

JUNE 19, 2009

The synod can be found online at
www.lakesandprairies.org.

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1. WINNEBAGO CHURCHES MAKE THRIFT STORES

WORK: It's nice to see a project succeed and grow. It's even nicer when the product of that success can be used to "pay it forward" to help someone else

succeed. It's perhaps most rewarding of all when those who have been helped wish to do the same for others. The Rev. Ed Slusser of First Presbyterian Church of Omro, Wis., had no idea that would be the result when he explored the idea of starting a thrift store 10 years ago. "A member of the local Catholic church approached me with the idea of starting a community thrift store," Slusser said. (The image above is from the thrift store of Forest Larger Parish.) The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09433.htm. ([Return to top](#))

2. 'THE TABLE' SET TO BEGIN AT EDINA'S CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN:

The June 15 edition of Emerge, a newsletter of the Twin Cities Area Presbytery, contains stories of the efforts of Christ Presbyterian Church, Edina, Minn., to reach out to a younger generation. One such effort, the Upper Room, is spinning off from the church. Its story can be found at www.upperroomcommunity.org. Dennis Sanders, editor of Emerge, wrote, "As the Upper Room is spun off from Christ Presbyterian, a new alternative worship service will be starting in September. Called The Table at CPC, this community "is about Christ (following Jesus), Community (loving others), and Cause (living missionally)." When asked to describe the Table at CPC and how it is different from the Upper Room, Associate Pastor Brad Jackson said it will be "an alternative environment for worship and discipleship." The complete story is in [EMerge](#). ([Return to top](#))

3. CHASKA, MINN., MINISTER FINDS HIS WAY INTO MEDIA:

The Rev. Gordon Stewart, pastor of Shepherd of the Hill Presbyterian Church in Chaska, Minn., a twin cities suburb, is showing up in a variety of media. The [church's Web site](#), noting what it calls its "dialogical way of life," states that "expanding the discussion of important subjects to the public media is important to the life of the church. The site notes that Stewart's voice is heard often across the Upper Midwest on the airwaves of Minnesota Public Radio's 'All Things Considered.'" Multiple Stewart commentaries can be found on the [Minnesota Public Radio site](#) by searching "Gordon Stewart." A Stewart "perspective" can be found in the [Chaska Herald](#), and another Stewart piece, "Empathy and the Bench," can be found in the online newspaper, minnpost.com. ([Return to top](#))

4. SPINNING THE MULTICULTURAL CHURCH WEB:

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Church Conference in Atlanta June 12, the Rev. Jin S. Kim, pastor at Church of All Nations in Minneapolis, admitted he is a racist. And he expects everyone in his congregation to do the same. "While there has always been evil among humans, the introduction of racism has heightened oppression among mankind the last 500 years," said Kim, in an address entitled "Becoming a Multicultural Church: Biblical Foundations for a Beloved Community." The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09511.htm. ([Return to top](#))

5. WOMAN WITH MINNESOTA CONNECTION EARNS PPC AWARD:

The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation selected Anna Kendig as the organization's Robert W. Bohl Racial Ethnic Intern, according to information released this month. Kendig graduated from McCormick Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree in May and will work with PPC in the coming weeks learning various aspects of religious publishing. Kendig is a graduate of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn. Kendig has served as the pastoral intern at Second Presbyterian Church in Chicago, Ill., and she was the worship assistant for special worship at McCormick. Before attending McCormick she was a summer intern with Hispanic and youth ministries at First Presbyterian Church in Claremont, Minn., and a youth ministry coordinator at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis. A complete news release can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/ppc09002.htm. (Return to top)

6. RACIAL ETHNIC MEMBERS TOLD TO 'BE ABLE TO STAND:'

Racial Ethnic members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) must "be able to stand" when they are called to serve the church. The first key to being able to stand as a leader is knowledge, according to Elona Street-Stewart, associate for racial ethnic ministries and community empowerment for the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Street-Stewart led the session, "Plugging in: Let Your Light Shine," during 2009 Racial Ethnic Convocation in Atlanta as part of the PC(USA)'s first ever Big Tent event that included 10 conferences that met jointly. "This is not training and this is not a workshop. We're going to talk about your role in the church," Street-Stewart said. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09500.htm. (Return to top)



7. CLEARWATER FOREST PLANS FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS DAY:

Presbyterian Clearwater Forest, Deerwater, Minn., will celebrate its annual Friends and Neighbors Day Saturday, July 11. According to D.J. Jeremiason, camp director, "This event provides our friends and neighbors with

the opportunity to visit [the camp] and to see what we are all about." The event will feature guided nature hikes, kayaking, canoeing, sailing, high ropes course, live music and food. Reservations are required for lunch and dinner. Additional details can be found at www.clearwaterforest.org. (Return to top)

24. Membership decline of mainline denominations listed

8. SYNOD-WIDE COMMUNICATOR EVENT SLATED IN SEPTEMBER: Communicators and anyone else who might want to attend are being invited to the second Synod-wide Communicators Conference Wednesday through Friday, Sept. 2-4, at the Hilton Garden Inn, Eagan, Minn. While several details remain to be ironed out, the conference will include sessions on social networking, writing for the Web, the Presbyterian News Service, Presbyterian Neighbor News and "Doing More (or At Least as Much) With Less." "We're going to do everything we can to keep the cost down," said Duane Sweep, associate for communications for the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. "We'd just like people to put a hold on those dates. More details should be available in a couple weeks." ([Return to top](#))

9. COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES CONFERENCE IN PLANNING STAGES: A planning group working on the second annual Collegiate Ministries Conference in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies has set Monday through Wednesday, Nov. 9-11, as the dates for this year's conference. A location, however, has not been firmly established. Just as last year, the conference is targeted at campus ministry staff and chaplains of Presbyterian-related colleges and universities. ([Return to top](#))

10. APCU 'CAMPUS UPDATE' INCLUDES SEVERAL SYNOD INSTITUTIONS: Update, a newsletter of the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities, mentioned several colleges and universities across the Synod of Lakes and Prairies in its "Campus Update" section. Mentioned were Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa, (www.bvu.edu) which will offer a U.S. Army Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program starting this fall; Carroll University, Waukesha, Wis., (www.carrollu.edu) which in January launched a new Center for Leadership Excellence focused on developing ethics-based and values-driven leaders for a global economy; and Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, (www.coe.edu) which, along with St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids, received a \$4.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce to construct a shared steam heating plant. The college has relied on temporary boilers since a flood last June destroyed the plant that previously provided its steam energy. ([Return to top](#))

11. MACALESTER COLLEGE, HASTINGS STUDENTS EARN FELLOWSHIPS: Two students with ties to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies were among 20 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) students who have been named recipients of leadership development fellowships by the Fund for Theological Education. Alexander Peterson, a member of First Presbyterian Church, Hastings, Neb., was named a Congregational Fellow, and Kristin Riegel, who attends Macalester College, St. Paul, Minn., was named an Undergraduate Fellow. Peterson will attend Yale Divinity School in the fall and recently completed three years with the Peace Corps in Ghana. The Fund for Theological Education grants the awards annually "to highly gifted and diverse undergraduate, seminary and doctoral students who exemplify the leadership qualities and academic excellence needed to serve as outstanding future pastors and theological educators for a changing church." A complete list of students can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09463. ([Return to top](#))



12. WESTERN NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING EVENT SET OCT. 7-9:

The long running Western National Leadership Training Event, a national training event for laity and clergy, is scheduled Oct. 7-9 and takes place this year at Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole, Wyo. With the theme, "Humor, Hope, Healing," plenary speakers are the Rev. Cynthia Campbell, president and Cyrus McCormick Professor of Church and Ministry at McCormick Theological Seminary, and Gary Eller, president of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation. The Rev. Richard Shaffer Jr., assistant dean of the seminary and instructor in ministry at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, will lead the track for commissioned lay pastors. Additional details can be found at www.synodrm.org/wnlte. ([Return to top](#))



13. PC(USA) 2008 STATISTICS RELEASED BY OGA: The Office of the General Assembly has released the 2008 statistics of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The statistical material includes a comparative summary of the membership and a summary of receipts and expenditures from 2005 to 2008, and additional miscellaneous information. Gradye Parson, stated clerk of the General Assembly, issued a statement that reflects on

the implications of the latest numbers. His statement and statements of others can be found at www.pcusa.org/oga. ([Return to top](#))

14. CHURCHES ASKED TO IDENTIFY MISSION SERVICE CANDIDATES: Presbyterian World Mission leaders are asking Presbyterians across the country to help them find qualified candidates for international mission service. Nineteen mission positions were available on June 9 and more openings are to be posted over the next several days, according to Nancy Cavalcante, mission service recruitment coordinator for Presbyterian World Mission. Filling these positions is crucial if the church is to meet the General Assembly Council's goal of increasing the number of mission co-workers for the first time in 50 years, she said. The complete story is at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09465. ([Return to top](#))



15. PEACEMAKING PROGRAM CALLS FOR BLOGGER PARTICIPATION: The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program is calling for participation in Presbyterian Bloggers Unite July 1, focusing on gun violence. Bloggers Unite, according to the Web site, is "an attempt to harness the power of the blogosphere to make the world a better place. By asking bloggers to write about a particular subject, a single voice can be joined with thousands to help make a difference." Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) bloggers are being invited to reflect on ways church communities address gun violence and to offer ways to mobilize efforts. More details are at [Bloggers Unite](#). ([Return to top](#))

16. HAY WRITES OGA MESSAGE FOR JUNE: The Rev. Tom Hay, director of operations for the Office of the General Assembly, wrote the monthly letter from OGA: "' It is not the clear-sighted who rule the world. Great achievements are accomplished in a blessed, warm fog.' Only a writer as accomplished as Joseph Conrad could get away with that misdirection. You know the fog-minded feeling of a too-early morning or a very late night, of being overwhelmed by too much information or too much stress. It is no fun to be in such a fog. But a detail-blurring fog can sometimes offer us the clarity of purpose we need to accomplish great things." The rest of the column can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09457. ([Return to top](#))



17. PRESBYTERIAN PUBLISHING OFFERS NEW ONLINE RESOURCE: Presbyterian Publishing Corp. is offering a new Web site, [The Presbyterian Leader](#), that will serve as a tool for pastors, elders, deacons, educators, worship leaders, musicians and other leaders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Marc Lewis, president and publisher of PPC says, "We are excited to provide this resource for leaders in the Presbyterian Church. We are committed to

helping Presbyterian congregations in their ministries, and we feel confident The Presbyterian Leader will prove to be an invaluable tool." A press release about the new site can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/ppc09003.htm. ([Return to top](#))



18. 1,500 GATHER FOR FIRST-EVER 'BIG TENT:' "I can't believe this. I'm in a room with 1,500 Presbyterians and I'm not packing a Book of Order." With those words, General Assembly Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons greeted an

enthusiastic throng that packed a Hyatt Regency ballroom in Atlanta for the first ever Big Tent event, a combined gathering of 10 PC(USA) conferences that fulfills a dream of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) leaders since the denomination moved to biennial legislative General Assemblies five years ago. "I'm the moderator but there's no business to transact," General Assembly Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow told the crowd just prior to opening worship. "What do Presbyterians do when there's no business to conduct? They worship and they talk about mission and celebrate their unity in God's spirit!" The complete story is at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09472. ([Return to top](#))

19. PEACEMAKERS TAKE 'URBAN PLUNGE' IN DOWNTOWN ATLANTA: A homeless man sleeps in a doorway. Trash litters the sidewalk. This is just one short block from Peachtree Street, with its prosperous businesses and gleaming high-rise hotels. Inside a dim, warehouse-like shelter run by the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, other men sit in rows of chairs, listening to the blare of music and enjoying a few hours of respite from the hot sun. These sights greeted 20-some participants in a June 13 morning "Urban Plunge," offered as part of the 2009 Presbyterian Peacemaking Conference, which explored various ministries in downtown Atlanta. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09495.htm. ([Return to top](#))

20. DIVERSITY IN 'BIRTH STORIES' CAN PRODUCE COMMUNITY: Even though everyone has a different "birth story," those differences will ultimately lead to community, according to the Rev. Buddy Monahan, who preached at the opening plenary worship service in Atlanta June 12 of the Racial Ethnic Convocation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Monahan, a Native American Choctaw who is the chaplain at Menaul School in

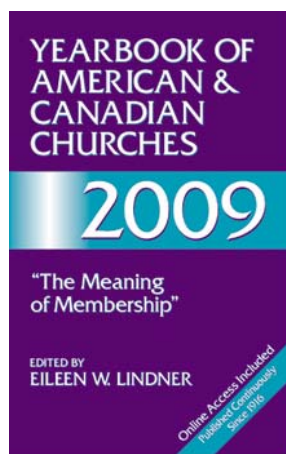
Albuquerque, N.M., used the opening chapter of the book of Matthew to describe how diversity can lead to unity. In the opening verses of Matthew, the author lays out the genealogy of Jesus, Christ's "birth story," and Monahan used the text to illustrate the individual histories of his diverse audience. "I think that it's important for us to remember who we are. ... Our scripture reminds us of that." The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09504.htm. ([Return to top](#))

21. OUTGOING SEMINARY PRESIDENT CALLS CHURCH, SEMINARIES TO CHANGE:

In her final public appearance as president of Columbia Theological Seminary, the Rev. Laura Mendenhall said this is a good time for the church and seminaries to review and change how they work together. Speaking to the biennial Healthy Ministry Conference, one of 10 conferences gathered in Atlanta June 11-13 under the auspices of the inaugural Big Tent event, Mendenhall used the analogy of a gardener pruning a plant to encourage healthier growth. "We know that most plants grow best, are most healthy and productive, when they are regularly pruned back," she said. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09485.htm. ([Return to top](#))

22. DISCIPLE WORKSHOP CHALLENGED TO BE SACRIFICIAL: The Rev. Glen McDonald challenged 42 workshop participants at the first ever Big Tent event in Atlanta to become sacrificial in moving their congregations from "maintenance mode to missional mode." He told people in a "Disciple-Making Church" workshop (part of the Evangelism Conference at Big Tent) "God has called us to go from maintenance mode to missional mode. We need to be congregations for the next 100 members, not the 100 who are already here." The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09484.htm. ([Return to top](#))

23. PRESBY WRITERS GUILD PRESENTS ANGELL AWARD: The Presbyterian Writers Guild presented the 2008 Angell Award to Linda Raymond Ellison and Bill Ellison for their book, *Like Jacob's Well: The Very Human History of Highland Presbyterian Church*, published by Beechmont Press, Louisville, Ky. The Angell Award is given annually by the Presbyterian Writers Guild for the best first book by a Presbyterian author published in the previous calendar year. The 125-year history of Highland Presbyterian Church of Louisville, Ky., as recounted in *Like Jacob's Well*, is more than a story of one church. It is the life of the denomination and even of the United States, from 1882-2007. The complete story can be found at www.presbywriters.org. ([Return to top](#))



24. MEMBERSHIP DECLINE OF MAINLINE DENOMINATIONS LISTED: The 77th annual edition of the Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches, long a highly regarded chronicler of growth and financial trends of religious institutions, records a slight but startling decline in membership of the nation's largest Christian communions. Membership in the Roman Catholic Church declined 0.59 percent and the Southern Baptist Convention declined 0.24 percent, according to the 2009 edition of the Yearbook, edited by the National Council of Churches and published by Abingdon. The complete story can be found at www.nccusa.org/news/090130yearbook1.html. ([Return to top](#))