



Synod of Lakes and Prairies  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

# Keeping in Touch

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

## SEPTEMBER 26, 2008

You can find the synod online at [www.lakesandprairies.org](http://www.lakesandprairies.org) or on My Space at [www.myspace.com/synodoflakesandprairies](http://www.myspace.com/synodoflakesandprairies).

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#### 1. SEPTEMBER SYNOD MEETING

**ANNOUNCED:** The stated meeting of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies opens Sunday, Sept. 28, at Mount Olivet Conference and Retreat Center in Farmington, Minn., beginning with dinner at 5:30 p.m. The meeting is scheduled to adjourn Tuesday, Sept. 30, at 11:30 a.m. The purposes of the meeting are to elect officers, to hear reports, to worship, to grow in fellowship and to take such actions as are necessary.

#### 2. EAST IOWA LISTS IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF DISASTER WORK:

Marue White, communications associate in the Presbytery of East Iowa, provided important steps in handling natural disasters in a presbytery. Among those, she noted the importance to "figure out right away what your funding strategy is going to be because people who call in want to know if they send you donations, is the money going to be used locally, how much is going to overhead - all this needs to be posted on your Web site so you can direct volunteer inquirers to the information on your home page." White also noted, "I would have never thought we needed to have a disaster response committee in place, but after this summer, I can see the value of having an idea of how you might want to handle press releases and other communications in the event of a disaster." The presbytery continues to post flood recovery on its Web site at <http://www.pbyeastia.org/tp40/page.asp?ID=155667>.

#### 3. NORTH CENTRAL IOWA SPONSORS HOME-STATE MISSION:

The Presbytery of North Central Iowa is sponsoring a Mission Trip in - Iowa. The note in the Sept. 25 edition of the presbytery's Weekly E-News noted, "We will be working in North Central Iowa aiding those affected by the flooding and tornados. Dates for the trip will be Oct. through Nov. 1. Housing will be available. More information will be forthcoming." For additional information regarding recovery efforts in the Presbytery of North Central can be obtained by calling the presbytery office at 319.233.1747.

#### 4. CHURCH LEADERS RESPOND TO

**HURRICANE IKE:** Three top leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have sent a letter to all of the denomination's congregations asking them to pray for those affected by Hurricane Ike. The full text of the letter, dated Sept. 19 and signed by the Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow, moderator of the 218th General Assembly; the Rev. Gradye Parsons, stated clerk of the General Assembly and Elder Linda Bryant Valentine, executive director of the General Assembly Council: Dear Sisters and

**10. Hastings students use fall break for flood relief**

**11. Jamestown dedicates Wellness Center**

**12. Lecture series set at United**

**PC(USA) News**

**13. Renowned Presbyterian musician dies**

**And juse one more**

**14. College survey finds students on Facebook**

Brothers in Christ, 2008 has been an extraordinary year of disasters, nationally and internationally. This week, our television screens are filled with scenes of destruction from Hurricane Ike. We are confronted almost weekly with news of another tornado, earthquake, cyclone, flood or hurricane. It seems there is hardly time to prayerfully respond to one crisis before another makes headlines. The complete text of the letter can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08686](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08686).

**5. RACIAL ETHNIC MINISTRY LEADERS GATHER IN TWIN CITIES:** Leaders in racial ethnic ministry gathered for the second time in two months at the Minnesota Church Center in Minneapolis Sept. 22 to talk about leadership, and once again lauded the efforts of the Twin Cities Area Presbytery and the Synod of Lakes and Prairies in organizing the meeting. Those who came together for the meeting also shared their impressions of the Immigrant Ministries Convocation held earlier this month in Louisville. The Rev. Bob Cuthill, interim transitional executive presbyter of the Twin Cities Area Presbytery, called the gathering the "cutting edge part of the future." Noting that those present need to provide leadership in the presbytery, Cuthill said, "The future is in this room." The complete story and photographs can be found at <http://www.ptcaweb.org/EMerge/EMerge092608.pdf>.

**6. MODERATOR CHALLENGES IMMIGRANT MINISTRIES CONVOCATION:** The world and the church are changing so fast that Presbyterians are faced with a crucial question, General Assembly Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow told the opening gathering of the 2008 New Immigrant Ministries in Louisville Sept. 11. "Are we going to be involved in the changes that are going on in our world and church so that those changes are healthy? he asked, "or are we going to just stand by and watch the changes happen in ways that are less healthy or unhealthy?" The complete story and photos can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08663](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08663).

**7. CHURCH TOLD SURVIVAL DEPENDS OUTREACH TO IMMIGRANTS:** With the political rhetoric heating up as the United States moves closer to election day, it is even more imperative for churches to speak up as advocates for immigrants and a more humane immigration policy in the country, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s top immigration attorney said Sept. 12. "The political future is uncertain because of the election," Julia Thorne, manager of immigration issues in the PC(USA)'s Office of the General Assembly, told 100 participants in the 2008 New Immigrant Ministries Convocation in Louisville. "A minority is calling the shots, so the church must stand up and speak up or [the treatment of immigrants] is going to get worse." The complete story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08674](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08674).

**8. WORKSHOP SET TO LEARN ABOUT THE HMONG:** The Minneapolis-St. Paul area has a substantial number of Hmong immigrants and now a workshop has been scheduled to help service providers, employers and others who may be interested to learn more about the history, culture and background of the Hmong people. The workshop, titled "Building Bridges: Learning About the Hmong," is slated Oct. 24 at the Hmong Cultural Center in St. Paul. Additional information is available at <http://hmongcc.org/BuildingBridgesFlyerOctober242008.pdf>.

**9. FIRST EVER SYNOD COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES CONFERENCE SET:** The first-ever Synod of Lakes and Prairies Collegiate Ministries Conference, "The Church-Campus Relationship," is slated Monday through Wednesday, Nov. 10-12, at the University of

Dubuque, Iowa. Speakers currently on tap are Jim Schmotzer, executive director of INN University Ministries in Bellingham, Wash.; Sylvia Wilson, associate for collegiate ministries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); Noelle Tennis Gulden, associate for the National Network of Presbyterian College Women; and Alan McCalister, campus minister and executive director of University Christian Ministries at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The conference, coordinated with the denomination's Office of Collegiate Ministries, is designed to enhance networking and improve communications among those serving in campus ministry capacities across the synod, according to Duane Sweep, associate for communications with the synod. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Sweep at [dsweep@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:dsweep@lakesandprairies.org) or Elona Street-Stewart, associate for racial ethnic ministries, at [estreetstewart@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:estreetstewart@lakesandprairies.org).

**10. HASTINGS STUDENTS USE FALL BREAK FOR FLOOD RELIEF:** Leaving Friday, Oct. 10, and returning Tuesday, Oct. 14, volunteers from Hastings (Neb.) College will be spending fall break on flood-relief efforts in the Cedar Rapids in the Presbytery of East Iowa. Hastings College is a Presbyterian-related college in the Presbytery of Central Nebraska. The group will be staying at Christ Church. Additional information about the trip can be obtained from the Rev. David McCarthy, Hastings College chaplain, by writing [dmccarthy@hastings.edu](mailto:dmccarthy@hastings.edu).

**11. JAMESTOWN COLLEGE DEDICATES FOSS WELLNESS CENTER:** Jamestown (N.D.) College cut the ribbon of its Foss Wellness Center Friday, Sept. 26, dedicating the center that opened in late August. The college is one of seven Presbyterian-related institutions of higher education across the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and is located in the Presbytery of Northern Plains. The lead gift for the nearly \$2.5 million project came from the Drs. Merle L. and Peggy J. Foss Academic Enrichment Fund. The Fosses live in Ann Arbor, Mich., and are both 1958 graduates of the college who spent their careers in physical education. Peggy Foss is a member of the College's Board of Trustees. Additional information about the dedication and the college can be found at [www.jc.edu](http://www.jc.edu).

**12. BLOUNT SCHEDULED FOR GUSTAFSON LECTURE AT UNITED:** Brian K. Blount will deliver the 17th Gustafson Lectures in Biblical Studies at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, Minn., Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 6 and 7. **Blount is president and professor of New Testament at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Va.** Blount's lectures will explore the topic, "Prophetic Proclamation: Two Voices." The lectures will take place in Bigelow Chapel at United. The lectures are free and open to the public. More information about the lecture series can be found at [www.unitedseminary.edu/CommunityPrograms/lectures.asp](http://www.unitedseminary.edu/CommunityPrograms/lectures.asp).

**13. RENOWNED PRESBYTERIAN MUSICIAN ISAIAH JONES DIES:** The Rev. Isaiah Jones Jr., who gave up a booming career in the music business to become a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) minister, died Sept. 21 at his home in Los Angeles. He was 68. Eighteen months ago, Jones was diagnosed with leukemia and was told he had two months to live. He resigned in May 2007 as pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Palo Alto, Calif., where he had served since 1999. After receiving treatment at Anderson Medical Center in Houston, Jones' leukemia went into remission and he returned to his native Los Angeles to be near his family. The complete text of the story can be found at [www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08693](http://www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08693).

**14. COLLEGE SURVEY FINDS 89% OF STUDENTS ON FACEBOOK:** The Society for College and University Planning reports that 89 percent of college students have a presence on Facebook, according to a survey by EDUCAUSE. SCUP also reported that: (1) A study of university admissions departments by the Center for Marketing Research at the University Massachusetts-Dartmouth found 33 percent saying they have blogged for recruitment purposes and 29 percent having a presence in Facebook or MySpace, and (2) Sending e-mails is the least popular form of daily social communication - only 14 percent of 12- to 17-year-olds use email, compared with 28 percent who send instant messages, 27 percent who use text messaging, and 21 percent who send messages via social networking sites. Additional information can be found at [www.scup.org/pdf/SCUP\\_Trends\\_8-2008.pdf](http://www.scup.org/pdf/SCUP_Trends_8-2008.pdf). This article originally appeared in the September edition of UPDATE, an electronic publication of the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities.