



SEPTEMBER 2007 - SECOND EDITION

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

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1. HISPANIC MINISTRY CONFERENCE SET OCT. 14-15: The Synod of Lakes and Prairies is hosting a Hispanic Ministry Conference – or Reunion de Ministerios Hispanos – Sunday and Monday, Oct. 14-15 in the twin cities. “While we know a presbytery’s responsibility and authority for Hispanic Ministry is very local, the most important way to build long-lasting success and organizational responsiveness is through broad-based mutual support across a geographic region,” Elona Street-Stewart, synod program staff for racial ethnic ministries and community empowerment, wrote in her letter of invitation to the conference. She continued, “Our fall gathering will bring together persons directly involved in Hispanic ministry, either in start-up or ongoing settings in order to explore ways to improve communication and exchange critical skills.” More information about the conference can be obtained by contacting Street-Stewart at estreetstewart@lakesandprairies.org.

2. SYNOD MEETING BEGINS SUNDAY AT MT. OLIVET CENTER: The fall meeting of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies begins Sunday with dinner at 5:30 p.m. at the Mt. Olivet Conference & Retreat Center in Farmington, Minn. The call to order, convening prayers and opening worship begin in the chapel at 6:30 p.m. Meetings and committee reports run through midday Tuesday. Reports are slated Monday afternoon from representatives of Presbyterian Women, General Assembly Council and the Administrative Review Task Force of Dakota Presbytery. The Synod School Committee will also present its report that afternoon.

3. PC(USA) NEWS SERVICE CONSTANTLY UPDATED ON WEB SITE: For those who may not have noticed, the home page of the synod's Web site – www.lakesandprairies.org – contains links to the most up-to-date articles released by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) News Service. At the site, visitors will find the most-recent headline of News Service release. Clicking on the headline will take the reader to the full story.

4. PASTORS SCHOOL HAS TWO COST STRUCTURES: In last week's issue of Keeping in Touch, an article regarding the 2008 Winter Pastors School cited only one price for the event. There are two prices, depending on the presbytery of those attending. David McCarthy, associate professor of religion and chaplain at Hastings College, wrote, "Because the event is financially subsidized by the three sponsoring presbyteries, there are two different cost structures – one for participants from the presbyteries of Central Nebraska, Homestead, and Missouri River Valley, and another for participants from other presbyteries." The cost of the 2008 conference for participants from the three sponsoring presbyteries is \$95. The cost is \$245 for participants from other presbyteries. Costs cover all meals, lodging and events. Spouses are welcome for an additional \$50. The 2008 Winter Pastors School takes place at Hastings (Neb.) College Jan. 28-31. The theme is "Vital Vocations and Communities: Survival or Revival in Pastoral Ministry in the Postmodern World." More information about and registration materials for the 2008 Winter Pastors School can be obtained by contacting the Rev. Lowell Knauss at lowellk@homesteadpres.org.

5. CONSULTATION ON ECUMENICAL STANCE CONVENES THIS WEEK: The stage is set this week for the first major consultation on the ecumenical stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) since Presbyterian reunion 1983. Approximately 65 participants are expected for the Sept. 27-29 event in Louisville, which will be hosted by the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations (GACER). The full story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2007/07609.htm.

6. GAC SEEKS EVANGELISM CONSULTATION: The General Assembly Council (GAC) is exploring a broad-based consultation on evangelism "to create the opportunity for bold, 'outside the box' thinking to imagine how the GAC can effectively support evangelistic strategies across all the ministry areas and at all levels of the denomination." Rick Ufford-Chase, former moderator of the General Assembly, framed the proposal in the GAC's Evangelism and Witness Goal Committee, envisioning a "movement-type" approach, not a program approach. The GAC approved the proposal at its meeting in Louisville Sept. 21. The full story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2007/07604.htm.

7. GAC DISTRIBUTES \$2.7 MILLION TO SYNODS: The General Assembly Council's Stewardship and Mission Support Committee approved the allocation of \$2,729,758 in National Mission Partnership Funds (NMPF) to nine of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s 16 synods. The annual allocation represents 10.5 percent of the unrestricted contributions from congregations and presbyteries to the General Assembly mission budget during the previous budget year. The allocation includes \$300,546 to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2007/07605.htm.

8. IMMIGRATION RESOURCES ABUNDANT AT PC(USA) WEB SITE: There is a substantial amount of information concerning immigration and the role of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the denomination's Web site. The site, www.pcusa.org/immigration, identifies legal and liturgical resources, provides sources for more information and shows ways to become involved in this national issue that also reaches into nearly every area of

the synod. The site also contains a study guide, "Resolution Calling for a Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States," developed with the help of the General Assembly. A PDF file of the study guide can be found at www.pcusa.org/immigration/getinformed.htm.