



MARCH 14, 2008

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

"Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise."
Luke 24:6-7 (RSV)

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1. ARSON SUSPECTED IN IOWA CHURCH FIRE: A Saturday, March 8, fire severely damaged First Presbyterian Church in Monticello, Iowa, located within the Presbytery of East Iowa. Arson is suspected. The Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Gazette opened its story as follows: "Members of the congregation of First Presbyterian Church, 211 W. First St., will hold their 9:30 a.m. fellowship and 10 a.m. worship at the United Church here after a Saturday morning fire damaged their church. Afterward, the church board will get together to discuss their next step. "I'm in shock," said the Rev. Al Polito, who has been pastor at the Presbyterian church 17 years. "It's something you always think about and see on the news, but you don't expect it to be your church." A fire recovery fund has been established and contributions can be addressed to Fire Recovery Fund, 211 W. First St., Monticello, IA 52310-1451. This complete story can be found at www.gazetteonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080308/NEWS/797226733/0/FRONTPAGE. Additional stories can be found at www.thonline.com/article.cfm?id=193913; www.kwwl.com/News/index.php?ID=22654; and www.kcrg.com/news/local/16517896.html.

2. FORMS, CATALOG ONLINE TO REGISTER FOR SYNOD SCHOOL: "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-long event is described in this year's brochure as "a special learning and personal enrichment experience for all ages." The brochure notes, "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.

3. REGISTRATION CONTINUES FOR 'CLEARWATER 2008:' "Rebooting the Church for the 21st Century" is the theme for the Clearwater 2008 conference scheduled April 18-20 at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest in Deerwood, Minn. The conference will feature keynote speaker Leonard Sweet, author of the bestselling "The Gospel According to Starbucks." Sweet has been called one of the most influential Christians in America by The Church Report. He is professor of evangelism at Drew Theological School in Madison, N.J., and visiting distinguished professor at George Fox University in Portland, Ore. The complete conference brochure, along with a registration form, can be found at www.lakesandprairies.org/PDFFiles/Clearwater%202008%20Brochure%20Large.pdf.

4. 'LIFELIGHT' TOUR SCHEDULED IN APRIL: A Lifelight Tour – www.lifelight.org – of contemporary Christian music will be playing stops through Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota in April. The tour of three Christian bands includes a free concert at the Ida Grove, Iowa, Skate Palace, sponsored by the SOS Youth Group of Ida Grove's Westminster Presbyterian Church. Other locations can be found at www.lifelight.org/tours/upcoming-tours/spring-tour. One of the bands, "Bread of Stone"

from Sioux City, Iowa, is currently playing on the synod's MySpace page at www.myspace.com/synodoflakesandprairies.

5. KENNALY BEGINS WORK AT CLEARWATER FOREST: The Rev. Andy Kennaly, who has served in pastoral positions in Oregon, Montana and Washington state, became the program director at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest, Deerwood, Minn., in January, the camp announced. Kennaly most recently had served as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in La Grande, Ore. During Kennaly's 13 years in ministry, he has "never lost touch with his passion for camp ministry," said David (D.J.) Jeremiason, executive director of the camp. Kennaly earned his Master of Divinity from Louisville (Ky.) Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 1994. Kennaly and his wife, Shawna, along with their three boys, Cole, 14, Grant, 12, and Mark, 10, will reside in the Carriage House at the camp.

6. 'IMPORT PEACE' HIGHLIGHTED BY PC(USA) PEACEMAKING

PROGRAM: "Import Peace," a group that promotes economic development in Palestine through the sale of Palestinian, Fair Trade, organic olive oil and donates its profits to charity, was highlighted in the winter issue of Peace Notes, a publication of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Peacemaking Program. The article opens, "From the moment he arrived, Peter Mann [volunteer board chair of camp Presbyterian Clearwater Forest] saw how important the olive harvest is for the wellbeing of the Palestinian people. A participant in the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program's 2006 travel/study seminar in Israel and Palestine, Peter saw the grave economic realities in the occupied territories and wanted to make a difference. Upon his return to Minnesota, he launched Import Peace, www.importpeace.org." The rest of this story can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/pubs/pnwin08.pdf>.

7. 'PRESBYTERIAN PILGRIMAGE' SET AT CALVIN CREST: The Great Plains Presbyterian Pilgrimage is schedule April 3-6 at Camp Calvin Crest, Fremont, Neb. Described on its Web site as a "lay renewal weekend for Christian adults that begins on Thursday evening and ends in the late afternoon on Sunday, ... the weekend is an experience of the grace of God in community." The weekend is structured around talks on the Christian life followed by small group discussion focused on the content of the talks. Details of the Great Plains Presbyterian Pilgrimage can be found in its brochure at <http://oasischurchministries.com/pdf/Brochure-For-April.pdf>.

8. WORKSHOP ON CARING RELATIONSHIPS SET IN WATERLOO: The Vital Ministry Initiative of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa is presenting a Miracle of Kindness Workshop at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Waterloo, Iowa, April 25-26. The Rev. James Kok, director of the care ministry for the congregation of The Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove, Calif. April 25-26 for a Miracle of Kindness Workshop. Kok is the author of "The Miracle of Kindness." North Central Iowa is inviting participants from beyond its presbytery borders. Additional information about the workshop, brochures and registration details are available by contacting Vicki Thordsen at the presbytery office by calling 319.233.1747 or by email at vthordsen@presbynciowa.org.

9. DES MOINES 'FAIR TRADE' COFFEE PROGRAM SUPPORTS MISSION: The Presbytery of Des Moines works with Our Sister Parish in Berlin, El Salvador, selling Don Justo brand "Coffee with Dignity" through churches and organizations, and to individuals. The sale of coffee supports fair prices for coffee growers and workers, and provides support to the pastoral team in El Salvador to facilitate water, education, medical, economic and social justice projects. More details are at www.oursisterparish.org.

10. 'BRACKETING' IS THEME OF PROSPECT HILL'S PRESBYTER COLUMN: Bill Byrd, interim executive presbyter in the Presbytery of Prospect Hill, writes, "Bracketing helps me deal with fearful situations. For example, I was asked a question last week about what will happen if the denomination collapses. It's one of those elephant-in-the-room type questions. ... I immediately bracketed it." The rest of the column can be found at www.prospecthillpresby.org. Once at the site, click on "E-News" and then on the March 13 edition.

11. IOWA GERIATRIC NURSE MISSION WORKER SET TO GO TO EGYPT: The Presbytery of Des Moines reported that it received confirmation Feb. 19 of the approved geriatric nurse mission co-worker position of Denise England, First Presbyterian Church, Audubon, Iowa, in Egypt. She is scheduled for deployment in July. According to the announcement, \$70,114 is still needed to assure complete fulfillment of her 3-year term. More about England, her calling and ways to contribute can be found at www.pcusa.org/joiningheartsandhands/calledtoserve/deniseengland.htm.

12. PRESBYTERIES SLATE JOINT 'OWLS' EVENT: The March 10 issue of Monday Morning in the Presbytery, the newsletter of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley, put it this way: "Heads up! OWLS will gather again in September. OWLS (Older, Wiser, Livelier Saints) is an older-adult ministry conducted jointly by Homestead and Missouri River Valley presbyteries." It went on to note that the event, a mid-week, two-day gathering for seniors is held every year in mid-September at Camp Calvin Crest, Fremont, Neb. The newsletter added, "It is a joyful, helpful, relaxing event. ... The exact dates are not yet known, but it will be in mid-September." More information about the event is available from Brad Field at 402.489.5676 or George Hooper at 402.339.2602.

13. JAMESTOWN COLLEGE GETS GRANT FROM PC(USA): The Jamestown College Department of Religion and Philosophy has received a \$10,000 Teaching of the Bible grant from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The funds are to be distributed over three years to help faculty members develop and teach a capstone course for religion-philosophy majors and minors. Brian Lang and Stephen Reed are the current faculty members in the department. "Our chaplain at that time, Randal Argall, did considerable work in writing up the grant proposal," Reed said. "The capstone course will be a seminar-type course that majors will take in their final year. The course will allow them to study biblical interpretation in-depth in a small group setting of students and faculty committed to serious research and scholarship." The capstone course will focus upon one of the great interpreters of the Bible and the impact of his or her work. The complete article can be found at www.jc.edu/campus/campusClips.php#483.

14. HASTINGS COLLEGE RECEIVES \$30,000 KEMPER GRANT: The Chicago, Ill.-based James S. Kemper Foundation awarded a \$30,000 grant to Hastings College to establish the Kemper Program in Social Entrepreneurship and enhance the college's Center for Servant Leadership. The Kemper Program in Social Entrepreneurship will include "Envision Grants" to enable faculty and students to plan and carry out new service learning projects, and provide funds for a leadership development training program. The full story can be found at <http://www.hastings.edu/igsbase/igstemplate.cfm?SRC=MD006&SRCN=articledetails&GnavID=144&SnavID=194&TnavID=&NewsID=1478>.

15. KIRKPATRICK WILL BE VISITING PROF AT LOUISVILLE: Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary has announced the appointment of the Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick as visiting professor of ecumenical studies and global ministries, beginning next

fall. The announcement was made during the "Voices of the Church Dinner," which was held last week in conjunction with Louisville Seminary's annual Festival of Theology and Alum Reunion. Kirkpatrick was the guest speaker. Kirkpatrick is currently stated clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) He is also president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and serves on the governing boards of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and the Council of Presidents, United States Chapter, of the World Conference on Religion and Peace. The full story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08180.htm.

16. PRINCETON SEMINARY, MICROSOFT FORM PARTNERSHIP: Religion will more readily be at the world's fingertips thanks to a new partnership between Princeton Theological Seminary [www.ptsem.edu] and Microsoft Corp. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)-related seminary and the technology giant have entered into an agreement to digitize a large number of public materials from Princeton's library. That means the library will now contribute content to Microsoft's Live Search Book service, which is accessed by people across the globe. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08192.htm.

17. COE COLLEGE PLANS 'CONCERT FOR ERIN:' The Women's Chorale at Coe College of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is presenting a fundraising program Friday, March 21, for senior history major Erin Daman, a longtime singer in the chorale, who was involved in a serious automobile accident Feb. 4 on her way to school from her home in Springville, Iowa. She remains in critical condition at the University of Iowa Hospitals in Iowa City. The "Concert for Erin" will take place at noon in Sinclair Auditorium on the college campus. A free-will offering will be accepted and presented to Daman's family. Additional information can be obtained by calling 319.399.8521.

18. THEOLOGY LECTURES SET THIS FALL AT BUENA VISTA: John McClure, the Charles G. Finney professor of homiletics and chair of the graduate department of religion at Vanderbilt Divinity School, will present the Robert and Barbara Tollefson Reformed Theology Lectures at Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa, Oct. 27. The first lecture is titled "Listen to the Music: Popular Music and Christian Identity" and the second is "Calvin Speaks to Music Row." More details will be available in the future at www.bvu.edu.

19. UNITED ANNOUNCES ENVIRONMENTAL THEOLOGY LECTURES: The Rev. Larry Rasmussen, the Reinhold Niebuhr professor emeritus of social ethics at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and co-author with Daniel Maguire of "Earth Community, Earth Ethics, Ethics for a Small Planet," will deliver the United Theological Seminary's Picard Lectures in Environmental Theology and Ethics March 31 at 7:30 p.m. and April 1 at 11 a.m. in Bigelow Chapel at the seminary, 3000 5th St NW, New Brighton, Minn. The lectures will explore and investigate the Christian traditions of baptism and Eucharist with a view to Christianity's ecological phase and a planet in jeopardy at human hands. The lectures are free and open to the public.

20. EVANGELISM CONFERENCE LOOKS AT MULTICULTURAL WORLD: The need for the church to revitalize and strengthen its commitment to evangelism in a rapidly growing multicultural world will be the focus of the ninth annual Multicultural Conference of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in San Antonio, Texas. The official theme of the April 10-13 event is Gather All Nations and Tongues: Good News for All Congregations, inspired by the prophesy of Isaiah 66:18. "We hope that Isaiah's prophesy will be a blessing and inspiration for our gathering as we seek to claim, celebrate and live our calling as a multicultural church, preaching the good news to all with emphasis on spiritual growth, peace and

justice," said the Rev. Raafat Girgis, a conference planner and the PC(USA)'s associate for multicultural ministries. The full story is at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08174.htm.

21. COACHING SKILLS TRAINING FOR TRANSFORMATION SET: The Office of Congregational Transformation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is offering a three-day session on coaching skills for a Presbytery Team. The purpose is to train the presbytery teams in the use of coaching skills to assist the pastor and the congregation in clarifying specific goals for the health of the congregation. Each team should consist of at least 2-4 people. The training will be April 28-30 at the National Christian Conference Center, Valley Forge, Pa. Details can be found at www.pcusa.org/transformation.

22. LIVING WATERS GETS NON-PROFIT STATUS ON YOUTUBE: Living Waters for the World is tapping even further than it already has into the video world of YouTube.com now that it officially has its own non-profit channel. The Franklin, Tenn.,-based Presbyterian ministry that helps provide clean water to places in the world that need it most applied and was given its own channel by YouTube, which features a smattering of videos produced by a range of individuals and organizations. Via www.youtube.com/lwwmission, viewers can see ministry public service announcements and LWW's new film, Clean Water for All of God's Children, according to LWW administrator Steve Young. The complete story is at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08177.htm.

23. 'SOUPER BOWL' GETS \$1 MILLION FROM PRESBYTERIANS: Souper Bowl of Caring officials say Presbyterian churches collected more than \$1 million in last month's annual anti-hunger campaign. As of March 5, organizers say, 2,356 Presbyterian churches nationwide had raised \$1,001,523 — and collections haven't been fully reported. The total marks the second straight year that Presbyterian collections broke the \$1 million mark. So far some 14,654 organizations and congregations from a variety of U.S. religious denominations have reported collecting a record \$9.5 million, according to Souper Bowl officials. The full story is at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08178.htm.

24. SUMMER REGIONAL COMMUNICATORS EVENT SET IN ILLINOIS: In addition to a regional conference at Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina April 30-May 2, the Presbyterian Communicators Network will conduct a summer regional conference at at Stronghold Conference Center in Oregon, Ill., Aug. 25-27 and Menucha Camp and Conference Center near Portland, Ore., Oct. 29-31. The conferences will feature interactive workshops, stimulating plenary, reflective worship and lively conversation with others who have similar communication responsibilities. Participants will learn to upload multi-media to Web sites, create online social networks, develop communicator networks and freshen up writing skills. The conference fee for each event is \$250, which includes all the programs, group meals and two nights lodging. Commuter rates will also be available. More details are at www.pcusa.org/comnet. Questions about the conferences can be addressed to planning committee members: Kim Coulter, Des Moines Presbytery, 515.276.4991, pbycommunication@qwest.net; Dennis Sanders, Twin Cities Area Presbytery, 888.323.4714, communications@ptcaweb.org; Duane Sweep, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, 800.328.1880 est. 206, dsweep@lakesandprairies.org; or Pat Wakeley, Blackhawk Presbytery, 815.732.3258 ext. 610 or ext. 5, patw@blackhawkpresbytery.org.

25. NCC ANNOUNCES EARTH DAY SUNDAY RESOURCE: The National Council of Churches is providing resources for Climate and Poverty Earth Day Sunday. The council notes, "As people of faith, addressing climate change is a justice issue. ... [the council] is marking Earth Day Sunday by recognizing the interconnectedness of poverty and climate

change and offering a resource for worship, adult study and youth activities." The materials can be accessed at www.nccecojustice.org/index.htm.

26. PEW FORUM RELEASES GUIDE TO CHURCH POLITICAL ACTIVITY: Can a minister, rabbi, imam or other member of the clergy endorse a candidate from the pulpit or speak on political issues of interest to voters? Is a church or other house of worship legally permitted to register voters or distribute voter guides? Answers to these and many other questions are contained in Politics and the Pulpit 2008: A Guide to the Internal Revenue Codes Restrictions on the Political Activity of Religious Organizations, recently released by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, sets out in plain English the rules governing political activity that apply to nonprofit organizations (including churches and other religious groups) that are exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. To full report is located at www.pewforum.org/docs/?DocID=280.