

Synod of Lakes and Prairies meeting summary

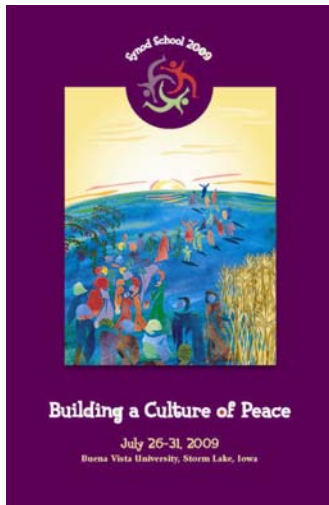


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Fall Meeting
- Synod of
Lakes and
Prairies -
Mount
Olivet
Retreat
Center -
Farmington,
Minnesota -
Sept. 27-29,
2009

Synod School 2009 includes worship, classes, games, fun, back flips

There aren't many places to hear about a back flip during worship, but that's the story from an 8-year-old that Tammy Rider told during her report on Synod School 2009.



Rider, clergy commissioner from the Twin Cities Area Presbytery, said she learned of the story following a worship service at Synod School, noting that it is another story to add to those told year after year about the annual week-long event.

More than 550 Presbyterians and about 30 others – for a total of 585 – attended Synod School at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, this summer, according to the report of 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.

More than 140 of those who attended this summer were at Synod School for the first time. And 103 were clergy, including 10 who were ordained in the last four years.

Attendees represented 185 separate towns in 18 states.

To put on Synod School 2009 required 58 people to staff the children and youth program, 67 people to teach the adult classes, five people to plan and lead worship and many more to help, 11 and more musicians at worship and the coffeehouse, two people to lead Saints-a-Playin' and 15 committee members and support staff.

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.

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.

ERC reviews funding schedule for collegiate ministry

The Ecclesiastical Relations Committee reviewed the funding schedule for ministry in post-secondary education that total \$213,000 in 2010 and \$200,000 in 2011.

The dollar amounts are slated to cover 19 collegiate ministry projects.

The committee noted in its report that "2010-2011 will be the last cycle for these PSE grants."

The report added, "In collaboration with campus ministry partners, committee members have requested information on plans for the future of their campus ministry and requested suggestions on alternative ways to provide assistance."

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 2010 budget shows mission support, governing body partnerships

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies approved a 2010 unified budget of \$2.15 million that includes nearly \$1 million in partnership funding with the synod's 16 presbyteries.

The budget includes estimates of income, expenses and per capita apportionment.

The budget represents a decrease of 2.9 percent from the current year's budget. The synod's budget is also a 6.1 percent decrease from 2008 figures.

Within the synod's governing body partnership funding block in the budget, the largest single item, \$600,000, is for comprehensive presbytery staff support.

A total of \$106,250 is allocated for comprehensive presbytery mission support, and \$75,000 is budgeted for presbytery staffing partnerships.

The line item for ecumenical and institutional ministries totaled nearly \$200,000 and includes \$140,000 for ministry in post-secondary education. That area of budget also includes \$25,000 for ministry development centers and ecumenical media centers.

The synod anticipates spending nearly \$100,000 for leader development, which includes \$35,000 for Synod School, \$22,500 for racial ethnic ministries, \$13,000 for COM/CPM training, and \$10,000 for emerging mission.

Anticipated per capita receipts in 2010 are \$719,621, a reduction from the estimate for the 2009 budget of \$742,190. The synod's per capita rate is \$4.80 and will hold steady through 2010.

Synod per capita costs are apportioned on the basis of presbytery membership. Membership in the synod totaled 149,921 at year's end in 2008. That number represents a decrease of 3 percent from Dec. 31, 2007.

The per capita apportionment raises the funds needed to pay for the essential governing body functions of the synod. Presbyteries and the General Assembly also have per capita apportionments and the synod's apportionment is typically the smaller of the three.

Per capita expenditures are distinct from those related to the synod's mission program, which are underwritten by mission contributions.

Mission support estimates for 2010 total \$905,289. Other synod revenue adds up to about \$380,000, including interest, fees and fund transfers.

The budget includes \$970,000 for synod governance, communication, and personnel and administration, a decrease of nearly \$24,000 from the 2009 budget.

Synod approves loan, modifies loan terms

The synod approved a \$50,000 loan to Kwanzaa Community Church, Minneapolis, to replace a boiler that exploded in February. The loan carries a 5 percent interest rate with a 20-year maturity.

The synod also extended the amortization on an existing loan to First Presbyterian Church, White Bear Lake, Minn., by two years from November 2019 to November 2021. The church anticipated that it would not be able to make full payments without the extension.

In addition the synod approved a request from First Presbyterian Church, Grand Forks, N.D., for a payment moratorium of two years on its existing synod loan.

Find synod information online

You can find the Synod of Lakes and Prairies online at www.lakesandprairies.org and find the synod on www.facebook.com — the Facebook group with the synod's logo (more than 150 members).

Synod elects Bouton, Kocourek to moderator, vice moderator posts

Synod of Lakes and Prairies commissioners elected and installed the Rev. Robert Bouton and Ardeth Kocourek to the moderator and vice moderator posts respectively for 2010.

Bouton and Kocourek will assume the offices at the January meeting.

Bouton, commissioner from the Presbytery of East Iowa, was born and raised in Princeville, Ill., and went on to earn his Master of Divinity from the University of Dubuque (Iowa) Theological Seminary. He earned a Doctor of Ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill.

He began his ministry in Christian education at First Presbyterian Church, Lincoln, Neb. He then served a 24-year call as pastor to Christ Presbyterian Church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. His last call was as pastor to Knox Presbyterian Church in Cedar Rapids where he served until he retired in 2003.

Bouton has been involved with the synod in multiple roles, serving multiple terms as a commissioner. He has chaired the synod's Christian Education, Communication and Finance committees, worked on the staff at Synod School, and served on the Synod School Planning Committee.

He recently completed two years on the Dakota Presbytery Administrative Review Task Force and is beginning his second term on the Finance and Nominating committees.

Bouton serves on the East Iowa Presbytery Nominating Committee. He and his wife reside in Cedar Rapids and are active in the First Presbyterian Church there.

Kocourek, elder commissioner from the Presbytery of South Dakota, describes herself as a "transplanted Iowan, who thinks of herself as an educator."

She has been a teacher and library-media specialist in the Bennett County (S.D.) Schools, part-time instructor for Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, S.D., a farm homemaker and operator, member of the South Dakota State Library Commission, and a 4-H and extension leader.

Kocourek holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, and a master's degree from New York University.

As a member of Lindsey Memorial Presbyterian Church, Martin, S.D., she has been or is an elder, clerk of session, treasurer, choir director, education superintendent, teacher, discussion leader newsletter editor and a member of Presbyterian Women.

In the larger church she has served as a volunteer in mission, leader of a Youth Vacation Bible School Team in South Dakota and Illinois, assistant in Christian education at Presbyterian Church, Westchester, N.Y., commissioned missionary to the Ganado (Ariz.) Mission, moderator of the Presbytery of South Dakota, and member and moderator of the presbytery council and Committee on Ministry.

She has been a member of the presbytery's Emergency Response Team and a reader of the denomination's ordination examinations in Chicago.

For the synod she serves on the Personnel and Synod School committees, and is a member of the Permanent Judicial Commission.

A resident of Martin, she has over eight years experience as a Commissioned Lay Pastor.

ERC notes plan for collegiate conference

"Making Connections in Times of Change," is the theme for this year's collegiate ministries conference of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, slated Nov. 9-11 in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

The Ecclesiastical Relations Committee noted that speakers for the conference will include Benson Hines, author of "Reaching the Campus Tribes;" Heather Godsey, an editor of the upcoming book, "Oh God, Oh God, Oh God!: Young Adults Speak Out about Sexuality and Christian Spirituality;" and Kathryn Cambell, who will lead a presentation on social networking.

The conference will also include time for campus pastors and chaplains to discuss topics of mutual interest and their individual campus programs.