



APRIL 11, 2008

You can find the synod online at www.lakesandprairies.org and on MySpace at www.myspace.com/synodoflakesandprairies.

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And just one more

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1. REGISTRATION MATERIALS ONLINE FOR SYNOD SCHOOL '08: "Coloring Outside the Lines," the theme for this year's Synod School, is a look at how the church might move beyond timidity and try new things. The Rev. Scott Nesbitt, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Clinton, Iowa, will challenge those at Synod School to become like little children who can paint a picture with bold colors and call it beautiful even though almost every boundary has been completely disregarded. The week is designed for laity and clergy, individuals and families. Classes and activities are available for adults, youth and children – some separately, some are intergenerational – to stretch the mind and nurture the soul. As one individual noted after last summer's Synod School, "I didn't know Presbyterians could gather together and have fun." Another described Synod School as "an unexpected spiritual awakening – wow!" The Synod School catalog and registration forms are posted online at www.lakesandprairies.org/school.html.



2. SYNOD QUILT INCORPORATES 'LAKES, PRAIRIES' LOGO:

Lucy Rupe, executive presbyter in the Presbytery of Winnebago, and Diana Barber, associate executive for leadership development in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, recently completed work on a quilt that now hangs in the synod offices in Eagan, Minn.



Barber said the two of them designed and completed the piecing during a two-day retreat at Mt. Olivet Conference & Retreat Center in Farmington, Minn., "where so many synod events have occurred." She noted, "In selecting colors and patterns, we were imagining the visual changes that happen as you move from the fields and woods of the eastern parts of the synod to the western plains as well as the 'lakes and prairies' of our name. But others may well see something else in the changing colors."

Discussing the fabric in the quilt, Barber said, "Some of the fabric used was purchased specifically for this quilt to provide some continuity within the design and other pieces were chosen from our personal fabric collections, many of which have appeared in other designs and activities at synod events."

Technically, the quilt was machine pieced, hand tied and the border was hand quilted in a design that mirrors the wheat of the logo which is appliquéd onto the surface of the quilt.

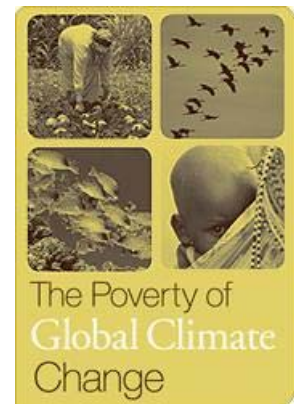
3. BOARD OF PENSIONS LAUNCHES NEW WEB SITE: The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has launched its new Web site – same name new in other ways – at www.pensions.org. This new site offers increased functionality, expanded information, and intuitive navigation, creating an improved online experience. A highlight of the new site is Benefits Connect – <https://benefitsconnect.pensions.org/portal/server.pt> – an online tool that provides non-retired members who are currently enrolled in a benefit secure access to their personal and plan benefits information. Not only can members review their personal and benefit information, but they can also submit changes to their contact information and dependent status. Benefits Connect also features online calculators that members can utilize to estimate their pension and death benefits. This tool makes it easier than ever for members to keep track of their benefits.

4. BOARD OF PENSIONS CREATES MEMBER ADVOCATE POST: The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) created a new member advocate position under the Medical Plan effective April 1. Recognizing that navigating the complexities of third-party providers, especially those for healthcare, can be a daunting experience for members of the benefits plan, this new position will help plan members through difficult situations arising out of administration of the medical plan. The new member advocate position will be filled by Annette Donald, who has many years of service with the Board of Pensions and is knowledgeable about the benefits plan and its relevant administrative processes. Additional information can be found at www.pensions.org.

5. MATERIALS FOR EARTH SUNDAY AVAILABLE

THROUGH NCC: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Web site states, "Global climate change is fundamentally altering God's Creation. ... Our call as people of faith – to protect the vulnerable and to be stewards of God's Earth – means we must act to stop global climate change. Because the effects of global climate change are already impacting those who can least afford to deal with it, addressing global climate change is also a justice issue." Church resources for Earth Day Sunday, April 20, including sermon starters, youth activities, a group study guide and bulletin insert, are available from the National Council of Churches at

www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/worship/earthday08.pdf. Additional Earth Day information can be found at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/worship/worship.htm#earth.



6. RURAL LIFE SUNDAY FETES RURAL CHURCHES, FARMERS, RANCHERS: Presbyterians are being encouraged to celebrate Rural Life Sunday April 27 by learning about issues facing rural communities and congregations and to look for ways to support small farmers and ranchers. As part of the annual observance, rural, suburban and urban churches are being urged to get to know one another by learning from each other and finding ways to be mutually supportive. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08269.htm

7. GLADYE PARSONS TAPPED AS STATED CLERK NOMINEE: The Stated Clerk Nominating Committee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) announced today that the Rev. Gradye Parsons is its consensus nominee to serve as the next General Assembly Stated Clerk, the top ecclesiastical post in the 2.3 million-member denomination. The election – to a four-year term – is slated Friday, June 27, during the 218th General Assembly of the denomination. If elected, Parsons will succeed the Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, who earlier this year declined to seek a fourth term. Parsons has served as associate stated clerk of the General Assembly for the past eight years. In that role, he has been the director of operations for the Office of the General Assembly (OGA), including director of OGA's General Assembly Meeting Services department. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08257.htm.

8. PC(USA) LAUNCHES WEB SITE ABOUT PER CAPITA: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has launched a new Web site featuring interpretive and educational materials about per capita funding at the General Assembly level. The site, Per Capita: The Presbyterian Covenant Community Fund – found at www.pcusa.org/percapita/index.htm – is sponsored by the denomination's Office of the General Assembly (OGA). It is designed to address such questions as: What is per capita? Why is it important? What do General Assembly per capita dollars provide? The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08244.htm.

9. PC(USA) SET TO LEASE PRESBYTERIAN CENTER SPACE: The General Assembly Council announced last week that it has signed a leasing contract for approximately 30,000 square feet of first floor office space at the Presbyterian Center in downtown Louisville. "We are in a prime area for downtown real estate," said Joey Bailey, GAC deputy executive director for shared services, "and it only makes good stewardship sense to take advantage of our location to produce additional funds for mission." The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08261.htm.

10. STUDENTS OFFERED SUMMER SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES: Opportunities are available through the National Volunteers Office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for college students interested in serving the church this summer. Participants will explore Christian vocation and experience diverse cultures as they work at Presbyterian camp or conference centers, help organize church mission trips or serve local communities at volunteer sites across the United States. Additional information can be found at www.pcusa.org/nvo/summerservice/summerservice.htm.



11. PC(USA) 'ENOUGH' SITE OFFERS 'GLOBAL DISCIPLE' OPTIONS: At www.pcusa.org/enough/ there is a variety of information pertaining to global discipleship. From being an "energy steward congregation" to becoming "global marketplace partners," the site presents options for multiple ways for congregations to become involved beyond borders. The site offers links to the Presbyterian Coffee Project, Electric Stewardship, Sweat-Free T-Shirts, Oikocredit, Eco-Palm Project and Global Marketplace. In addition, an "Enough for Everyone" newsletter is available at www.pcusa.org/enough/newsletter.htm.

12. RACISM CONFERENCE SET IN AUGUST AT GHOST RANCH: A workshop developed to show ways to dismantle racism and build community is scheduled Aug. 4-10 at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico. Promotional materials state, "Racism remains a significant barrier to building truly inclusive multiracial, multicultural community in our lives, our

neighborhoods, our church. This workshop will draw on the tools of antiracism training to offer a time for dialogue and discovery, through Bible study and discernment to focus on understanding the ways that racism continues to shape our lives ... " Registration by April 30 will save \$100. Additional information about the workshop can be found at http://www.ghostranch.org/index.php?option=com_oscommerce&osMod=product_info&manufacturers_id=286&products_id=581.

13. RETIREES CONVENTION SET IN JUNE IN INDIANAPOLIS: The 12th convention of the Association for Retired Ministers, Spouses or Survivors is scheduled June 12-15 at the Radisson Hotel North in Indianapolis, Ind. The convention, with an early registration deadline of May 16, has the theme, "Peace: A Dream and A Possibility." More information about the convention will be issued in the organization's April newsletter. Additional information about the organization can be found at www.pcusa.org/olderadults/armss.htm.

14. BULLOCK NAMED TO MISSION COMMUNICATIONS SLOT: Elder Rob Bullock, of Orlando, Fla., has been selected as the director of mission communications for the General Assembly Council. Karen Schmidt, deputy executive director for Communications and Funds Development, said, "Rob's background as a very active member of the church, a story-teller, and a marketing strategist offers the exact blend of skills and life experiences we need to reach out to Presbyterians in the pews with the stories of God's work throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)." The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08277.htm.

15. 'MINISTRY DEPOT' OFFERS WORSHIP RESOURCES: The Ministry Depot, located online at www.ministrydepot.com, offers a variety of sermon ideas and sermon illustrations. But sometimes the tips alone are great. For instance, the Ten Commandments for Media in Worship are at www.ministrydepot.com/infodesk/?p=11. And there are another Ten Commandments for Media in Worship at www.ministrydepot.com/infodesk/?p=14.