

AUGUST 28, 2009

The synod can be found online at
www.lakesandprairies.org.

News around the synod

- [1. OGA releases logo for 2010 General Assembly in Minneapolis](#)
- [2. Moderator to speak at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, church](#)
- [3. Northern Waters plans Texas mission trip](#)
- [4. Iowa church offers new ministry ideas](#)
- [5. Presby College Scholarships helps former foster child](#)
- [6. Student in Lebanon studies at Dubuque Seminary](#)
- [7. Hillcrest students grow 'normal' garden](#)
- [8. Synod School's Facebook group surpasses 100](#)
- [9. Winnebago churches go on mission trip to West Virginia](#)
- [10. Iowa Religious Media Services begins 'eNews'](#)
- [11. Reformation conference set at Omaha church](#)
- [12. Macalester plans to dedicate 'green' building](#)

Conferences, Training set

- [13. Western National Leadership Training event set Oct. 7-9](#)
- [14. Domestic violence workshops set in Nebraska](#)



1. OGA RELEASES LOGO FOR 2010 GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN

MINNEAPOLIS: The 219th General Assembly is planned July 3-10, 2010, in Minneapolis and earlier this month the Office of General Assembly released the logo

(at left) for the event. Andy Rector, who designed the logo, said, "I used a soft, water-color approach to create the effect of water in the logo." Rector is a program assistant for the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council. The logo can be used on church and presbytery Web pages and in bulletins. It can be found on the PC(USA) [Web site](#). ([Return to top](#))



2. MODERATOR TO SPEAK AT MT. PLEASANT, IOWA, CHURCH:

The Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow, moderator of the 218th General Assembly, will speak at the fifth annual Scholar in Residence program at First Presbyterian Church, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 26-27. Registration begins at 2 p.m. the opening day. The program, which

includes Sunday worship and wraps up with an adult forum following the service, also will explore faith, and include Bible study, a local art display, and music and a meal. The Saturday evening meal is free, but registrations are required by Wednesday, Sept. 23. Additional information can be found at www.firstpresbyonline.org. ([Return to top](#))

3. NORTHERN WATERS PLANS TEXAS MISSION WORK TRIP:

The Presbytery of Northern Waters, along with its congregations, is planning a mission work trip to Port Neches, Texas, in January to assist in the recovery from Hurricane Ike. Participants need to be at least 18 years of age, be in good health and have health insurance. Participants will stay in pods in a Presbyterian Disaster Assistance work camp on the grounds of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Port Neches. Additional information can be obtained from the Rev. Rich Blood at 218.343.4850 or Paul Rigstad at 218.727.6576. Registration is required by Oct. 1 and financial donations are welcome. ([Return to top](#))

4. IOWA CHURCH OFFERS NEW MINISTRY IDEAS:

The Wider Circle, the newsletter of the Presbytery of Des Moines, included in its Aug. 25 edition a story of new ministry of First Presbyterian Church in Centerville, Iowa. The ministry includes photography and a blog. The photographs can be found under [visual meditations](#), and the newsletter noted, "With each new photograph that is posted, look at it, sit with it for awhile, see what thoughts and prayers arise, and then, if you would like, add a comment or prayer to the blog." The Rev. Suzanne Gorhau is blogging for worship ideas at www.freshworship.wordpress.com. ([Return to top](#))

[15.](#) **Border, immigration issues conference set in April**

News around the PC(USA)

[16.](#) **FOG task force approves final draft**

[17.](#) **'Comparative Statistics 2008' analyzes 25 years of reunion**

[18.](#) **GAC officially becomes GAMC**

[19.](#) **ACSWP releases 3 new study resources**

[20.](#) **Liturgy created for 'International Day for Climate Action'**

[21.](#) **Peacemaking program offers new 'Minute for Mission' video**

[22.](#) **Evangelism, church growth seeks participation in Evangelism Sunday**

[23.](#) **PC(USA) co-sponsors healthcare call with Obama**

And just 1 more

[24.](#) **Free Inquiry mag publishes stat portrait of nonreligious**

5. PRESBY COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP HELPS

FORMER FOSTER CHILD: Throughout Ciera Minor's young life, role reversals have been the rule rather than the exception. Prior to entering the foster care system, Minor was raised in an unstable household where both parents were addicted to drugs and alcohol and were rarely at home. A child herself, Minor became parent to her three younger siblings. ... Eventually adopted into a loving family in Martelle, Iowa, Minor and her siblings followed their new mother into the sanctuary of nearby First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, Iowa. "That first day at church, I gave Ciera and each of her siblings children's Bibles," recalled the church's former pastor, the Rev. Emory Gillespie. The complete story can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09639.htm>. ([Return to top](#))

6. STUDENT IN LEBANON STUDIES AT DUBUQUE

SEMINARY: Second-year University of Dubuque Theological Seminary Master of Divinity student Jamil Mansour doesn't mind that he "commutes" thousands of miles over several countries to receive a solid theological education. In fact, while most of his classmates are headed to bed for the night, he's just starting his day, which is full of the rigorous work Dubuque seminary requires in order to educate informed leaders to serve congregations. Mansour's home and life are in Beirut, Lebanon, nestled beside Israel and Syria in the cradle of the Holy Land. Yet the dedicated student is actively earning his degree online through the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminary's distance learning program. The complete story can be found on the [PC\(USA\) Web site](#). ([Return to top](#))



7. HILLCREST STUDENTS GROW 'NORMAL'

GARDEN: This summer students at Hillcrest Family Services in Dubuque dug

into gardening and now they sell the fruits (or vegetables) of their labors. The summer edition of Hillcrest Calling, the organization's newsletter, noted, "Early this year, while the snow was still on the ground, John Bellini, residential education director, decided he wanted the kids in our residential education program to experience one more part of a life that many of us would call normal. John decided that our residential education kids should learn about gardening. From that initial dream of bringing a normal" part of life to a group of kids that have not experienced 'normal,' a whole series of events has transpired to bring us to where we are now." The complete article can be found in the [Hillcrest newsletter](#). A Dubuque television station also reported on the garden and the reporter wrote about it in her blog, [Squires Scribbles](#). ([Return to top](#))



8. SYNOD SCHOOL'S FACEBOOK GROUP SURPASSES 100 MEMBERS:

Membership in a Synod School Facebook group recently surpassed 100. The group has a great name, ['Synod School - "Is this Heaven? No, it's Iowa."'](#) and it is administered by Doug and Sue Rutford, longtime Synod School participants. ([Return to top](#))

9. WINNEBAGO CHURCHES GO ON MISSION TRIP TO WEST VIRGINIA: The Aug. 7

edition of Winnebago Presbytery's News & Notes included the following story: "Following a year of preparation and fundraising, 33 youth and nine adults from Forest Larger Parish (Lakewood, Laona and Wabeno) and DePere First United dedicated 10 days of their lives to a 'simply amazing' experience. They travelled to Martinsburg, W.V., where they joined forces with 358 other youth and leaders to assist the elderly, disabled and poor. The 10 days of little sleep, three-minute showers, sleeping-bag-lined classroom floors, and a few bandaids, resulted in nearly 5,000 canned goods donated to the food pantry, 48 homes repaired and/or repainted, and uncountable 'God sightings,' encountering Christ through other people or events." ([Return to top](#))



10. 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@ecity.net. IRMS can be found online at www.irms.org. ([Return to top](#))



11. 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 (left), professor of history and religion at Tabor College in Kansas, is slated Saturday, Sept. 26, at Wheeler Presbyterian Church, Omaha. 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 and published this year. 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. ([Return to top](#))

12. MACALESTER COLLEGE PLANS TO DEDICATE 'GREEN' BUILDING: When Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn., decided to invest in a new home for the Institute for Global Citizenship (IGC), a program to educate and engage students to be global citizen-leaders, college leaders knew that it was critical that the building itself be designed and constructed in ways that demonstrate global leadership. Reflecting that commitment, Markim Hall is the college's first, and only the second higher education facility in the state, to be built with the goal of obtaining the LEED Platinum certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. It is also the first building in St. Paul to be built to these standards. Macalester, which has a covenant relationship with the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, is one of seven Presbyterian related institutions of higher education within the synod. Markim Hall will be officially dedicated following a campus-wide convocation Oct. 1. The complete story can be found at

<http://www.macalester.edu/whats happening/press/2009/July23MarkimHall.html>. ([Return to top](#))



13. WESTERN NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING

EVENT SET OCT. 7-9: The long running Western National Leadership Training Event, a national training event for laity and clergy, is scheduled Oct. 7-9 and takes place this year at Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole, Wyo. With the

theme, "Humor, Hope, Healing," plenary speakers are the Rev. Cynthia Campbell, president and Cyrus McCormick Professor of Church and Ministry at McCormick Theological Seminary, and Gary Eller, president of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation. The Rev. Richard Shaffer Jr., assistant dean of the seminary and instructor in ministry at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, will lead the track for commissioned lay pastors. Additional details can be found at www.synodrm.org/wnlte. ([Return to top](#))



14. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WORKSHOPS SET IN

NEBRASKA: Two one-day workshops, designed to help clergy and other faith community leaders address domestic violence, are planned in Atkinson and Norfolk, Neb., on consecutive days, Thursday and Friday, Oct. 29-30. The workshops, presented by Bright Horizons, a Nebraska non-profit dedicated to the elimination of violence against women, men and children through empowerment, education, social action, and support services, will be led by the Rev. Al Miles, a nationally recognized expert in the field of religion and family violence

awareness. Miles' most recent books, both published by Augsburg Books, are "Violence in Families: What Every Christian Needs to Know," and "Ending Violence in Teen Dating Relationships: A Resource Guide for Parents and Pastors." Contact information can be found at www.brighthorizonsne.org/index.html. ([Return to top](#))



15. BORDER, IMMIGRATION ISSUES CONFERENCE SET IN APRIL: A group of partnering governing bodies has slated an April conference in Phoenix, Ariz., that will address border and immigration issues. Titled "Crossing Borders, Encountering God," the conference will run April 15-17 at the Phoenix Airport Hilton Hotel. Sponsoring partners are the Synod of the Southwest, Synod of the Sun, GAMC Office of Multicultural Ministries,

Iglesia Nacional Presbiteriana de Mexico, and Frontera de Cristo. Included among several speakers are the Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow, moderator of the 218th General Assembly, and Julia Thorne, attorney and manager for immigration services of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Additional information and registration information can be found at www.synodsw.org. ([Return to top](#))

16. FOG TASK FORCE APPROVES FINAL DRAFT: The Form of Government 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. It 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

<http://www.pcusa.org/formofgovernment/>. ([Return to top](#))

17. 'COMPARATIVE STATISTICS 2008' ANALYZES 25 YEARS OF REUNION:

"Comparative Statistics," an annual publication of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Research Services, provides a yearly snapshot for tracking denominational trends across a spectrum of statistical measurements. But the current release, "Comparative Statistics 2008," 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. ([Return to top](#))

18. GAC OFFICIALLY BECOMES GAMC: The General Assembly Mission Council is now officially the new name for the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The new name is a more accurate reflection of the work the council does as the mission agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 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. "For more than 200 years, Presbyterians have been faithfully responding to the call of Jesus Christ, taking the gospel into the world and bearing witness to Christ's saving love to the ends of the earth," said Linda Valentine, executive director of the GAMC. "Our new name is a more accurate reflection of the work we do as the mission agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in partnerships with all of our congregations, presbyteries and synods." The complete story can be found at

www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/gac09023.htm. ([Return to top](#))

19. ACSWP RELEASES 3 NEW STUDY RESOURCES: With the Labor Day weekend approaching and the U.S. Congress poised to take up a number of "social safety net" issues when it returns from summer recess, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Advisory committee on Social Witness Policy has released three related resources authorized by last summer's 218th General Assembly. "Connecting to the Creed" is a new guide to help Presbyterians study and discuss "A Social Creed for the 21st Century," which was adopted by the Assembly by a 5-1 margin. The other booklets have also just been produced on serious mental illness and homelessness. Both grow out of resolutions also adopted by last summer's General Assembly. The complete story can be found at

www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09726.htm. ([Return to top](#))



20. LITURGY CREATED FOR 'INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR CLIMATE ACTION:'

"As Presbyterians, we are supposed to be living our lives out of gratitude, being good stewards of all that we've been given," said Tustin Presbyterian Church's pastor, the Rev. Rebecca Prichard. "I think that caring about creation is absolutely something that we should be doing as human beings, as

Christians, and more specifically as Presbyterian Christians." So when the opportunity came for Tustin to partner with the organization www.350.org to create a liturgy for its "International Day of Climate Action" on Oct. 24, it was a rather, so to speak, organic partnership. The complete story can be found at

<http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09729.htm>. ([Return to top](#))

21. PEACEMAKING PROGRAM OFFERS NEW 'MINUTE FOR MISSION' VIDEO: The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, online at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/, has developed a new minute for mission video to help interpret the Peacemaking Offering to congregations. The theme is "Peace Be With You" and gives more than a dozen practical examples of what that means and how gifts to the offering support activities and

resources. The video can be viewed online or ordered through the [Presbyterian Distribution Service](#). The Peacemaking Offering is typically taken on World Communion Sunday, which this year is Sunday, Oct. 4. Each congregation is encouraged to retain 25 percent of the offering it receives to use for local peacemaking ministries. Twenty-five percent is used by presbyteries and synods, and 50 percent is used by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and other General Assembly Mission Council Ministries. ([Return to top](#))

22. EVANGELISM, CHURCH GROWTH SEEKS PARTICIPATION IN EVANGELISM

SUNDAY: The Office of Evangelism and Church Growth of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is seeking participation in Evangelism Sunday, slated Sept. 27. Details about [Evangelism Sunday](#) and [worship resources](#) are online. The theme for Evangelism Sunday comes from John 1:14, "The Word took on human flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood." ([Return to top](#))



23. PC(USA) CO-SPONSORS HEALTHCARE CALL WITH

OBAMA: An estimated 140,000 people of faith gathered on an historic national conference call with President Barack Obama Aug. 19 to discuss health care reform. The 90-minute conference call was sponsored by more than 30 churches and other religious groups, including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). One purpose of the call was to help launch the campaign, "40 Days for Health Reform," to mobilize people of faith to press Congress to finish work on health care reform when it returns after the Labor Day

recess. A recording of the call is available at [Faith for Health](#) or at [Blog Talk Radio](#). The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09712.htm. ([Return to top](#))

24. FREE INQUIRY MAG PUBLISHES STAT PORTRAIT OF NONRELIGIOUS: The best statistical portrait yet available of atheists, agnostics, humanists and other nonreligious Americans, based on data collected from nearly 6,000 respondents, has been published in a recent edition of Free Inquiry magazine. Luke Galen, an associate professor at Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, Mich., reported on the Non-Religious Identification Survey, which he conducted in conjunction with the Center for Inquiry, a secular think tank. "NRIS is the first study of its type to direct a full range of sociological survey questions to a population of 'nones,' as they have come to be known," said Thomas Flynn, editor of Free Inquiry. "Nones" are respondents who tell pollsters they identify with no religious tradition. The complete article can be found at the [Center for Inquiry](#) online. ([Return to top](#))