

Synod of Lakes and Prairies meeting summary



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Fall Meeting
- Synod of
Lakes and
Prairies -
Mount
Olivet
Retreat
Center -
Farmington,
Minnesota -
Sept. 28-30,
2008



Members of the Administrative Review Task Force on Dakota Presbytery presented the final report of their work at the fall meeting of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Task force members are (left to right) Elder JoAnn Simser, commissioner from Twin Cities Area Presbytery; Elder Betty Walker, Twin Cities Area Presbytery; the Rev. Val Putnam, South Dakota Presbytery; the Rev. Robert Bouton, commissioner from the East Iowa Presbytery; and Commissioned Lay Pastor Kevin Kaufmann, Northern Plains Presbytery.

Synod to craft overture on Dakota Presbytery

After The Synod of Lakes and Prairies accepted the final report of its Administrative Review Task Force on the Presbytery of Dakota, the synod referred it to the synod staff, working with the synod's Steering Committee, to develop an overture to the 219th General Assembly.

The synod motion called for the overture to be presented at its April 2009 meeting for "consideration and action." The motion also noted that "consideration be given to reviewing the draft overture with the Presbytery of Dakota with the objective of gaining their support for the overture or a revision thereof ..."

The Rev. Jerry Swanson, synod commissioner from the Presbytery of Dakota, who also is moderator of the presbytery, said the task force showed "insight, imagination and love" in crafting its report.

Swanson credited the task force with facing the issues related to the presbytery, and said, "The future is brighter than the morning star."

Noting several positive stories about churches in the presbytery, Swanson said it will be important to retain a relationship between the Dakota and the



*The Rev. Jerry Swanson,
commissioner, Dakota
Presbytery*

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Synod approves 2009 unified budget

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies approved its 2009 unified budget, including income, expenses and allocation of per capita assessment. The budget, totaling \$2,216,282, includes \$1,024,000 for ministries in partnership, \$196,880 for ecumenical and institutional ministries, \$24,500 for communication, \$96,050 for synod governance, and \$874,852 for personnel and administration.

The budget represents a decrease of 3.1 percent from the 2008 budget.

The synod's per capita apportionment stands at \$4.80. Presbyteries and the General Assembly also have such an apportionment.

The Synod Meeting Summary is published shortly after each meeting of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Comments regarding the publication or requests for copies should be addressed to dsweep@lakesandprairies.org.

Synod seeks invitation from Dakota

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Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). If the relationship is lost, Swanson said, "You're going to be losing a blessing."

Among its conclusions the task force's report noted, "Any plan to integrate the churches of Dakota Presbytery into geographic presbyteries is doomed to failure." The task force also wrote, "Given the current requirements of Chapter 11 of the Form of Government, the Presbytery of Dakota is not viable, nor is it likely to be in the foreseeable future."

In another of its conclusions, the task force wrote, "It appears that the only mutually acceptable solution is to allow the Presbytery of Dakota to continue with its current privileges (such as commissioning of Lay Pastors and ordaining Ministers of Word and Sacrament) without being held accountable for the responsibilities in Chapter 11."

In a separate motion, the synod requested an action by Dakota Presbytery to invite the task force to a "regular or special meeting" of the presbytery for the purpose of "helping the [presbytery] understand the final report and action of the synod."

The text of the task force's report, along with motions, can be found online at www.lakesandprairies.org.

Synod hears initial plans for collegiate ministries conference

The Ecclesiastical Relations Committee reported on its plans for the first ever collegiate ministries conference slated Nov. 10-12 for campus pastors and chaplains in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. The conference, conducted in collaboration with the Office of Collegiate Ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is slated at the University of Dubuque, Iowa.

Conference participants will worship together, explore future models of campus ministry, exchange information, and have opportunity to establish network relationships.

The Office of Collegiate Ministries will partner with the synod to provide funds for the conference.

The conference, titled "The Church-Campus Relationship," will include presentations by 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.

Finance Committee approves loans

The synod's Finance Committee reported approval of loans to churches in presbyteries of Winnebago and Northern Waters.

The committee approved a loan not to exceed \$40,000 for First Presbyterian Church, Wabeno, Wis., to make renovations to the church primarily for accessibility. The committee also approved a loan not to exceed \$15,000 for First Presbyterian Church, Eau Claire, Wis., to replace a lift/elevator in the narthex.

Find synod information online

You can find the Synod of Lakes and Prairies online at www.lakesandprairies.org and find the synod's MySpace page at www.myspace.com/synodoflakesandprairies.

Synod adopts new policy for dispersing Peacemaking Offering

Following the recommendation of its Program Coordination Committee, the Synod of Lakes and Prairies approved a new process for dispersing the synod's share of the 2008 Peacemaking Offering.

Under the new policy, the synod will return the funds it receives through the Peacemaking Offering to each presbytery in an amount proportional to what was given by the congregations in that presbytery. The funds are returned "with the encouragement that the presbytery use those additional funds for purposes designated by the presbytery," according to the motion.

The motion went on to note, "If a presbytery cannot readily identify a recipient of the funds, the synod encourages it to consider sending the additional funds to the presbyteries within the synod which have been impacted by flooding and natural disaster so that the money can be directed to efforts to address issues of peace and wholeness in family and personal life (most significantly East Iowa, North Central Iowa, and John Knox)."

The third option in the motion noted, "The synod encourages presbyteries to consider forwarding to the General Assembly Peacemaking Program any unexpended funds which they have received and do not have immediate plans for using."

Providing background to support its recommendation for the use of the offering, the Program Coordination Committee wrote, "Prior action of the synod directed the treasurer to send unexpended Peacemaking funds to the General Assembly Peacemaking Program. Given the synod's commitment to being a resource to its presbyteries, the committee believes that this plan is more appropriate, particularly at this time."

Synod School reports on 2008, lists theme for next year's event

About 568 Presbyterians and about 30 others – for a total of 598 – attended Synod School at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, this summer, according to the report presented at the meeting by the Synod School Committee.

The 30 others were members of either a Roman Catholic, Methodist, United Church of Christ, Jewish, Reformed Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or other congregation.

Those attending Synod School 2008 represented 182 separate towns and 21 states.

Synod School 2009 runs July 26-31 on the BVU campus with a theme of "Building a Culture of Peace."

Sara Lisherness, director of Compassion, Peace and Justice for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is slated as convocation speaker.

Worship leaders on tap for 2009 are Sweet the Sound, featuring Matt and Liz Myer Boulton, and Burns and Lorraine Stanfield. Matt Boulton is professor of worship and theology at Harvard Divinity School. Liz Myer Boulton is associate pastor at Old South Church in Boston. Burns Stanfield is pastor of Third Presbyterian Church in Boston and Lorraine Stanfield is a physician and vocalist. The Stanfields are Synod School regulars.