



# Keeping in Touch

An e-newsletter for ministry partners in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies

**OCTOBER 12, 2009**

The synod can be found online at [www.lakesandprairies.org](http://www.lakesandprairies.org). Also check out the Presbyterian Neighborhood at <http://lakesprairies.pnnews.org>.

## News around the synod

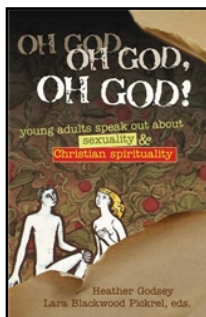
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**1. SYNOD MEETING SUMMARY POSTED ONLINE:** The unofficial meeting summary of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies fall meeting is posted online. The summary contains information about the

synod's 2010 budget, election of 2010 moderator and vice moderator, and 2009 Synod School summary. The summary can be found at "[Fall Meeting Summary](#)." ([Return to top](#))

**2. LUKENS NAMED WINNER OF CONSTITUTIONAL SERVICES AWARD:** The Rev. Michael Lukens, stated clerk of Winnebago Presbytery, was named the C. Fred Jenkins Constitutional Services Award winner during breakfast Oct. 6 at the Fall Polity Conference of the Office of the General Assembly in Minneapolis. The award is presented annually to an individual who has given "wise, prudent, and vigilant support to the constitution and polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" in memory of C. Fred Jenkins, who served as the associate stated clerk of the denomination from 1990 until his death in 2001. Lukens begins his 13th 3-year term as Winnebago's stated clerk Jan. 1. The official presentation of the award will be made during the 219th General Assembly in July in Minneapolis. ([Return to top](#))



**3. COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES CONFERENCE WEEKS AWAY:** The Synod of Lakes and Prairies' collegiate ministries conference is coming up Monday through Wednesday, Nov. 9-11, in Cedar Falls, Iowa, and here's just a little hint of what's in store at "Making Connections in Times of Change," the conference theme. The speaker lineup includes Benson Hines,

author of "[Reaching the Campus Tribes](#);" Kathryn Campbell, associate pastor of youth and congregational fellowship at [Starmount Presbyterian Church](#) in Greensboro, N.C., talking about social networking; and Heather Godsey, program director for the Wesley Foundation at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tenn., and co-editor of "[Oh God, Oh God, Oh God!: Young Adults Speak Out About Sexuality and Christian Spirituality](#)." Garnett Foster, who retired this summer as director of field education and ministry placement at [Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary](#), will lead conference participants in a discussion on the status of collegiate ministry and its future. Tuesday evening of the conference is set aside as free time to provide for networking among conference participants. Details will soon be online. Registration is only \$50. If you're interested, drop a note to Duane Sweep at [dsweep@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:dsweep@lakesandprairies.org). ([Return to top](#))

**4. COLOMBIAN PASTOR SPEAKS OF PEACEMAKING AMID CIVIL WAR:** Beside a table dressed with a colorful Colombian tapestry

affairs head

**Pensions news**

**13. Changes in medical plan reported in Bulletin**

**14. Pensions Board posts EducationTalk**

**PC(USA) news**

**15. Mission Challenge speakers commissioned**

**16. GAMC reaffirms support of News Service**

**17. Ghost Ranch withdraws incorporation proposal**

**18. Changing environment challenges congregations**

**19. Youth Triennium coming up in July 2010**

**20. Development of new hymnal continues**

**21. Yodogawa hospital makes large gift to PC(USA)**

**And a couple more**

**22. Patheos launches dialogue on religion, education**

**23. Riding sea of change in U.S. churches**



and set with baskets of bread, the Rev. Diego Higuita preached in Spanish on his vision of peace during two worship services at First Presbyterian Church in

Neenah, Wis., Oct. 4. Higuita, general secretary of both the Presbyterian Church of Colombia and the country's Uraba Presbytery, visited the church on World Communion Sunday as one of more than 40 international mission workers and peacemakers sharing their stories with Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) presbyteries in October. *(In the photo above, the Rev. Higuita (left) brings official greetings from Uraba Presbytery to Winnebago Presbytery. Receiving the greetings are the Rev. Michael Lukens, stated clerk, and the Rev. Mara Rivera.)* The complete story can be found at "[Diego Higuita](#)." ([Return to top](#))

**5. PASTOR RACES IN 'FASTER PASTOR'**

**FEATURE:** The Jackson County Speedway in Jackson, Minn., ran a special "Charity Night" evening Aug. 15 that featured a special event called "Faster Pastor" and the Rev. Christopher Drew of First Presbyterian Church in Jackson was one of seven area pastors who competed in the event. "I found out about the race just before racing season began," Drew said. "Right away, I knew I wanted to be a part of the action. ... " The complete story can be found at "[Faster Pastor](#)." ([Return to top](#))

**6. FAITH, CULTURE WORKSHOP SET IN**

**NORTHERN PLAINS:** Doug Pagitt, co-founder of Emergent Village, a social network of Christians around the world, will be in Grand Forks, N.D., Saturday, Oct. 17, to lead an interactive workshop on navigating faith at its intersection with culture. Pagitt will also be doing a "Live Occurrence" (his book tour) Oct. 16 and 17. "Live Occurrence" is billed as part revival, part book reading, part hootenanny and part community gathering. The events are brought to the area by the transformation team of Northern Plains Presbytery. Full details and registration materials can be found at [www.northernplainspresbytery.com](http://www.northernplainspresbytery.com). ([Return to top](#))

**7. TWIN CITIES UTS PASTORAL MINISTRIES INSTITUTE SETS CLASSES:** The recently established Institute for the Support of Pastoral Ministries at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, New Brighton, Minn., plans to offer periodic half- to one-day courses on special topics. Upcoming courses include "Narrative Theory Resources for Pastoral Care and Counseling," set Tuesday, Oct. 13, and "Crisis Care, Assessment and Referral," set Monday, Dec. 7. Additional information about the Institute, its offerings and courses can be found online at [www.unitedseminary.edu/Institute/](http://www.unitedseminary.edu/Institute/). ([Return to top](#))



**8. 'MINISTERING TO MISSING GENERATION' SET OCT. 30 AT**

**UTS:** Carol Howard Merritt, a noted Presbyterian pastor who appears weekly on [God Complex Radio](#) with Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow, will speak at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, New Brighton, Minn., Friday, Oct. 30. Merritt will take part in an all-day event titled "Ministering to the Missing Generation." Merritt is associate pastor at

Western Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C. The cost is free to authorized members of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ and \$55 for all other attendees. There is also \$7 charge for lunch. Registrations can be sent to Renee Flesner at [rflesner@unitedseminary.edu](mailto:rflesner@unitedseminary.edu). ([Return to top](#))

**9. WINTER PASTORS' SCHOOL SET AT HASTINGS FEB. 1-4:** The 2010 Winter Pastors' School, with the title "When Church Stories Become Songs," runs Feb. 1-4 at Hastings (Neb.) College. The school will take participants into the stories of their congregations, mining them for wisdom in relation to the seasons of the church year. Practical applications of this year's school include preaching from the lectionary in the seasons, personal reflection on faith stories, spiritual development of church boards and leadership teams, communal story formation, and congregational understanding and developing of their own stories. Winter Pastors' School begins with the first presentation at 3:00 pm on Monday, Feb. 1, and ends with communion worship service at 3 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4. Additional information will become available in the coming weeks. ([Return to top](#))

**10. 2009 TOLLEFSON LECTURE SLATED AT BVU NOV. 9:** The Rev. J. Andrew Dearman, director of the Fuller Seminary-Houston extension, will present the 2009 Robert and Barbara Tollefson lectures at Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa, Nov. 9. The Robert and Barbara Tollefson Reformed Theology Lectureship began in 1992 in recognition of the Tollefsons' contributions to the university. Dearman was most recently a member of the faculty at Austin Presbyterian theological Seminary for 27 years and served as academic dean from 1997 to 2003. His two lecture titles are "What is in a Name and Portrait? The City of Jerusalem in the Biblical Text," and "How a Book in the Bible Moves Around: The Book of Ruth and the History of its Interpretation." Additional details are available by contacting the Rev. Ken Meissner, chaplain at Buena Vista, at [meissnerk@bvu.edu](mailto:meissnerk@bvu.edu). ([Return to top](#))

**11. CARROLL, UW-MILWAUKEE FORM PARTNERSHIP IN ENGINEERING:** [Carroll University](#) and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee have formed a partnership that will provide opportunities for students to earn both bachelor's and master's degrees in engineering in Waukesha County. Under terms of the agreement, students can earn a bachelor's degree in applied physics at Carroll University and a bachelor of science degree in engineering or a master's degree in engineering at UWM. These dual-degree programs will require students to attend Carroll for three years and UWM for two years. Details of the programs are at the Web sites of [Carroll University](#) and [UWM](#). ([Return to top](#))

**12. DUBUQUE ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS HEAD:** [University of Dubuque](#) President Jeffrey Bullock announced last month the retirement of John R. Stewart, vice president and dean of academic affairs, effective June 1, 2010. "I am profoundly grateful to have had the opportunity to serve God in this place since 2001," Stewart said. "The University is an exciting place to work and is well-positioned to move into the most productive period in its more than 150-year history." A national search, including internal and external candidates, will be conducted to fill Stewart's position. ([Return to top](#))

**13. CHANGES IN MEDICAL PLAN REPORTED IN BOARD BULLETIN:** The Medical Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is undergoing some changes, according to The Board of Pensions. The upcoming changes to the Medical Plan are explained online in the [Board Bulletin](#). ([Return to top](#))

**14. PENSIONS BOARD POSTS NEWSLETTER TO WEB:** As autumn falls, The Board of Pensions has posted the fall issue of [EducationTalk](#). Some of the featured articles include "A call for members' wellness success stories and statements;" "How to host member education seminars;" "What to tell your financial or tax advisor;" and "E-learning modules explain Medical Plan and Medicare Supplement Program changes." ([Return to top](#))



**15. MISSION CHALLENGE '09 SPEAKERS COMMISSIONED:** With hymns, prayers, scripture readings, dessert and exhortations to get plenty of rest, 46 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission workers from around the world were commissioned for the church's month-long Mission Challenge '09 Sept. 24. The following day they fanned out throughout the church, where between Sept. 25 and Oct. 21 they will visit congregations and other groups in 152 of the denomination's 173 presbyteries, telling their stories of ministry and mission and seeking stronger ties with mission-minded Presbyterians. The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09825.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09825.htm). ([Return to top](#))

**16. GAMC REAFFIRMS SUPPORT OF NEWS SERVICE:** The General Assembly Mission Council reaffirmed its support for the Presbyterian News Service, calling the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s news agency "a high priority and an essential function" of the church. In approving the report of a six-member task force authorized by the council a year ago and appointed by GAMC chair Carol Adcock, the council approved new editorial guidelines that clarify and strengthen the news service's editorial freedom and responsibility. The complete

story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09823.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09823.htm). ([Return to top](#))

**17. GHOST RANCH WITHDRAWS INCORPORATION PROPOSAL:** A report to the Evangelism and Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s General Assembly Mission Council confirms that the Ghost Ranch Conference Center has withdrawn its current incorporation proposal. Brian Frick, associate for Camp and Conference Ministries, along with Debra Hepler, executive director of Ghost Ranch, told elected GAMC committee members that the New Mexico conference center withdrew its proposal "in order to work collaboratively with GAMC staff in Louisville." The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/gamc09037.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/gamc09037.htm). ([Return to top](#))

**18. CHANGING ENVIRONMENT CHALLENGES PASTORS, CONGREGATIONS:** Most Presbyterian pastors are not adequately equipped to lead their congregations through the changes that are necessary to adapt to 21st century life, the Vocation Committee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s General Assembly Mission Council was told in Louisville Sept. 24. "Most people have a 'change threshold,' a point past which they just can't handle it," the Rev. Jill Hudson, middle governing bodies coordinator for the council and the Office of the General Assembly, said in a presentation she titled "Barbecueing the Sacred Cows: creating the change environment." The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09829.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09829.htm). ([Return to top](#))



**19. YOUTH TRIENNIUM COMING UP IN JULY 2010:** Every three years thousands of Presbyterian youth and adult youth leaders together for worship, play, music, community building and Bible study at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium or PYT. The Triennium is for young people entering or completed high school (approximately age 14-19 years old by July 20, 2010). Adult Advisors must be 21 years of age by this date. A work crew track is available for college-aged young people who would like to apply to attend and volunteer to work behind the scenes. There is also a new Ambassador program for more mature friends. Details can be found at "[Presbyterian Youth Triennium](#)." ([Return to top](#))

**20. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HYMNAL CONTINUES:** Work on the monumental new Presbyterian hymnal continues at the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. The project began in 2006 when the 217th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) authorized Presbyterian Publishing Corp. to research, develop, and produce a new hymnal, the first new Presbyterian hymnal since 1990. Featuring more than 600 selections from celebrated classics to the latest contemporary selections, the project represents a huge undertaking. The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/ppc09005.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/ppc09005.htm). ([Return to top](#))

**21. YODOGAWA CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL MAKES LARGE GIFT TO PC(USA):** Yodogawa Christian Hospital in Osaka, Japan, has given the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) \$208,577 to be used for mission in Asia. The gift represents the same amount Presbyterian Women contributed in 1956 to the hospital, founded by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) missionaries. The PW gift helped build a 76-bed hospital that has grown into a multi-faceted medical complex. The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09842.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09842.htm). ([Return to top](#))

**22. PATHEOS LAUNCHES DIALOGUE ON RELIGION, EDUCATION:** [Patheos.com](http://Patheos.com), an online destination for global dialogue on religion and spirituality, has launched a "Public Square" examination of the challenges and issues facing religious education from the perspective of seven of the world's largest faiths. "In each Public Square, Patheos gathers some of the most respected scholars in the world to reflect on a specific theme," said Leo Brunnick, chief executive of Patheos.com. ([Return to top](#))

**23. RIDING SEA OF CHANGE IN U.S. CHURCHES:** A look at Donald Miller's new Convergence DVDs, frank dialogue between Miller and leading Christian thinkers, is a view of the sea change in the American church. That change shows strongly in small groups, for 40 years the backbone of the church and in some 93 percent of U.S. Churches, according to "Beyond Megachurch Myths" from Jossey Bass Publishers. The aging of small groups noted in "Group Movement Showing its Age," an article in the Feb. 15 issue of the Washington Times, stands in contrast now to what younger seekers don't like about them, including "reading assignments and Q&As" over relational learning. Details can be found at [www.allthingsconverge.com](http://www.allthingsconverge.com). ([Return to top](#))