



Keeping in Touch

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

AUGUST 15, 2008

You can find the synod online at www.lakesandprairies.org or on My Space at www.myspace.com/synodoflakesandprairies.

Around the synod

- [1. East Iowa hosts called 'awesome'](#)
- [2. Hoskins writes of hope in response to disaster](#)
- [3. Hillcrest strives for Family Life Center](#)
- [4. Synod PJC dismisses case](#)

Presbyterian colleges

- [5. Winter Pastors School set at Hastings](#)
- [6. Jamestown College gets high ranking in Review](#)
- [7. Collegiate ministries seek student contact info](#)

Around PC(USA)



1. EAST IOWA HOSTS CALLED 'AWESOME:' The Presbytery of East Iowa Web site opened with a sign (shown here) made by youth at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Iowa City,

one of several churches that have been hosts to work groups from around the country. The site noted that the "universal comment they receive from the teams they house is that the hospitality provided is awesome." More information about disaster recovery efforts can be found at www.peia.org. ([Return to top](#))

2. HOSKINS WRITES OF HOPE IN RESPONSE TO DISASTER: Kaylene Hoskins, disaster response point person for the Presbytery of North Central Iowa, wrote about hope and described her experiences in response to the storms and flooding that have devastated Iowa. She wrote, "Then as I stood and looked at the pile, I could see that it was more than just a pile of wood and sheetrock. In the pile were items that represented someone's life ... The little boy was playing with his friend and came to me and said, 'Hey blue shirt lady, can I have another bracelet? My friend is feeling sad.' That's what it is all about - making sure we share God's love and grace by our actions." The rest of the story can be found at <http://www.lakesandprairies.org/PDFFiles/Kaylene%20Hope-Contact%20article%207-08.pdf>. ([Return to top](#))

3. HILLCREST STRIVES FOR





**FAMILY LIFE
CENTER:** Hillcrest
Family Services,

Dubuque, Iowa, which provides a variety of individual and family social services for children and adults, is growing and needs to expand its physical plant. Gary Gansemer, president and chief executive, wrote in the current newsletter: "After years of dreaming and planning the vision of a spiritual, educational, and health center for Hillcrest is becoming clearer. In the past year residents, staff and leaders have worked to design a Family Life Center for Hillcrest. The [center] would include a chapel that would provide a spiritual home away from home for clients and staff. It would be an outward sign of God's grace at Hillcrest to all." The center would also include a multipurpose gymnasium, classrooms and an emergency shelter open to the community. Gansemer's complete column can be found online in the newsletter at <http://www.hillcrest-fs.org/PDF/ACF6ABE.pdf>. ([Return to top](#))

- [8.](#) Parsons undergoes heart surgery
- [9.](#) What God puts puts together: stated clerk column
- [10.](#) We are family: moderator column
- [11.](#) Expanded FOG task force sets meeting
- [12.](#) Presbyterian World Mission seeks candidates
- [13.](#) Parish nurse wins health ministry award
- [14.](#) Speaker: Christians must resist economic injustice

4. LAKES AND PRAIRIES PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION DISMISSES CASE

The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies Aug. 12 dismissed a remedial case filed against the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area that sought to nullify the presbytery's Jan. 26 action that restored the Rev. Paul Capetz, an openly gay man, to the exercise of ordained ministry.

The complainants, the Revs. David Bierschwale and David Lenz, and Elder Carol Shanholtzer, all members of the presbytery, asked the church court to "declare as irregular" the presbytery's "action of determining that a declared departure from the [Book of Order's] G-6.0106b does not constitute a failure to adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity under G-6.0108."

The complainants also asked the court to "invalidate any related actions taken" as a result of the restoration. Finally, the complainants also sought to have the presbytery admonished and directed to "refrain from conducting further irregular" action.

Noting the decision of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in Bush, et al. v. Presbytery of Pittsburg in February 2008 that departures from the fidelity and chastity requirement found in G-6.0106b are not permitted, the synod's PJC found that ruling did not apply because it dealt with "ordination" while the current case involved the "reinstatement of

a pastor already ordained."

The commission cited *Wier v. Second Presbyterian Church*, a 1999 case of the General Assembly PJC, that noted, "The ordaining and installing governing body is in the best position to determine whether self-acknowledgement is plain, palpable, and obvious, based on its knowledge of the life and character of the candidate."

In dismissing the case, the synod's PJC noted the Book of Order's G-6.0108b "is a foundational argument." That paragraph places the ultimate responsibility for determining "whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity" on the governing body in which the person serves.

The synod's PJC also wrote, "The only acceptable method of denying Dr. Capetz the full rights and privileges of exercise of the office of Minister of Word and Sacrament would be by disciplinary action of the presbytery." ([Return to top](#))



5. WINTER PASTORS SCHOOL SET AT HASTINGS COLLEGE: The annual Winter Pastors School runs Monday through Thursday, Feb. 2-5, at Hastings (Neb.) College and will feature the Rev. Louis B. Weeks, president emeritus of Union Theological Seminary & Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Va. Weeks is an author and historian who, together with Milton J. Coalter and John Mulder, co-edited a landmark seven-volume study of American Presbyterianism. Weeks address is titled "Administration as Pastoral Care: Redeeming the Scutwork." Additional details and registration materials can be found at http://www.homesteadpres.org/mainpage_files/2009WinterPastors.pdf. ([Return to top](#))

6. JAMESTOWN COLLEGE GETS HIGH RANKING FROM PRINCETON

REVIEW: Jamestown (N.D.) College, a Presbyterian-related institution, has once again been ranked as a "Best in the Midwest" college by The Princeton Review in its annual review of colleges and universities. The New York City-based education services company selected the College as one of 159 institutions it recommends in its website feature "2009 Best Colleges: Region by Region." This is the sixth year of rankings by Princeton Review, and Jamestown College has made the list each year. The rankings are based on academic excellence within the region and the results of student surveys. The complete story can be found at <http://www.jc.edu/campus/campusClips.php#535>. ([Return to top](#))

7. COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES SEEK STUDENT CONTACT INFO: A number of campus ministries have contacted the synod, asking the synod to obtain names and-or contact information for Presbyterian college students who will attend the college or university served by the ministry this fall. Not all churches – in fact it may be very few – collect this type of information from their members who are going away to college. And, if some churches do collect this information, the individual with the information may not be aware of the collegiate ministry program at a particular college or university. The synod does maintain a list of the collegiate ministries with which it has a relationship, and Presbyterian colleges and universities. The synod is willing to share that information with presbyteries and churches. ([Return to top](#))

8. PARSONS UNDERGOES SUCCESSFUL HEART SURGERY: The Rev. Gradye Parsons, stated clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), underwent successful open heart surgery on Aug. 7 at the Cleveland (Ohio) Clinic. The surgery — to repair an aortic aneurysm that was first diagnosed several years ago but which had worsened in recent months — took five hours. Parsons is scheduled to remain hospitalized for five to seven days and then return to his home in Louisville to recuperate for the remainder of August. Messages can be sent by email to gradye.parsons@pcusa.org. ([Return to top](#))

9. WHAT GOD PUTS TOGETHER: STATED CLERK COLUMN: The Rev. Gradye Parsons, stated clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is writing a monthly column and this month's installment begins: "One of my favorite books is "How Buildings Learn," by Stewart Brand. It is a book about what happens to buildings after they are built. We tend to look at buildings as static objects with a utilitarian future. Brand argues that good buildings are those that adapt to new uses, different inhabitants, and changing customs. Buildings that can adapt and are indigenous to the local culture usually survive and thrive." Parsons' complete column can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08580. ([Return to top](#))

10. WE ARE FAMILY: MODERATOR'S COLUMN: The Reverend Bruce Reyes-Chow, moderator of the 218th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), has begun to issue a monthly column. This month's column begins: "In just a few weeks since the end of the 218th General Assembly, it is safe to say that serving as moderator has already been an incredibly meaningful experience. What a privilege to be in a place to listen to the passionate voices of this community, our church family. Through "Town Halls" online communities and personal interactions, the complex nature of our church has been made very real to me. As I have listened to the voices that have shared, whispered, and shouted in my direction, it is clear that a great many realities exist in our church." The complete column can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08575. ([Return to top](#))

11. EXPANDED FOG TASK FORCE SETS MEETING: The Form of Government Task Force (FOGTF), expanded in size and loaded with comments from this year's General Assembly, is scheduled to meet for the first time since the 218th General Assembly adjourned in June to begin revising the original task force's report. Three new members will join the original nine when they gather Aug. 21-22 at First Presbyterian Church in Arlington, Va.: Elder Carol Hunley of Pittsburgh Presbytery and the Revs. Grace Bowen of New York City Presbytery and Dan Williams of Shenandoah Presbytery. This complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08576. ([Return to top](#))

12. PRESBYTERIAN WORLD MISSION SEEKS CANDIDATES: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mission leaders are asking the church to help them identify qualified candidates for international mission service. "The General Assembly Council developed a budget, which in June was approved by the General Assembly, that enables the church to reverse a 50-year trend of decline in the number of mission co-workers serving internationally," says Hunter Farrell, the church's director of World Mission. "We are seeking to increase the number from fewer than 200 today to 215 in 2009 and 220 in 2010." This complete story is available at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08577. ([Return to top](#))

13. PARISH NURSE WINS HEALTH MINISTRY AWARD: Sue Mooney,





parish nurse for Overbrook Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio, has been named recipient of the 2008 Elise Stutzer Award in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s health ministries. She will receive the award Aug. 24 during a special worship service at Overbrook church. This complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08583. ([Return to top](#))

14. SPEAKER: CHRISTIANS MUST RESIST ECONOMIC INJUSTICE: Christians must speak out in the face of intolerable injustice if the economy is to enhance the lives of all people not just a privileged few, according to the Rev. Roberto H. Jordan, president of the Reformed Church in Argentina. Jordan, who is also a member of the executive committee of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, was speaking at the recent 2008 Intergenerational Peacemaking Conference of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). He said that in a world bulging with raving injustices Christians everywhere are called to come together and share their vision of how things can be different. This complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2008/08554. ([Return to top](#))