You" to all of you who made thousands of stockings and contributed to "Snickers Sunday"!** We received so many Snickers that we were able to place TWO in every stocking! The stockings themselves were so wonderfully festive!

**The warden at Omaha Correctional Center personally thanked us for making such a heartfelt contribution to the inmates.** He said that **the inmates looked forward to the stockings each year** and it felt like Santa himself arrived at the facility. He also said that **suicide rates actually lowered because of this small timely gift.**

Such a small gift with such a large impact. **Even adults need to believe in Santa and the miracle of giving.**

### Respite Care or Medical Equipment Delivery Volunteers Needed

**HELP Adult Services: a Presbyterian community outreach relies on many volunteers to serve the mission in our community.** As demand increases (20-27% over 2009), we are in great need for more volunteers.

#### Please consider becoming a volunteer:

- **Respite care for families** dealing with Alzheimer's, MS and stroke recovery (2-4 hours a week)
- **Deliveries of medical equipment** (4 hours a month or 2-3 hours once a week). Vehicle is provided.

No experience is necessary. **All training and support is provided by HELP Adult Services.** We are looking for compassionate and committed individuals to help us serve the growing need in our community.

**Please call Nousha (New-sha) at 341-6559 x102 or Lee at x106 for more information**

### PDA responds to new Haiti disaster

**Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is responding to help prevent the spread of the cholera outbreak identified first in the Artibonite and Central provinces of Haiti.** Preventive measures are being taken in areas where PDA-supported work in collaboration with ACT Alliance is under way to prevent the infection from spreading further in Port-au-Prince and other metropolitan areas. ACT Alliance response efforts are focused on supporting water, sanitation and hygiene promotion. The most effective ways to prevent the disease from spreading are clean drinking water and basic hygiene practices, such as active hand washing and cleanliness of sanitation facilities. **For more information, please click on or paste the following link in your browser:**

<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/pda/cholera-outbreak-in-haiti/>

## **PDA responds to Indonesia disasters**

**PDA is also responding to the two disasters that struck Indonesia in October—the earthquake-triggered tsunami off the west coast of Sumatra and the volcanic eruption of Mt. Merapi about 30 km north of Yogyakarta,** which has caused severe burn injuries and the displacement of hundreds of families. PDA is working with the Christian Foundation for Public Health to provide medical care to people suffering from the volcano's eruption and Church World Service–Indonesia as well as the Mentawai Christian Protestant Church to respond to families affected by the tsunami. ***For more information, please click on or paste the following link in your browser:***

<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/pda/indonesia-situation-report-october-2010/>

## **Season of Prayer for Sudan**

**Prayers are always in order for the people of Sudan. *For more information, please click on or paste the following link in your browser:***

<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/global/sudan/>

**Prayers are particularly in order as January, 2011 draws near.**

A referendum on self-determination for the people of South Sudan

***For more information, please click on or paste the following link in your browser:***

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36774&Cr=sudan&Cr1=referenda>

The referendum is scheduled for January 9.

On that same day, a referendum is also scheduled for the Abyei region of Sudan.

***For more information, please click on or paste the following link in your browser:***

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=89832>

Here the people will vote on the question of whether to retain Abyei's special administrative status in the north or become part of Southern Sudan. Our sisters and brothers in Sudan are in prayer now and will continue in prayer until, through, and after the referendum, which carries with it the threat of violence and even renewed outbreak of civil war.

This season of prayer is open to all people. Pray wherever you are; pray individually or gather with your community or an ecumenical community or an interfaith community; pray in a manner you feel comfortable praying. ***Prayers to use or adapt may be found by clicking on or pasting the following link in your browser:***

<http://presbyterian.typepad.com/peacemaking/2010/11/prayers-for-sudan.html>

**Pray too for Presbyterian mission co-workers in Sudan:** Debbie Blane, Jacob and Aliamma George, Nancy McGaughey, and Ingrid Reneau.

## Positions Available

### Part-Time Secretary

**Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation** starting January 3, 2011.  
Position requires experience in customer service and/or secretarial field including demonstrated competence in MS Word and Excel.

**Please direct inquiries and applications to:**

Dr. Gary S. Eller, President, Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation, 7101 Mercy Rd., Suite 216, Omaha, NE 68106-2616 (402-397-5138).

The Foundation is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

### 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](mailto:ddaisy@dpcomaha.org)

## Middle East Pilgrimage – May 3-18, 2011

**Have you ever wanted to make a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land?**



If you have been thinking of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, **you are invited to join Rev. Deena Candler, May 3 – 18, 2011, as she leads West Hills members and others on a spiritual journey in Israel and Jordan and Bethlehem.**

Join other pilgrims in prayer, study, reflection and worship where Jesus walked and the Patriarchs lived.

**For more, information click on or paste the following links in your browser:**

**The Itinerary** [http://www.pmr.org/newsletters/mm\\_holyland\\_2011\\_itinerary.pdf](http://www.pmr.org/newsletters/mm_holyland_2011_itinerary.pdf)

**Pricing** [http://www.pmr.org/newsletters/mm\\_holyland\\_2011\\_pricing.pdf](http://www.pmr.org/newsletters/mm_holyland_2011_pricing.pdf)

**Registration Form** [http://www.pmr.org/newsletters/mm\\_holyland\\_2011\\_registration.pdf](http://www.pmr.org/newsletters/mm_holyland_2011_registration.pdf)

**If you have questions, please contact:** Betty Manna at West Hills [betty@whcomaha.org](mailto:betty@whcomaha.org)

## Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Invitation to Join the Planning Team

**The committee for Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry is looking for representatives from churches in MRV and Homestead presbyteries to develop a program for older adults.**



**POAM encourages** older Presbyterians to:

- \*remain active in the faith of the Church;
- \*to find happiness and comfort that is compatible with their interests and abilities;
- \*to encourage congregations to become aware of and provide support for their "aging saints."

POAM conducts meetings in open forum, allowing all attendees to vote.

**One annual activity POAMS plans** is the OWLS (Older Wiser Livelier Saints) Celebration to be held in 2011 on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 20-21, 2011.

**New members or interested persons are encouraged to attend the next sack lunch meeting**

**When:** January 26 at 12:00 noon

**Where:** Calvin Crest.

**Our goal is to have more representatives from more congregations.**

**For more information contact:**

- Ernie or Zelda Gutha     [zegutha@msn.com](mailto:zegutha@msn.com)     712.347.5918
- Dick or Miriam Skelley     [rhmhskelley@cox.net](mailto:rhmhskelley@cox.net)     402.339.7345
- Lowell or Reta Johnson     [gettinbyranch@iowatelecom.net](mailto:gettinbyranch@iowatelecom.net)     712.647.2635

## News from our Congregations

### Toy Prize Drive

**Westminster Presbyterian ~ Omaha is collecting toy prizes for the Pediatric patients at the Nebraska Med Center as the nurses are running low on prizes for the kids.**

The only restrictions are no latex or candy. Best places to find items: Michaels, the Dollar General, Target or Walgreens. Suggestions: toy cars, puzzles, markers, crayons, stick on earrings, stickers. Cost \$1-2 range.

Drop off your donations at the church office: Mon-Fri 10:30 AM-5:30 PM  
Westminster Presbyterian Church, 3416 Woolworth Ave, Omaha NE 68105

## Nuts for Sale

**The Youth Group of Central Presbyterian Church is selling nuts to raise funds for the youth fund, which supports the summer mission trip.**

**These are the same nuts that some of you may have purchased from the Presbytery Center** sold by the Presbyterian Men. They are very fresh and GOOD and will be perfect for your holiday baking or for snacking.

**We are selling** pecans, walnuts, cashews, mixed nuts, pistachios, sunflower seeds, macadamia nuts and almonds (the almonds are all shapes and sizes).

**The prices range from \$6.00 to \$7.50 for a 14oz bag (some bags are 8oz).**

**If you would like to purchase some nuts, please contact Central Presbyterian Church at 402.553.4500.**

Thank you for your support of the youth group!

## MOPS at Church of the Cross

### What is MOPS?

**MOPS groups are communities that strive to meet the needs of every mom with children from birth through kindergarten.** MOPS recognizes all moms share a similar desire to be the very best moms they can be. MOPS groups are designed to help!

### Mops Groups do this through:

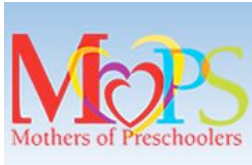
**Discussion:** The intimate and accepting atmosphere of a small group offers moms a chance to share their successes, failures, questions, and concerns. It is during these times that a mom realizes that she is not alone, and lifelong friendships are formed.

**Teaching:** Topics presented at MOPS meetings celebrate motherhood and meet a mom's unique needs during this season of life.

**Creative Activities:** Through creative projects and presentations, women are encouraged to experience the sense of accomplishment that comes with trying and finishing new things.

**and MOPPETS:** During most MOPS meetings, children are cared for in a program called MOPPETS

### Interested, check out:



### Presbyterian Church of the Cross MOPS Group meetings

**When:** the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday evenings of the month; 6:30 - 8:00 P.M.

**Where:** Presbyterian Church of the Cross, 1517 South 114th Street Omaha,

***Child care is available and there's still space available for new MOPS members.***

We are the only Presbyterian church to offer a MOPS group in the Omaha area.

***We'd LOVE to have members from your congregation come and join us.***

**Our next meeting is January 11<sup>th</sup>, after the holidays.**

**Please contact Sheri Sessions at 333-7466 for more information.**

## **Westminster, CB ~ Christmas Eve Service**

**When:** December 24, 2010 -- 7:00 p.m.

**Where:** Westminster Presbyterian Church, 517 South 32nd Street, Council Bluffs, Iowa

**The Westminster Church Choir will present "The LOVE of GOD at CHRISTMAS."** This stirring presentation celebrates the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who comes to us, not to conquer, not to enslave, not to dominate, but to give us all His love. Created by Joel Lindsey, Sue C. Smith and Russell Mauldin. Arranged and Orchestrated by Russell Mauldin.

**The evening worship will conclude with a Traditional Candlelight Service.**

***If there is a cancellation due to poor weather conditions,  
the service will be held on Sunday, December 26.***

## **Westminster ~ Clarinda Special Services in Addition to Their Christmas Eve Service**

### **Longest Night Service**

**When:** Dec. 21, 7:00 pm

**Where:** Westminster ~ Clarinda, 322 N 16th St Clarinda, IA

A quiet time of Scripture, song and prayer, especially for those who experience sadness during the holidays. People attend because they have lost a loved one, or the holidays don't carry the joy they used to, or often because they need a quiet break from the enforced merriment that marks the days before Christmas. It is held on the evening of the winter solstice, the longest night of the year.

### **Good Riddance Day**

**When:** Dec. 31, about 4 in the afternoon

**Where:** Westminster ~ Clarinda, 322 N 16th St Clarinda, IA

This started in Times Square a few years ago, and we've adapted it. There is no particularly Christian aspect to the observance, but is a gathering for people to let go of memories, events or feelings of the past year. Last year we built a fire in a grate in the church's front yard and people burned representations of what they wanted to let go of. We'll do that again this year.

***Editor's Note: This section is for your congregation to share special events.  
Submit information to: [pmrv.mondaymorning@gmail.com](mailto:pmrv.mondaymorning@gmail.com)***

## Social Justice Opportunities

### Book, Movie & Music Drive for Omaha Digital Bridge Project

- **First Presbyterian Church, Omaha needs your unwanted or no longer needed Books, Movies and Music.**



- **All proceeds will support** FPC Omaha's computer lab's newest mission: Omaha Digital Bridge
- **The goal:** to eliminate unemployment in Omaha and build contributors to our community by: Serving the needs of the un- and under-employed; Equipping them to bridge the digital divide\*; and Deploying them with employable skills to serve others and our community.
- *\*Digital Divide: The troubling gap between people who have the ability, access and skills to benefit from computers and the Internet and those who do not.*

- **Bring your books, movies and music to FPC, Omaha.**
- **Program contact:** Rev A David Paul 402-345-5383 [adpaul@fpcomaha.org](mailto:adpaul@fpcomaha.org)
- **For more information and a flyer to promote this program,** click on or paste the following link in your browser:  
[http://pmrv.org/newsletters/attachments/mm\\_100531\\_book\\_movie\\_music\\_drive.pdf](http://pmrv.org/newsletters/attachments/mm_100531_book_movie_music_drive.pdf)

## Continuing Education

*Editor's Note: Please submit educational offerings for pastors and for everyone to [pmrv.mondaymorning@gmail.com](mailto:pmrv.mondaymorning@gmail.com)*

## Congratulations!

### Rev. Jeff and Krista McDonald on the birth of their daughter!

Jeff and Krista welcomed **Katherine "Katie" Hope McDonald** on December 14th at 3:28PM. She weighed 7 lbs 3 oz and was 20 inches long.

## Needed The Loan Of A Vehicle For CDL Driving Test

**Rev. Nancy Profit has been working with a fifty year old man to pass his CDL driver's license. He lives in Omaha and has passed the written test, but no one is hiring until spring and he needs a vehicle to pass the driving part before his temporary license expires.**









**He will need a 15 passenger van or another vehicle that qualifies.** I will go with him and he does have car insurance. **If anyone is willing to loan us such a vehicle for that test before January 3rd, it would be greatly appreciated. We would pay for gas.**

**Please contact:** Rev. Nancy Profit, 712 215-0129, [nancy\\_profit@hotmail.com](mailto:nancy_profit@hotmail.com)

**Event Calendar** (Calendar begins on Monday)

Dec	20	21 9AM STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES (PMRV OFFICE)	22	23 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)	24 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)	25 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)	26 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)
Dec	27 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)  MISSION (NO MEETING)	28 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)  COM (NO MEETING)	29 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)	30 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)	31 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)	JAN 1 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)	2 PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED (DEC 23- JAN2)

**Prayer Calendar** (Calendar begins on Monday)

Dec	20 Keep this congregation in your prayers throughout the coming week: Wheeler  Rev Ed Steinmetz is the pastor of this congregation 	21 Pray for Rev. Jon Sloan. John is pastor of First Omaha.  Pray for Rev. Dean Sparr. Dean is pastor of the Neola congregation. 	22 Pray for Rev. Ed Steinmetz. Ed is pastor of Wheeler Presbyterian Church.  Pray for Rev. Howard Svoboda. Howard is retired and is residing at the VA Home in Bellevue. 	23 Pray for Rev. Barbara Todd. Barbara is serving as pastor of the Missouri Valley congregation.  Pray for Rev. Roger Todd. Roger is retired and serves as a member-at-large on Presbytery Council. 	24 Pray for Rev. Sara Tonje. Sara is serving as associate pastor at Church of the Master.  Pray for Rev. Leslie Traylor. Leslie is serving as pastor of Trinity-Clarinda. 	25 Christmas Day! Celebrate the birth of our Lord! Pray for peace, lift up those who are lonely, depressed, hungry or oppressed.	26 Pray for Rev. Sandra Wainwright. Sandy is serving as pastor of Villisca Presbyterian.  Pray for Rev. Ronald Van Heukelom. Ron is serving as pastor of First, Plattsmouth.   Please keep Susan Mayer in your prayers as she continues to recover.  Please pray for Rev. Dr. Paul Lundell.
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