

Synod of Lakes and Prairies meeting summary



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

2115 Cliff Drive
Eagan, MN 55122
651.357.1140

October 12, 2011

Fall Meeting
- Synod of
Lakes and
Prairies -
Mount
Olivet
Conference
and Retreat
Center -
Farmington,
Minnesota -
Oct. 2-4,
2011

Synod accepts task force report, adopts Steering Committee recs

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies, meeting Oct. 2-4 at the Mount Olivet Conference and Retreat Center, Farmington, Minn., accepted the report of its Administrative Review Task Force on the Future of the Synod and adopted nearly all recommendations presented by its Steering Committee in response to the report.

The Steering Committee had reviewed the task force's final report, looking for recommendations that called on the synod to take action. Most of the task force's recommendations call on the synod to be increasingly responsive to the needs of its presbyteries.

In addition to voting on the Steering Committee's recommendations, the synod also received recommendations from the Presbyterian Forum, a group

(Continued, see "Task Force on the future" on Page 2)

The Synod Meeting Summary is an unofficial report of synod actions 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.



Left to right are David McCarthy, chair of the synod's Ecclesiastical Relations Committee; Ardeh Kocourek, synod moderator; Elona Street-Stewart, staff support to the Ecclesiastical Relations Committee; Lucy Forster-Smith, associate dean for religious and spiritual life and chaplain at Macalester College; and Phil Brown, synod executive.

Synod updates Macalester covenant

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies approved a new covenant with Macalester College of St. Paul, Minn.

Forwarded to the full body of synod commissioners by the Ecclesiastical Relations Committee, the covenant calls for the synod and college to "co-host one event annually that engages religious and social issues in contemporary society."

The covenant notes that the synod and college "freely covenant together to support education that leads to growth in scholarship, faithfulness in character, and preparation to serve the common good."

The covenant calls on the college and synod to review the agreement every five years.

Find synod info online

You can find the Synod of Lakes and Prairies online at www.lakesandprairies.org and you can also find the synod on www.Facebook.com.

Task Force on the future *(continued from Page 1)*

composed of presbytery executive leadership across the synod. The group's recommendations called for a "move toward a more agile regional body with (potentially) fewer members and a strong reformed witness ..." The synod will strive to be in more open communication about the needs of its presbyteries and the support the synod can provide.

The synod created the task force in January 2009, tasking it to review the history of the synod, to review past proposals to dissolve synods, to examine the changing role and need of the synod to serve as a governing body, to consider the synod's role as a resource to presbyteries and other parts of the denomination, and to make recommendations.

Complete copies of the task force report and the recommendations of the Presbyter Forum can be found at <http://www.lakesandprairies.org/within.html>.

Mid Council Commission votes on model ...

Later in the week, in a development away from the synod meeting, the Mid Council Commission (formerly Middle Governing Body Commission), created by the 219th General Assembly of the PC(USA), voted Oct. 8 to eliminate synods and vest their ecclesiastical functions in five regional administrative commissions of the General Assembly.

The commission itself has no authority to eliminate synods. However, it was given the task to "develop models that reflect the roles of middle governing bodies." An action to eliminate synods would require constitutional changes and needs to take place at General Assembly. If approved there, it would subsequently need presbytery ratification.

A complete Presbyterian News Service article regarding the Mid Council Commission's action can be found online at <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/10/10/mgb-commission-votes-eliminate-synods/>. If you need a printed version of that story, please submit your request to the synod office at 651.357.1140.

Synod approves 2 collegiate ministry grants, authorizes 2 more

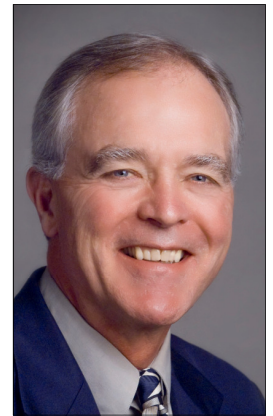
The Synod of Lakes and Prairies approved two collegiate ministry grants for 2012, one for \$5,000 that will go to Collegiate Presbyterian Church, Ames, Iowa, and another for \$1,500 that will go to First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

The grant to Collegiate Presbyterian supports its ongoing ministry. The grant application noted, "Our program has been growing over the past three years. We have worked hard to establish a culture of hospitality in our church and in our university ministry program."

The Cedar Falls grant will support relationship building with Central Outreach Advocacy, a mission of Central Presbyterian Church in Atlanta.

The synod also authorized its Task Force on Collegiate Ministry to spend up to \$10,000 on a conference on grant writing for practitioners of collegiate ministry, and up to \$10,000 for a grant to the Richard Mauthe Center for Faith, Spirituality and Social Justice of Green Bay, Wis.

The purpose of the grant writing conference is to develop campus ministers who will be able to assist other campus ministers in "the process of expanding sources of support." The grant request of the Mauthe Center seeks support of its leadership program Red Cloud Indian School, Pine Ridge, S.D.



Brown announces 2012 retirement

Synod Executive Phil Brown, who has served in the call since 2004, announced to the Personnel Committee that he plans to retire Oct. 31, 2012.

Before serving as synod executive, Brown had been executive presbyter in the Presbytery of Milwaukee.

Ordained by the Presbytery of Chicago in 1969, he was called as the associate pastor of Wellshire Presbyterian Church in Denver, Colo. From 1975 to 1977 he served as pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Ill.

Brown began middle-governing body ministry in 1978, serving as associate and then executive presbyter with the Presbytery of Great Rivers.



5 recognized for years of service

When the Synod of Lakes and Prairies met Oct. 2-4, it recognized five commissioners for completing two consecutive terms.

Recognized were John Bates, North Central Iowa; Robert Bouton, East Iowa; Beverly Raske, Minnesota Valleys; Rogene Stephens, Dakota; and Wesley Stevens, Central Nebraska.

In the photo at left are, left to right, Raske, Bates and Stevens. Bouton and Stephens were not present.

Synod takes first action as administrative commission for Dakota property

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies took its first action Oct. 4 as an administrative commission for the Presbytery of Dakota for all matters related to property by approving the sale of a vacant house and lots in the Sisseton, S.D.

All current synod commissioners make up the administrative commission.

The resolution had been approved by the Finance Committee on July 16 and by the Steering Committee on Aug. 4.

The synod also approved the hiring of a temporary part-time staff person to research property records on properties of churches within Dakota Presbytery. "Preference is to be given a Native American law student that would have knowledge of how to work within the legal system in various states," according to the action. The approval included a budget of up to \$20,000 for wages and travel expense "necessary to carry out this task."

According to information provided, "The purpose is to give the synod and Dakota Presbytery a clearer picture of property issues within Dakota Presbytery."

Synod staff directed to develop resource for property issues

Commissioners of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies voted Oct. 4 to direct the synod staff to "gather information and develop a resource to assist presbyteries dealing with the disposal of property and other property issues." Presbytery."

Synod Executive Phil Brown had suggested to the Steering Committee that the synod might "work with presbyteries to form a synod-wide church properties consulting group" that would help presbyteries deal with emerging property issues. The Steering Committee voted to refer this suggestion to the Finance Committee.

Synod School draws more than 600

Synod School 2011 drew more than 600 people to the Buena Vista University campus in Storm Lake, Iowa, during the last week in July.

Attendees represented 190 towns, 24 states, one Canadian province, Poland and Russia. More than 140 attendees were at Synod School for the first time.

Carol Howard Merritt, a pastor at Western Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., and author of "Tribal Church" and "Reframing Hope," will be next year's convocations speaker when Synod School runs July 22-27.

Chris Levan, pastor at Eglinton St. George's United Church in Toronto, Ontario, will lead next summer's worship.

Crittenden urges story sharing

It could be called a simple message, but it's a vital one. Stewardship is a visible way of showing faith and commitment.

"Everyone is on a financial discipleship journey," Dave Crittenden (right), director of stewardship for the General Assembly Mission Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), told synod commissioners Oct. 3 during the fall meeting of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.



Sharing a message that he has been spreading throughout the PC(USA), Crittenden said, "Everyone has a story to tell. Let's start telling stories."

Crittenden, who had served on the staff of the Synod of Lincoln Trails for 16 years, including 10 as co-executive, joined the GAMC staff in the fall of 2010. He has spent the past year telling stewardship stories.

Quoting from Henri Nouwen's booklet, "The Spirituality of Fundraising," he noted, "From the perspective of the gospel, fundraising is not a response to a crisis. It is first and foremost, a form of ministry. It is a way of announcing our vision and inviting other people into our ministries."

Crittenden provided a variety of stewardship and urged participation in next year's Stewardship Kaleidoscope event in Charlotte, N.C., March 12-14. Information about that event is located online at <http://www.stewardshipkaleidoscope.org>.

He also promoted what he called the "most comprehensive guide to stewardship planning" in the PC(USA): "A Stewardship Manual: A guide to Year-round Stewardship Planning." The manual outlines eight types of annual campaigns and identifies when to use them. The manual is available online at <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/stewardship-manual/>.

Prouty, Anthony elected to positions

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies elected Scott Prouty and Stephanie Anthony as moderator and vice moderator respectively for 2012 when it met Oct. 2-4 at Mount Olivet Conference and Retreat Center, Farmington, Minn.

Prouty, teaching elder from the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys, has spent 2011 as the synod's vice moderator. A synod commissioner since 2007, Prouty currently serves the First Presbyterian Church in Redwood Falls, Minn., where he has been since 2002.

Anthony is a teaching elder from the Presbytery of Twin Cities Area. Anthony was ordained at First Presbyterian Church in Lincoln, Neb., in 2002 and served as an associate pastor for that congregation until 2007. She currently is fulfilling a call to First Presbyterian Church in Hudson, Wis., where she has served since 2008.