

## SEPTEMBER 18, 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>.

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### News from



#### 1. 'GRACE NOTES' IS THEME FOR SYNOD SCHOOL 2010:

Rodger Nishioka, Benton Family Associate Professor of Christian Education at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga., will be the convocation speaker for Synod School 2010, which will have "Grace Notes" as its theme. Synod School 2010 dates are Sunday afternoon,

July 25, through Friday noon, July 30. Synod School runs at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. The evening worship leaders are Mark Davis and Barb Nish, pastor and worship leader at Heartland Presbyterian Church in Clive, Iowa, and the morning worship leader is Steve Plank, pastor of Central Presbyterian Church in Omaha, Neb. Synod School announcements will be posted from time to time to the Synod School Facebook group: **Synod School - "Is this Heaven? No, it's Iowa!"** To find the group, go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com). If you have a Facebook presence, use the search function in the upper right-hand corner. If you are not a Facebook member, you will need to join first. The Synod School group has more than 100 members, and at least 70 pictures and three videos on the group page. Questions concerning Synod School can be directed to the synod office at 651.357.1140 or 800.328.1880. Questions can also be directed to Diana Barber, associate synod executive for leadership development, at [dbarber@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:dbarber@lakesandprairies.org). ([Back to top](#))



#### 2. HOUSE BECOMES GOD'S HOUSE IN EAST IOWA:

Marue White, associate for communications in the Presbytery of East Iowa, wrote a story this week about the transformation of

a home. It opened, "Deborah Lebeda is a realtor by profession and knows a lot about houses so when she said the property located at 2219 D Steet in Cedar Rapids was God's house, we took notice. Built in 1931 by her grandfather and turned over to her in 2000, Deborah's home was flooded last summer. The devastation she felt at seeing the basement wall caved in on the family home made her realize that someone bigger than herself was in control and she started searching for answers." (Photo by Marue White.) The complete story can be found on [PNNews](#). ([Back to top](#))

#### 3. SYNOD'S FALL MEETING SLATED SEPT. 27-

**29:** The Synod of Lakes and Prairies will conduct its fall meeting Sunday through Tuesday, Sept. 27-29, at the Mt. Olivet Retreat Center in Farmington, Minn. In his note to synod commissioners prior to the meeting, Synod Executive Phil Brown indicated that both the church and secular society should

**colleges,  
universities**

**12. Theological  
education  
Sunday is  
Sept. 20**

**13. Jamestown  
College sets  
'Character  
in Leadership'  
conference**

**14. Colleges,  
universities  
in synod show  
well in rankings**

**15. Macalester is  
part of fair-  
wage food  
program**

**16. Dubuque  
Seminary prof  
receives award  
from alma mater**

**News from  
the PC(USA)**

**17. Hurricane Ike  
sometimes  
forgotten**

**18. Peacemaking  
Program notes  
International  
Peacemaker visits**

**19. Immigration  
issues highlighted  
in Presbyterians  
Today**

**20. White House  
reaffirms  
commitment  
to immigration  
reform**

**21. Stated Clerk:  
Home  
improvement**

**22. Vice Moderator:  
What are you  
looking  
forward to?**

**23. PC(USA)  
headquarters  
holds green day**

**And just 2 more**

**24. Survey shows  
strength, vitality  
of PC(USA)**

**25. So someone  
asks, 'You're  
Presbyterian?'**

step back from personal attacks and labels during disagreements. He wrote, "Working for the unity of the church, demonstrating to our communities locally and globally that there is something extraordinarily unique about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ appears to me increasingly elusive for us. Instead, the behaviors and attitudes we exhibit; the labels we so readily cast on others from the pews, from our session meetings, at all levels of the church, don't seem very different that what we see and hear in our communities, our schools and politics. Who's reflecting whom? Who's reflecting Jesus Christ?" ([Back to top](#))

#### **4. REGISTRATIONS COME IN FOR COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES CONFERENCE:**

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies is already receiving registrations for its second annual collegiate ministries conference, "Making Connections in Time of Change." The conference runs Monday through Wednesday, Nov. 9-11, in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Hotel accommodations are at the Holiday Inn University Plaza and most conference sessions will take place at First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Falls. Registration is simple. From now through Oct. 9, the registration fee is \$45. Yes, \$45. And that fee will cover everything but travel expenses to get to the hotel. Yes, it includes two night's lodging, two continental breakfasts, opening banquet, two lunches and all presentations. After Oct. 9, the fee increases to \$50. To register, contact Duane Sweep, synod associate for communications, at [dsweep@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:dsweep@lakesandprairies.org). ([Back to top](#))



#### **5. COMMUNICATORS LEARN ABOUT GOOGLE, PNNEWS, WEB WRITING:**

At any given time about 30 people participated in the Synod-wide Communicators Conference Sept. 2-4 in Eagan, Minn., and conference goers heard presentations on Google Tools, Presbyterian Neighbor News, Presbyterian News Service and Writing for the Web. Marue White, Dennis Sanders, Kris Peterson and

Kim Coulter, all presbytery communicators, led a panel discussion on "Doing More with Less." Paul Moore, organizing pastor of Chain of Lakes New Church Development in Lino Lakes, Minn., [blogged about the conference](#). The Facebook group of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies contains 25 pictures from the conference, most taken by Coulter. At left, Shane Whisler, communications director for the Synod of the Sun, leads an overview of Presbyterian Neighbor News. (Photo by Duane Sweep.) See some of the stories at <http://lakesprairies.pnnews.org>. ([Back to top](#))



**6. PRESBYTERY LEADERS WORK ON HABITAT HOUSES:** When the executive and general presbyters in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies got together earlier this month in Kearney Neb., for their regular forum, they went to work, but in a slightly different way. They went to work for Habitat for Humanity. Bob Hauser, executive presbyter in Central Nebraska Presbytery, made the connection with Habitat through Roger Payne, a member of First Presbyterian Church in Kearney, who is active in the local Habitat organization. "In fact," Hauser wrote, "he and his wife will be going to Vietnam with a group for a Jimmy Carter Habitat Blitz next year." Hauser said he couldn't take credit for organizing the work, noting, "Actually the forum planning team suggested that Habitat might be a possibility and since I was more familiar with it than others in Kearney I pursued that. They worked for about three hours on three different houses while here in Kearney." Photos shown here were taken by Chaz Ruark, executive presbyter in Presbytery of the Twin Cities. ([Back to top](#))



#### **7. AREA CHURCHES NOTED IN SEPTEMBER PRESBYTERIANS TODAY:**

The September issue of *Presbyterians Today* highlights a couple churches in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Community Presbyterian Church, Postville, Iowa, is cited in the magazine's cover story on immigration, and Crossroads Presbyterian Church, Mequon, Wis., ([www.crossroadspres.org](http://www.crossroadspres.org)) is noted in an article on mission support.

Postville was the site of a major raid by federal immigration agents on a meat processing plant in May 2008. Crossroads Presbyterian provided \$200,000 to support the funding of three mission co-workers. The mission funding effort of Crossroads was noted in the July 6 issue of *Keeping in Touch*, after Linda Valentine, executive director of the General Assembly Mission Council, sent a note to council members highlighting the church's mission support. ([Back to top](#))

**8. CAMPUS PASTORS WANT TO KNOW YOUR COLLEGE STUDENTS:** Campus pastors across the Synod of Lakes and Prairies are trying to identify the Presbyterian students on their campuses. It's no surprise that not all Presbyterian college students are at Presbyterian colleges and universities, but that doesn't mean there is not a campus ministry at the college or university they do attend. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Web site maintains a [campus ministry locator](#). It's an opportunity to help a campus minister identify contacts and to help a Presbyterian student make a connection. ([Back to top](#))

**9. FELTMAN CHALLENGES PRESBYTERY'S CHURCH LEADERS TO WORK DAY:** David Feltman, general presbyter in the Presbytery of North Central Iowa, is challenging all of the presbytery's pastors, commissioned lay pastors and eligible lay pastors to a work day for disaster assistance. The work day is slated Tuesday, Sept. 22. Work locations were not set at the time of the announcement, but participants were asked to arrive at 9 a.m. "with your tools and muscles ready to go." On a broader front in Iowa, disaster assistance volunteers are still needed in North Central Iowa and East Iowa presbyteries where natural disasters devastated the area in 2008. For North Central Iowa, prospective volunteers should contact Kaylene Hoskins at the presbytery office at 319.233.1747. For East Iowa, prospective volunteers can contact Sarah Dyck, that presbytery's disaster recovery coordinator, at [sdyck@peia.org](mailto:sdyck@peia.org). ([Back to top](#))

**10. HEALTHY PASTOR, CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS IS WORKSHOP TOPIC:** How do we keep pastors and churches in a healthy relationship? What are the signs of an anxious system? What do we do if or when trouble comes? The Rev. Peter Steinke will lead a two-day workshop covering those questions at Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, 4126 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, Oct. 18-19. Sponsored by the Presbytery of Des Moines' Professional Care and Development Committee with support from Des Moines

Pastoral Counseling Center, each day's workshop will provide a primer on understanding the congregation as an emotional system. A more complete description can be found at <http://lakesprairies.pnnews.org/view/article/13351>. ([Back to top](#))



**11. CLEARWATER FOREST SLATES 3 YOUTH RETREATS:** Three youth retreats are scheduled this fall at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest, Deerwood, Minn. The Middle School Fall Retreat runs Friday through Sunday, Oct. 16-18; the Senior High Fall Retreat is set Friday through Sunday, Oct. 30-Nov. 1; and the Confirmation Retreat wraps up the three-day events, running Friday through Sunday, Nov. 13-15. Additional information and registration materials can be found at [www.clearwaterforest.org](http://www.clearwaterforest.org). Also, Presbyterian Clearwater Forest has its own group on Facebook and lists more than 600 members. ([Back to top](#))

**12. THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION SUNDAY IS SEPT. 20:** The Rev. Claude Jones, director for church relations at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, reminded Keeping in Touch this week that Sunday, Sept. 20, is Theological Education Sunday in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Jones wrote, "The importance of this Sunday reminds us of the connectional nature of our denomination. It also reminds us of the importance of supporting the education of our church leaders for the future." UDTS is the only Presbyterian seminary in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and it is the only Presbyterian college or university. The seminary is online at <http://udts.dbq.edu>. ([Back to top](#))

**13. JAMESTOWN COLLEGE SETS 'CHARACTER IN LEADERSHIP' CONFERENCE:** Tickets are available for Jamestown College's fourth annual Character in Leadership fall conference featuring a keynote address by Arthur Collins, retired chairman and chief executive of Medtronic Inc. The conference will take place Thursday, Oct. 8, in the Reiland Fine Arts Center on campus. Tickets are \$12 and can be reserved by calling the Box Office at (701) 252-3467 ext. 2435, sending e-mail to [tickets@jc.edu](mailto:tickets@jc.edu). Jamestown College, one of seven colleges and universities in covenant with the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, is online at [www.jc.edu](http://www.jc.edu). ([Back to top](#))

**14. COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES IN SYNOD SHOW WELL IN RANKINGS:** Several colleges and universities in covenant with the Synod of Lakes and Prairies showed well recently in what is the most popular higher education guide, the U.S. News & World Report guide to America's Best Colleges. Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn., ([www.macalester.edu](http://www.macalester.edu)) made it into the top 50 liberal arts colleges, one of four Presbyterian schools in that ranking. Among other schools in covenant with the synod, Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, ([www.coe.edu](http://www.coe.edu)) made it into the top 100 of liberal arts colleges. Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa, ([www.bvu.edu](http://www.bvu.edu)) and Jamestown (N.D.) College ([www.jc.edu](http://www.jc.edu)) were named to the top tier of baccalaureate colleges, and Carroll University, Waukesha, Wis., ([www.carrollu.edu](http://www.carrollu.edu)) made it into the top tier schools in the university-master's category. The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09753.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09753.htm). ([Back to top](#))

**15. MACALESTER IS PART OF FAIR-WAGE FOOD PROGRAM:** College and seminary students are being asked to consider the Student Farmworker Alliance's Dine with Dignity Campaign. The description of the campaign is at [www.sfalliance.org/foodservice.html](http://www.sfalliance.org/foodservice.html). Through this food service campaign, students across the nation demand that campus food service providers work with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to address what it calls "modern-day slavery in the fields." The CIW is a community-based organization of mainly Latino, Mayan Indian and Haitian immigrants working in low-wage jobs. This past spring Bon Appetit Corp., which provides food service to Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn., ([www.macalester.edu](http://www.macalester.edu)) one of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies' seven related Presbyterian colleges, forged a ground-breaking agreement with the CIW, establishing a fair wage for farmworkers as well as stringent standards for the company's suppliers. The Student Farmworker Alliance's Web site includes sample letters to managers of campus food services and serves as connection to students across the nation. ([Back to top](#))

**16. DUBUQUE SEMINARY PROF RECEIVES AWARD FROM ALMA MATER:** Elmer Colyer, professor of historical theology and Wesley studies at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, is the recipient of the 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award from his alma mater, the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. The award is given annually to alumni who have significant and broad career achievement evidenced through broad recognition in their chosen discipline or profession. The award was given in conjunction with the university's May 2009 commencement ceremony. ([Back to top](#))

**17. HURRICANE IKE SOMETIMES FORGOTTEN:** When Hurricane Ike blew through Southeast Texas a year ago, thousands of Americans were forever impacted. And thousands more didn't seem to notice. Ike was the third most destructive storm to ever make landfall in the United States. "The timing of Ike was horrible for tens of thousands of Americans," said Randy Ackley, coordinator of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. "You have

whole neighborhoods that aren't there and no one is talking about it. ... " The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09780.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09780.htm). ( [Back to top](#) )



#### **18. PEACEMAKING PROGRAM NOTES INTERNATIONAL**

**PEACEMAKER VISITS:** Eleven International Peacemakers, leaders who are engaged in peacemaking in their own countries, will visit presbyteries in the United States in less than a month, according to an announcement by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. The announcement noted, "They help us seek peace as they tell of peace and justice concerns and ministries in their homes. This may lead to a better understanding of peace and justice issues in our own communities." The schedule of visits can be found at

[www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/intl/09peacemakers/schedule.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/intl/09peacemakers/schedule.pdf). The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program is online at [www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/intl/international.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/intl/international.htm). ( [Back to top](#) )



#### **19. IMMIGRATION ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED IN**

**PRESBYTERIANS TODAY:** Editor Eva Stimson opens her article, "The Faces of Immigration," in the September issue of Presbyterians Today this way: "About seven years ago a woman in Presbyterian pastor Gary Catterson's church in Postville, Iowa, came to him with an unusual request: Could a group of Guatemalan Pentecostals use the church's facilities for worship services? The woman taught English to immigrant workers at a local meatpacking plant, and some of them needed a place to worship. The church session approved the request." The complete article can be found at [www.pcusa.org/today/cover.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/today/cover.htm). ( [Back to top](#) )

#### **20. WHITE HOUSE REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO IMMIGRATION REFORM:**

Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano met with leaders in the faith, labor, business, law enforcement and immigrant advocacy communities in August to discuss immigration reform. Several member organizations of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, which includes the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), participated in the meeting. Following the meeting, the coalition issued the following statement: " The Interfaith Immigration Coalition is grateful to Secretary Napolitano for recognizing the vital role of faith communities in the conversation on immigration reform. During the meeting, President Obama repeated his commitment to achieving reform, stating that 'immigration is a problem begging to be fixed.'" The complete story can be found at

[www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09745.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09745.htm). ( [Back to top](#) )



**21. STATED CLERK: HOME IMPROVEMENT:** The Rev. Gradye Parsons, stated clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) opened his most recent column this way: "The default television channel at our house is HGTV. It is a channel that focuses primarily on home improvement or home replacement. ... Given that the improvements generally follow a life change of the home owner, the work is usually centered on a hope that new space will mean a new way of living." The complete column can be found at

[www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09778.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09778.htm). ( [Back to top](#) )



#### **22. VICE-MODERATOR: WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO?:**

The Rev. Byron Wade, vice moderator of the 218th General Assembly, opens his most recent column this way: "As summer turns into fall, people are looking forward to new things. Take my son Andrew, who started second grade a few days ago. He had a great summer camp experience, but was so ready to go back to school." The complete column can be found at

[www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09773.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09773.htm). ( [Back to top](#) )

**23. PC(USA) HEADQUARTERS HOLDS GREEN DAY:** "It's easy being green" is the theme of an inaugural event for staff of the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, Ky. They are gathering today, Sept. 18, to celebrate local food, sustainable resources and an environmentally friendly way of life. The Presbyterian Center, which houses the national offices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is host of the event to educate staff and increase awareness of the many products and services available to encourage ecological thinking at home and at work. The complete story can be found at

[www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/gamc09032.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/gamc09032.htm). ( [Back to top](#) )

**24. SURVEY SHOWS STRENGTH, VITALITY OF PC(USA):** Many Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations display strength, vitality and openness to change despite current

resource constraints. These findings are from a fall 2008 survey of 115 PC(USA) congregations that was part of the larger Faith Communities Today 2008 (FACT 2008) survey. The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09783.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09783.htm). ([Back to top](#))

**25. SO SOMEONE ASKS, 'YOU'RE PRESBYTERIAN?':** It happens from time to time. Someone asks, "You're Presbyterian? What exactly is that." At that point many Presbyterians can't think of an answer. There's a great place on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Web site with answers. It's Presbyterian 101 and it offers some things that make Presbyterians distinct. It can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/101/101-distinct.htm>. ([Back to top](#))