

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

"A Pastoral Letter Regarding Amendment 10-A"

While it certainly was not the only action taken at the April 30 Stated Meeting, many in attendance were focused on the Presbytery's action regarding Amendment 10-A.

By a ballot of 52 for, 39 against, and 4 abstaining the Presbytery voted in the Affirmative on the Amendment "Gifts and Requirements on Amending G-6.0106b".

Aside from the vote of Missouri River Valley, as of April 26, 2011 the "unofficial" tally of Presbyteries voting as reported by the Presbyterian Outlook is 80 for and 60 against. The most recent "official" count as tabulated by General Assembly is 75 for and 57 against.

Since a majority of votes (87) are needed for approval, most groups who are keeping track estimate that the margin required for approval will be reached by mid May.

There is a wide variety of opinions as to the implications of adoption. As a larger community of believers, it is vital that everyone clearly understand what the approval of 10-A does and does not mean! To that end, we covenant with the Presbytery to provide the best information possible as it becomes available.

We have been informed by The Office of the General Assembly that once the amendment has been adopted, they will provide media guidelines, press releases, and other clarifying communications. As soon as we receive these, we shall forward them to all Minister Members and Clerks of Session in the Presbytery.

Until that time, we are sharing through Monday Morning as well as through e-mail correspondence with every congregation the following FAQ that addresses some of the questions and concerns of our brothers and sisters in Christ regarding this amendment.

As I understand it, this is the beginning of a much longer and broader conversation about our relationships as a larger community of faith. I look forward to our ongoing discussions and fellowship as we seek to live together as disciples of Jesus Christ!

Kevin



FAQ's begin on next page

Frequently Asked Questions

About the Approval of Amendment 10-A

1. What exactly is happening?

It appears likely that a majority of the 173 presbyteries will approve a change in language of G-6.0106b in the Book of Order which was recommended by The General Assembly in 2010. In all, since the General Assembly meeting, 55% of the total number of commissioners voting in presbyteries is approving the amendment.

2. What does this change mean?

The language will change from "living in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness" to "joyfully submitting to the Lordship of Jesus Christ." This removes language that explicitly prohibited the ordination of persons in sexual relationships outside of marriage.

3. What does this change represent for the larger church?

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has shifted the authority for applying its ordination standards from the national level to the local presbytery and session level. This represents a de-centralization of the church and puts more discernment in the hands of people at the local level.

4. May congregations now ordain people who are openly gay?

The previous language was never about a person's orientation, but about behavior. The new language does not list specific behaviors that automatically exclude someone for consideration for ordination. Each examining body is responsible to look at all possible factors to determine if someone is being called into ordained ministry.

5. Specifically, what was changed?

The primary change is the removal of language requiring those ordained "to live either in fidelity in the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness." However, it also adds language referring to obedience to Christ, and indicates that criteria for ordination is judged on a case by case by the examining body.

6. What practical changes will we see?

If pastors, elders, and deacons who are ordained in one area move to another location, they shall be examined by that ordaining body before being able to take up their office. That body may choose to examine an individual based on criteria different from the officer's previous body.

7. Is the ordination of sexually active gays and lesbians mandated?

No, it is not required, but it is no longer prohibited by specific Constitutional language.

8. Will a congregation be required to change anything?

A congregation cannot be forced to ordain or receive pastors or elders or deacons of whom they do not approve. The congregation retains the right to determine who will serve as officers.

9. May a congregation continue to consider sexual activity outside marriage between a man and a woman as impermissible for its officers?

Yes, as long as the application is on a case by case basis. The authority for ordaining elders and deacons is fully vested in the local congregation. The new language calls the ordaining body to be guided by Scripture and the confessions in examining individual candidates for ordination.

10. May a congregation or presbytery now ordain or install a sexually active homosexual?

Yes, if after a thorough examination, the congregation or presbytery believes the person to be called by God to serve as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament, elder or deacon and not to be living in violation of the church's ordination standard, its Confessions, or Scripture.

11. Does the new language give candidates who are sexually active outside the covenant of marriage between a woman and a man the "right" to be ordained?

Nobody has a "right" to be ordained. Ordination is based on a sense of God's call as confirmed by the ordaining body.

12. May a presbytery continue to use "fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness" when examining candidates for ordination?

Yes, as long as the application is on a case by case basis. The new language calls the ordaining body to be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying ordination standards to each candidate.

13. Is a presbytery required to receive, by transfer of membership, an ordained sexually active gay or lesbian minister?

No, each presbytery determines which ministers to receive into its membership.

14. May questions about a candidate's sexuality be asked or are such questions forbidden?

All questions are allowed during an examination. The acknowledgment of being sexually active outside the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman does not automatically disqualify a person from being ordained.

15. Is a congregation required to call a pastor who is openly gay or lesbian?

No.

For further discussion of these or any other questions, please call presbytery staff, who will be glad to visit with you.

Kevin

Positions Available

Chancel Choir Director ~ First, Bellevue

First Presbyterian Church, Bellevue is currently accepting applications for Chancel Choir Director. Interested candidates should send a resume to Don McCon, Personnel Chair, at the church (1220 Bellevue Blvd. S., Bellevue, NE 68005) or by email to donmcccon3@cox.net.

A job description is posted on the church's website (1stpresbvue.org).
Application deadline is May 9.

A Very Important Item From the Stated Clerk

Defining Quorum for Your Congregation WILL BE IMPORTANT if the New Form of Government Passes

If the proposed General Assembly overture regarding a new Form of Government is approved by the required numbers of presbyteries, there is one thing that Sessions should IMMEDIATELY address. The new proposed Form of Government has no specific instructions about the number required for a quorum for meetings. Whenever the Constitution has been silent on procedural issues, it has specified that the default guideline is whatever *Robert's Rules of Order* specifies. *Robert's* has specified a quorum for organizational meetings as a majority of the membership.

What this means is that **all Sessions should make sure that their bylaws (for the congregation especially) specify what a quorum is.** Otherwise, **a Session or congregation could conduct no business (such as electing officers, calling a pastor, or even voting on bylaws changes) unless a majority of the congregation is present at a meeting!**

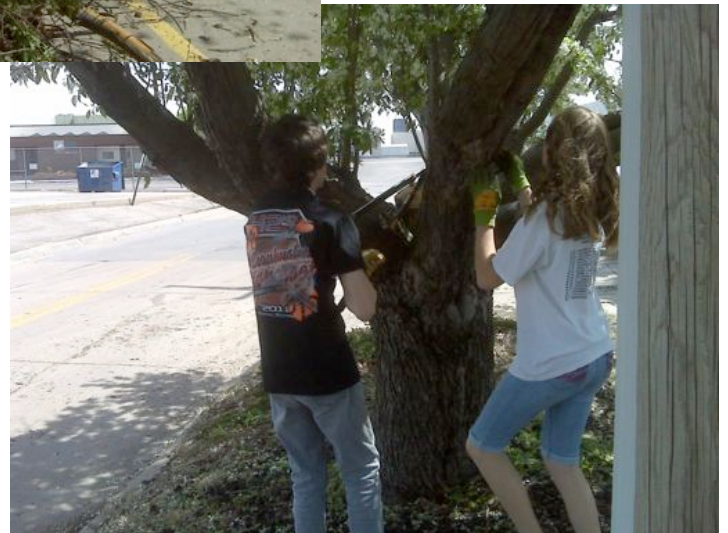
The current *Book of Order* defines a quorum this way:
 "The quorum of a meeting of the congregation shall be not less than one tenth of the members unless the particular church upon application to the presbytery shall obtain the consent of the presbytery to a provision for a smaller quorum. A congregation by its own vote may fix a higher quorum.." (G-7.0305)

A quorum of 10% is one thing; a quorum of majority of the membership is a number that most of our congregations probably would never see for congregational meetings!

Sessions should act on this immediately. If the new Form of Government is approved, it will go into effect on July 10, 2011. Any changes must be made before that date.

[A Very Special Thank You to...](#)

The youth and leadership who participated in the Clean Up Day at the Presbytery offices on May 1! They trimmed trees and shrubs, dug out dead bushes, as well as scraped, caulked, and painted windows. **We are very grateful for the energy of youth and leaders from First Bellevue and Central as well as leaders from Church of the Master and Faithful Shepherd.**



Calvin Crest Summer Camp June 5 - July 15

"The Summer Camp Brochures are out and the registrations are coming in.

Summer Camp at Calvin Crest Camp offers exciting Christ-centered residential camp opportunities for children, youth and families. Horse Camp, Mt Biking Camps, Night Owl Camp, Explorer Camp and more.

Check out the many ways the kids in your life can spend time experiencing God in his beautiful creation. **More information can be found at http://www.calvincrest.org/Summer_Camp.php or by calling the camp office at [\(402\) 628-6455](tel:4026286455)."**

Blessings,
Craig Huffman, Executive Director, Calvin Crest Camp, Conference & Retreat Center

Mission and Ministry Opportunities in the Presbytery

Presbytery Mission Prayer Project

The mission committee of the presbytery is collecting prayer requests (needs and assets or benefits) from presbytery-wide and congregationally supported mission, including prayer requests for any mission coworkers (Presbyterian, as well, as other denominations) your congregation is supporting either monetarily or with prayer.

Please notify the mission committee at pmrv.mission@gmail.com, if you have any mission related prayer requests you would like us to share with other congregations. One way we can support one another and show our connectedness is by praying together for our mission partners whether they are presbytery-wide or congregation related.



Southern United States Spring Storms

Clean up buckets are needed in response to storms across the United States.

Multiple natural disasters have struck the United States over the past few months. Disasters that Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has been responding to or monitoring include flooding in North Carolina, Tennessee and the Upper Midwest; tornadoes in Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Virginia and Wisconsin; and wildfires in west Texas.

WHAT YOU CAN DO?

GIVE.

The generous sharing of your financial blessings through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering and special designated giving provides resources needed to assist with immediate emergency needs, long-term and unmet needs, and spiritual/emotional counseling. Individuals may give by phone at (800) 872-3283, through your congregation, or by mailing a check to:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) P.O. Box 643700 Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700 or give online. **Please include DR000015 on your check to support response to recent storms and other disasters in the United States.**

Congregations should send donations through their normal mission giving channels.

ACT.

CLEAN UP BUCKETS are needed. Please consider assembling buckets to assist our neighbors as they clean up from storms and other disasters in the United States.

CLEANUP BUCKET

- 1 — 5-gallon bucket with resealable lid*
- 5 — scouring pads
- 7 — sponges, assorted sizes
- 1 — scrub brush
- 1 — pkg. cleaning towels (18 reusable, like Easy Wipes®)
- 1 — box dry laundry detergent, 50-78 oz.
- 1 — liquid concentrated household cleaner (like Lysol®), 12 oz.
- 1 — bottle liquid disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn®), 24-28 oz.
- 1 — 1 pkg. clothespins, 48-50 Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.
- 5 — dust masks
- 2 pair — latex gloves (like Playtex®)
- 1 pair — work gloves
- 1 — 24 to 28 count roll heavy-duty trash bags (30-45 gallon, remove from carton)
- 1 — bottle insect repellent (pump, drops or lotion; not aerosol), 6-9 oz. Please purchase all liquids in plastic bottles. Send only new, unopened materials. Put all items in the plastic bucket, packed securely to avoid damage during shipment, and seal lid with packing tape. If shipping, place each bucket in a separate box. *Some local fast-food restaurants are willing to donate pickle buckets (or other 5-gallon buckets with re-sealable lids) or offer them for a small fee. These can be washed out and used for the cleanup buckets.

PRAY.

Please pray for those displaced by the storms, those who lost loved ones, and those who will work to offer spiritual and emotional care or help with restoration efforts. Pray that the light of God's love and the power of hope that is found in Christ will be evident.

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

<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/pda/southern-united-states-spring-storms/>

Disaster Assistance ~ Japan

Announcing a Joint PW – MRV Mission Project The 2nd Great Truck Haul”

In the wake of the disaster in Japan, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is in need of Gifts of the Heart Hygiene Kits. To help reduce the cost churches incur in the mailing/shipping boxes of kits, the Quad Presbytery group (Homestead, Central, MRV and Prospect Hill) are planning a “2nd Great Truck Haul”

When: Monday June 6th. Kits will be picked up at several points along the route and delivered to Ferncliff Disaster Assistance Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. (continued on next page)

All churches and all PW groups are encouraged to help “Fill the Truck”.

PRESBYTERY DROP-OFF SITES:

Omaha ~ Central Presbyterian

(Please contact the church to arrange your “kit drop-off”)

726 South 55th Street, Omaha, NE 68106
(402) 553-4500

Council Bluffs~ Bethany Presbyterian

(Please contact the church to arrange your “kit drop-off”)

1900 S. 7th Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51501
(712) 323-0901

If there are other questions, please contact the Presbytery office at [402-553-8300](tel:402-553-8300).

And Watch Monday Morning for more details.

While this project is sponsored by the Presbytery and PW, other groups or an entire congregation may also wish to participate

Kit instructions:

Hygiene Kit (previously Health Kit)

- 1 — hand towel (approximately 16" x 28", no fingertip or bath towels)
- 1 — washcloth
- 1 — wide-tooth comb (remove from package)
- 1 — nail clipper (no metal files or emery boards; remove from package)
- 1 — bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- 1 — toothbrush (in original packaging)
- 6 — Band-Aids® or other adhesive bandage strips

Please do not add toothpaste to the Hygiene Kit. Toothpaste, which has an extended expiration date will be added to Hygiene Kit shipments just prior to shipment.

Seal all items in a one-gallon plastic bag with a zipper closure.

Available: scholarships for Camp Calvin Crest, Synod School or Special Needs Camps

The Faith Education and Leadership Development Committee of Missouri River Valley Presbytery is once again offering scholarships for use at Camp Calvin Crest, Synod School or Special Needs camps. The amount of the scholarship varies, in proportion to the cost of the camp or event. Scholarships will be awarded on a first come/first serve basis, as their budget allows.

Contact Linda Reffert at Hope Presbyterian Church, [402.895.4044](tel:402.895.4044), with questions or concerns.

The scholarship application, can be downloaded from the Presbytery website - www.pmriv.org - select "FORMS" - Listed under Educational Ministries. (Application may be duplicated, as needed.)

International Youth Camp Opportunity in the Czech Republic International Christian Youth Camp Herlíkovice Czech Republic 2011: *around the world in seven days*

SEM Angel and Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren in Louny wish to invite young people from all over the World to engage in an inter-religious and inter-cultural discussion and to work together to fight stereotyping and prejudices created by people. We would like to have 3-5 participants from each country.

The language of the camp is English.

When:

- Main part: July 9th – 15th: Herlíkovice
- Voluntary additional part: July 16th: Prague sightseeing;
- July 17th: Closing divine service in Louny -

Application deadline: 23rd May 2011!

Price: 1200 CZK including accommodation, meals, program and excursion.
(About \$70 US Dollars) plus airfare

For further information and an application, go to: <http://louny.evangnet.cz/camp/>

If you apply for the camp. please copy your application to jody@czechconnections.org so we can know who is attending from the USA.

Preacher Available

Patrick Bracken, a Hospice Chaplain for Alegent and Chaplain Candidate in the Air Force Reserve, is available for preaching this summer. He is a candidate for the ministry with the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley (Ohio) while living and working in Omaha. He has experience in our Presbytery, especially with Gethsemane Church (Council Bluffs). You can contact Patrick at [330-418-2448](tel:330-418-2448) or patrickebracken@gmail.com

Books Available! *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor

We have 25 copies of this book left over from our annual Lenten Study that we cannot return to the seller. In *An Altar in the World* Taylor takes a look at 12 everyday spiritual practices such as: The Practice of Feeling Pain, the Practice of Getting Lost, and the Practice of Paying Attention. ***It is a wonderful resource for small groups and inspired many in depth conversations.***

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this book for your own library or multiple copies to use for an Adult Education class, contact Nadia Mullin at Presbyterian Church of the Cross (402-333-7466 or nadia@pcoc.us). Suggested donation of \$10 per book. Thank you!

News from our Congregations

Musical Group Needed for May 22nd Service

Sidney Presbyterian Church is looking for a musical group willing to do a worship service on May 22nd at 11:00 a.m.

Korean Presbyterian Church Food Bazaar

When: May 14, Sat 10:00am to 3:00pm

Where: Korean Presbyterian Church, 14015 Q St
Omaha NE 68137

For a promotional flier, click on or paste the following link in your browser: http://www.pmr.org/newsletters/foodbazaar_2011.pdf



Benson Presbyterian Church Annual Garage Sale

When: June 2-4, 2011, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 8 AM - 4 PM

Where: 56th Street and Northwest Radial Highway, just East of the Benson Business District

Come browse our aisles inside and out for one-of-a-kind knick knacks, dishes and glassware, clothes from baby to adult, tools, furniture, bedding and linens, holiday items and toys galore!

Lunch and baked goods will be available each day.

Social Justice / Mission Opportunity in the Presbytery



Music Jam for Healthy Babies for One World Prenatal Clinic.

When: Sun May 22nd 5-9 PM

Where: Arthurs, 114 and Davenport, Omaha

Continuing Education Opportunities

Synod School ~ 'All My Relatives'



When: July 24-29, 2011

Where: Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa

For More Information and Synod School brochure, click on or paste the following link in your browser:

http://www.pmr.v.org/newsletters/mm_synod_school_brochure_11.pdf

Second Annual Conference on Bullying Bullying @ School and Online: International Experts Offer Real World Solutions

When: June 13th and 14th, 2011

Where: Omaha Marriott 10220 Regency Circle Omaha, NE 68114

Cost: \$375

Sponsors: R.E.S.P.E.C.T. (Relationship Empowerment for Students Parents Educators and Community through Theatre) and the Bullying Research Network

A unique conference bringing together internationally and nationally recognized researchers, psychologists, educators, legal experts and parents to work together to stop bullying at school and online.

Online Registration begins, March 1, **to register click on or paste the following link in your browser** <http://www.respect2all.org/>

For more information, contact: Sue Behr at Info@respect2all.org or click on or paste the above link into your browser.



Hope for Today & Tomorrow

Saturday October 15th, 2011

Church of the Cross
1517 S. 114th St. Omaha, NE
8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

David Loleng & Elona Street-Stewart
 Keynote Speakers

+

Workshops & Roundtable discussions
 on expanding the community of God
 through sharing our faith

Missouri River Valley Presbytery
 Sponsored by the Faith, Education & Leadership
 Development Committee

A postcard template has been provided for your convenience as you share this info with your congregation. Please click on or paste the following link in your browser:

http://www.pmrv.org/newsletters/feld_seminar_oct_2011.pdf

The Lombard Mennonite Peace Center Offerings

Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders

When: May 23-27, 2011

Where: Dubuque, Iowa at Immanuel Congregational United Church of Christ.

For Details and the Registration Form, click on or paste the following link in your browser:

<http://www.impeacecenter.org/MSTIcontractedIA.pdf>

This program is designed to equip pastors, church leaders, judicatory leaders, with the skills necessary to deal effectively with interpersonal congregational, and other forms of group conflict. This workshop also includes congregational intervention and consultation, placed within the context of family systems theory. We also do individual or congregational consulting in areas of mediation.

Conferences at Montreat

2011 Transitioning from Solo Pastor to Multi-Staff Pastor

When: May 8-13, 2011

Who should attend this event?

- Pastors considering a move to a congregation with pastoral and program staff
- Pastors of mid-size or larger congregations discerning a need to hone their skills as staff leader
- Pastors puzzled by experiences in serving a mid-size congregation
- Pastors discovering they can't "do it all" by themselves

2011 Arts and Sabbath: The Montreat Artists Series

When: May 8-13

For anyone seeking Sabbath time and exposure to an art form – no experience necessary

Further information, registration forms and housing information for these and other conferences at Montreat, can be found at: <http://www.montreat.org/>



Plan now to attend the 2011 Big Tent!

Registration is now open!

For more information or to register, click on or paste the following link in your browser:

<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/big-tent/>

Reserve your place at Big Tent 2011, but delay travel reservations ~ Indiana's legislature is considering an immigration bill that could cause the PC(USA) to move Big Tent to another location. ***The denomination will decide May 2 on whether and where to move, so until then, please register for the conference, but delay making your travel arrangements.***

Join thousands of Presbyterians for your choice of nine national conferences under one roof, including:

Clergywomen's Leadership Institute/Young Women's Leadership Development:

Inspiring, connecting, and equipping women to strengthen their leadership in the service of God.

Evangelism and Church Growth Conference:

Focusing on community discipleship, evangelism and outreach, and how churches can shift from a membership-focused ministry to a disciple making-focused ministry.

Healthy Ministry Conference:

For Committees on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), Committees on Ministry (COM), presbytery staff, and seminary faculty and staff who want to develop healthy leaders for the 21st-century Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Event Calendar (Calendar begins on Monday)

May	<p>2</p> <p>PRESBYTERY OFFICE CLOSED TODAY</p> <p>9:30 AM - PWP CT MEETING (NEW HORIZON)</p> <p>7PM – YOUTH MINISTRIES (CENTRAL)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>NOON RETIRED MINISTER LUNCHEON (NEW HORIZON)</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>JOURNEY OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD (CALVIN CREST)</p> <p>9-NOON COACHES TRAINING,</p> <p>1-3:30PM CLERGY TRAINING,</p> <p>3:45-5PM PASTORS & COACHES</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9AM-2PM - CLUSTER WORKSHOP - JOURNEY OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD - PASTORS & CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP (CALVIN CREST)</p>	<p>8</p> <p>MOTHER'S DAY</p>
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Prayer Calendar (Calendar begins on Monday)

May	<p>2</p> <p>Keep this congregation in your prayers throughout the coming week: Faithful Shepherd Rev. Darin Seaman is pastor of this congregation.</p>  	<p>3</p> <p>Pray for Rev. Leslie Traylor. Leslie is serving as pastor of Trinity-Clarinda.</p>  <p>Pray for Lyn Graves, member of the Sudanese Working Group</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Pray for Rev. Ronald Van Heukelom. Ron is serving as pastor of First, Plattsburgh.</p>  <p>Pray for Jackie McLellan, chair of the Sudanese Working Group</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Pray for Rev. Sandra Wainwright. Sandy is serving as pastor of Villisca Presbyterian.</p>  <p>Pray for the vacancies on the Sudanese Working Group to be filled.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Pray for Rev. Gary Warren. Gary is pastor of Avery Presbyterian.</p>  <p>Pray for the Sudanese American Fellowship</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Pray for Rev. Dwight Williams. Dwight is the pastor of Peace Presbyterian Church.</p>  <p>Pray for Leslee O'Bradovich, member of the Latino Hispanic Working Group</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Pray for those in our Southern States who have lost homes and loved ones in the recent tornados.</p> <p>Continue to pray for the people of Japan.</p> <p>Pay for all those countries currently seeking freedom from oppression and the rule of dictators.</p> <p>Pray for the Sudan.</p>
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