

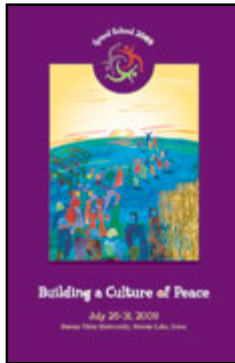
JULY 17, 2009

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

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information sheets pertaining to other Synod School details have been posted on the synod's website at www.lakesandprairies.org/school.html. ([Return to top](#))

2. DES MOINES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES SUPPORT RAGBRAI RIDERS:

Several churches in Des Moines Presbytery are supporting bicycle riders July 18-25 during the Des Moines Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI). More information about the churches supporting the riders can be found in [Presbyterian Neighbor News](#). Additional information about the RAGBRAI can be found at <http://ragbrai.com/>. ([Return to top](#))

3. CONFERENCE SHOWS NEW WAYS TO COMMUNICATE:

Communicators, and anyone else who might want to attend, are being invited to the second Synod-wide Communicators Conference Wednesday through Friday, Sept. 2-4, at the Hilton Garden Inn, Eagan, Minn. Sarah Moore-Nokes, associate executive presbyter in Winnebago Presbytery, will lead the conference's first session Wednesday evening on Google Tools. Attendees are asked, if possible, to bring their own laptop computer. Shane Whisler, communications director in the Synod of the Sun, will provide details about working with Presbyterian Neighbor News on Thursday morning, and Bethany Furkin will also address the conference about the Presbyterian News Service during that time. There is also a possibility that the executive director for the Committee on Local Arrangements for the 2010 General Assembly will be on hand before Thursday's lunch. Full registration is \$100 and includes all sessions, accommodations, opening dinner, two breakfasts and a lunch. For those who do not need accommodations, registration is \$40 for all sessions. Registration is easy, simply send an email to Duane Sweep, associate for communications at the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, at dsweep@lakesandprairies.org. The email should include name and position. The registration fee can be mailed to Duane Sweep, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, 2115 Cliff Drive, Eagan, MN 55122. ([Return to top](#))

4. TCA PRESBYFEST FEATURES JOHN CALVIN BIRTHDAY:

The 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin will be featured at "PresbyFest 2009" slated Nov. 14 at Oak Grove Presbyterian Church, Bloomington, Minn. PresbyFest is an event of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. The keynote

[12.](#) **Western National Leadership Training set Oct. 7-9**

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[17.](#) **Oregon congregation learns of homeless community**

[18.](#) **Young adults return service to Atlanta**

And just 3 more

[19.](#) **Synod's Facebook group grows**

[20.](#) **Peanuts gospel author dies**

[21.](#) **Keillor publishes 'Life Among the Lutherans'**

speaker for the event is the Rev. Cynthia Rigby, professor of theology at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Presbyfest will focus on lay leadership in the church and will feature a number of leadership development workshops. There is additional information at [PresbyFest 2009](#). ([Return to top](#))

5. WISCONSIN INTERFAITH EARTHKEEPING CONFERENCE SET: The fourth statewide Wisconsin Interfaith Earthkeeping Conference of the Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign will be Sunday and Monday, Oct. 11-12, at Stevens Point, Wis. The conference, "Greening Our Faith Communities and Our Lives," will feature keynote speakers, an interfaith panel discussion, workshops, exhibits and conversations about next steps for interfaith action in the state. A brochure, including reservation information, can be found on the website of the [Wisconsin Council of Churches](#). ([Return to top](#))

6. CENTRAL NEBRASKA CHURCHES FEED CHILDREN: In St. Paul, Neb., a town of about 2,200 not far from Grand Island in Nebraska, Wes Stevens, a synod commissioner from the Central Nebraska Presbytery and a member of First Presbyterian Church there, is among a group of volunteers who in 2008 organized a summer feeding program to help children who otherwise might go hungry. The Presbyterian Outlook magazine highlighted the work in St. Paul in a longer article dealing with food pantries affected by the economic crisis. The article quoted Stevens: "In St. Paul, at least a third of the kids qualify for low-cost meals, but what do they do in the summertime, when school is not in session?" So twice a week, volunteers from seven local churches and from civic groups cook a meal, which they are allowed to serve in the cafeteria of a local school. Already this summer, the St. Paul program has fed as many as 66 children a day. The complete story can be found in [The Presbyterian Outlook](#). Bob Houser, executive presbyter in Central Nebraska, noted that First Presbyterian Church in Axtell, Neb., also serves in a summer feeding program. ([Return to top](#))



7. HILLCREST STRIVES TO BE AS 'GREEN' AS POSSIBLE: According to the latest issue of Hillcrest Calling, the newsletter of Hillcrest Family Services, Dubuque, Iowa, "Hillcrest is striving to become as green as possible" by modifying the way it distributes information, modifying its website, establishing a presence on Facebook

and publishing its annual report online. Beyond information, Hillcrest has contracted with a local company to provide geothermal heating and cooling for the Barbara Butler Center on its Family Life Campus. Hillcrest Family Services is in a covenant relationship with the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Additional information about Hillcrest can be found online at [www.hillcrest-fs.org](#). ([Return to top](#))

8. COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES CONFERENCE IN PLANNING STAGES: A planning group, working on the second annual Collegiate Ministries Conference in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, has set Monday through Wednesday, Nov. 9-11, as the dates for this year's event. A location, however, has not been firmly established. Just as last year, the conference is targeted at campus ministry staff and chaplains of Presbyterian-related colleges and universities. Heather Libich, director of child, youth and young adult ministries at First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa, along with Elona Street-Stewart, synod

associate for racial ethnic ministries and community empowerment, and Duane Sweep, synod associate for communications, have begun the planning work for the conference. ([Return to top](#))



9. ANNUAL 'OWLS' CELEBRATION SET AT CALVIN CREST: Monday Morning in the Presbytery, the newsletter of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley, included the following note last week: Presbyterian seniors may want to sign up for the annual "OWLS September Celebration." The "OWLS," which stands for older, wiser, livelier saints, meet each September at Calvin Crest for two days of nature and seminars. This year's event is Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 16-17. Additional information is available from the Rev. Dick Skelley (402.339.7345), George Hooper (402.339.2602)

or the Rev. Ernie Gutha (712.347.5918). A registration form is online at www.calvincrest.org/OWLS.php. ([Return to top](#))



10. PDA LISTS NEED FOR HELP IN U.S. DISASTERS: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has issued a call for help Thursday in three areas in the United States. PDA's announcement included the following: (1) Although it is the third most destructive hurricane to hit the United States, Hurricane Ike has been named the forgotten storm. When Hurricane Ike devastated the Texas coast, all of the major media and press outlets were focused on two items: the 2008 presidential election and the downward spiral of the

U.S. financial crisis. Less than \$500,000 was received to respond to the massive needs in Texas. Information about Hurricane Ike and ways to provide help can be found at www.pcusa.org/pda/response/usa/gustav-index.htm. (2) The Presbytery of East Iowa has several locations hosting volunteer work teams who want to help with reconstruction and recovery efforts caused by flooding in 2008. The primary need is for skilled workers such as licensed plumbers, electricians and general contractors and volunteers who are experienced with drywall or who can supervise others willing to do the work. Information about volunteering can be found at www.pcusa.org/pda/teams.htm#ia. (3) Volunteers are needed for a period of three months or more to help PDA minister to hurricane survivors through the Presbyterian Volunteer Villages. Volunteer expenses are covered, along with a per diem for food and incidentals. Position information is available at [Volunteer Villages](#). ([Return to top](#))

11. PENSIONS BOARD PUBLISHES 'EDUCATION TALK:' With the arrival of summer, the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) hopes you're finding time to catch your breath and reflect, and that you take a few minutes to enjoy this season's issue of the award-winning "EducationTalk" newsletter on Pensions.org? This issue reviews Benefits Plan updates made as a result of the June Board of Directors meeting and many other articles. ([Return to top](#))



12. 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/wnltr. ([Return to top](#))



13. PEACEMAKERS TEAM UP WITH WORLD MISSION CHALLENGE: This year's World Mission Challenge will focus on partnership and it will put that idea into action in a new way. During World Mission Challenge, which runs Sept. 25-Oct. 18, mission co-workers visit presbyteries throughout the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) This year some mission co-workers will be accompanied by International Peacemakers from the same country. International Peacemakers are people engaged in peacemaking in their own areas of the world. They are invited to by the denomination to visit with Presbyterians in the United States to help explain peace and justice concerns of others around the world. Every presbytery within the Synod of Lakes and Prairies is a confirmed participant in World Mission Challenge. The complete story can be found at

www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09573.htm. ([Return to top](#))

14. WORLD MISSION CELEBRATION SET IN OCTOBER: Hundreds of Presbyterians passionate about mission will gather in Cincinnati Oct. 22-24 for the World Mission Celebration '09. Meeting under the theme, "Branches of the Same Vine," the conference will seek to connect Presbyterians with others who have similar mission interests, enable mission learning through presentations and mutual sharing among attendees, and send participants forth to embrace their calling to mission service and support, says Lis Valle,

Presbyterian World Mission's associate for equipping the church for mission involvement. Complete information about the event can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/missioncelebration/>. [Online registration is also available.](#) ([Return to top](#))



15. BOOK TELLS HOW CHURCHES CAN COMBAT GLOBAL

WARMING: A book by Rebecca Barnes-Davies, former coordinator of Presbyterians for Restoring Creation, shows how individuals and churches can make a difference in fighting global warming. The book, "50 Ways to Help Save the Earth: How You and Your Church Can Make a Difference," is available through [Cokesbury](#). It outlines 50 ways individuals and churches can help fight global warming and participate in a part of Christian discipleship, making a connection between stewardship of the earth and faith. The book consists of seven chapters on topics related to global climate change: water, energy, transportation, food and agriculture, people, other species, and wilderness and land planning. Each chapter begins with a statement on

how the content relates to global warming, followed by seven action items. ([Return to top](#))

16. PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM CELEBRATES 40 YEARS: What began with a General Assembly action four decades ago has become a program that has raised more than \$125 million for hunger relief. The Presbyterian Hunger Program celebrated its 40th anniversary with speakers, music and a raffle at the Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women July 14. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was the first denomination to state that hunger is a grave threat and moral imperative for the church, said PHP Coordinator Ruth Farrell, adding that the program was originally charged with five focus areas surrounding hunger: direct food relief, development assistance, influencing public policy, lifestyle integrity, and education and interpretation. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09607.htm. ([Return to top](#))

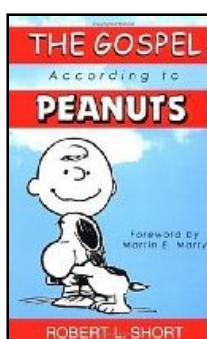
17. OREGON CONGREGATION LEARNS OF HOMELESS COMMUNITY: In March, Emmanuel Presbyterian Church in West Linn, Ore., met a resident of Dignity Village, beginning a new partnership and learning a lot along the way. Dignity Village is a cooperative venture among the city of Portland, Ore., the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Self-Development of People Program and a group of homeless people. It seeks to create a cohesive, self-determining community with temporary shelters. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09574.htm. ([Return to top](#))

18. YOUNG ADULTS RETURN SERVICE TO ATLANTA: Bleary-eyed yet tenaciously determined, some 20 Presbyterian young adults, accompanied by friends, mentors, and members of the General Assembly Council staff, rose uncharacteristically early to roll up their sleeves for a day of volunteer service in Atlanta in June during the Big Tent Event of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This opportunity for young adults to engage in service to the community was one of the special program features of the Young Adult Experience, which also offered 18-35 year olds the time and space to gather for faith-filled discussions, worship and fellowship. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09506.htm. ([Return to top](#))



19. SYNOD'S FACEBOOK GROUP NOW LISTS MORE THAN 120

MEMBERS: As of July 17, the Synod of Lakes and Prairies' Facebook group had 121 members. And, although it could be regarded as only a modest gain, some voices (o.k., written voices) are being heard. The synod group can be found by signing in at www.facebook.com and searching "Synod of Lakes and Prairies." (Hint: the group is the one with the synod's logo.) ([Return to top](#))



20. PEANUTS GOSPEL AUTHOR DIES: Robert Short (right), the Presbyterian minister who pioneered the study of religion through popular culture, passed away July 6 after a brief illness. He was 76. Born in Midland, Texas, in 1932, Short is perhaps best known for his landmark first book, "The Gospel according to Peanuts" (left). Upon its release in 1965 it became the top nonfiction bestseller in the United States, selling over 10 million copies in eleven languages. An obituary can be found online through the [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#). ([Return to top](#))





21. KEILLOR PUBLISHES 'LIFE AMONG THE LUTHERANS:' According to publicity released by Augsburg Books, Garrison Keillor continues his masterful storytelling in his latest work, "Life among the Lutherans." Based on his Lake Wobegon monologues, the book reflects everything Keillor fans have come to expect, a slice of small-town life complete with touching stories and laugh-out-loud moments. Keillor draws on his "greatest hits," including the quintessentially Lutheran "95 Theses" from "Lake Wobegon Days." Other stories are new, with Keillor detailing the entertaining, surprising, and comforting aspect of life in a Lutheran world. The publicity quotes Keillor, "I don't know much about Lutherans and that is one reason I've told stories about them over the years, so I could learn." Information

about the book can be found at [Augsburg Fortress](#). ([Return to top](#))