

GOOD NEWS FROM GREAT RIVERS

January 11, 2010



[PRESBYTERY OF GREAT RIVERS](#)

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When viewing our website please use Microsoft Internet Explorer as Firefox does not work well with our web design software.

Elder Training

Each training event will be held on a Saturday from 8:30am - 3:00pm with lunch served at noon. **Registration is required** for the purpose of preparing the meal and providing training manuals. Registration is accomplished by contacting [Julie](#) at the presbytery office. Let Julie know how many will be attending and which event they prefer. **If there are not at least ten registrations per event, cancellation is possible.** We want to be good stewards of time and resources.

Please RSVP by the dates listed below.

January 16 @ United, Woodhull **RSVP no later than TODAY**

January 23 @ United, Peoria **RSVP before January 14**

January 30 @ United, Biggsville **RSVP before January 21**

Mark Your Calendar

Visioning Council

Thursday, January 14
9:30 - 2:30
PGR

Elder Training

Saturday, January 16
8:30 - 3:00
United, Woodhull

OFFICE CLOSED

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Birthday
Monday, January 18

Administrative Council

Wednesday, January 20
9:30 - 2:30
PGR

Clergy Group

Thursday, January 21
10:00 - 11:30
PGR

General Presbyter's Perspective Rev. Susan Krummel

Ah, the joys of driving through Central Illinois in the wintertime! Actually, this past Sunday was beautiful. I kept watching the outside thermometer on my car as I was making my way to a church where I was preaching. The coldest it got was minus 6-and this was at 9 a.m. I was glad it was not one of those Sundays when I have to be halfway across the state by 9 a.m.! Instead, I only had to be about 45 minutes from home and their worship service did not start until 10:30. I love it when I am asked to be someplace on a Sunday morning and I have said "yes" and then I ask what time worship starts and they tell me "10:30". (You would be surprised how many Puritan work ethic congregations we have in this presbytery who get started much earlier than that on a Sunday!) It is kind of like when I was a pastor and I would be meeting with a wedding couple, filling out a form about their wedding. We would come to the question about whether or not there would be any flower girls or ring bearers. The answer the pastor always wants is "no."

Now, on my Sunday morning jaunts, there are only so many roads that lead out of Peoria and into our presbytery, since Peoria is actually at the edge of the presbytery. Very often, whether on Sunday morning or at other times, I find myself on Route 116 which, while still in Peoria, is known as Farmington Road. It is very, very familiar territory to me, since my in-laws lived on Farmington Road and the farm that my family still owned while I was growing up was in the same direction. I know the businesses along

Interim Pastor's Group

Thursday, January 21

11:30 - 2:00

First, Delavan

Elder Training

Saturday, January 23

8:30 - 3:00

United, Peoria

Examinations Comm.Mtg.

Saturday, January 23

9:00 - 11:00

PGR

Nominating Committee

Tuesday, January 26

10:00 - 2:00

PGR

COM

Tuesday, January 26

10:00 - 3:00

Northminster, Peoria

Elder Training

Saturday, January 30

8:30 - 3:00

United, Biggsville

Farmington Road very well-at least from the outside.

There is a succession of little establishments from very close to Peoria all the way to Hanna City that dot Farmington Road. They are restaurants, but using that kind of high-falutin' sounding word that comes to us from the French is probably way too fancy for these places. From the outside, some of them do not look big enough to hold more than about four tables and, perhaps, they are not. Several of them have names based on animals. My favorite is the "Hog Trof" and, yes, that is the way it is spelled. Now, before you dismiss these eateries as places where your elbows would stick to the grease on the table and you would be sick the rest of the day after eating there, let me tell you that this is a mistaken impression. I have actually dined at the Hog Trof and, as I recall, had a tenderloin to write home about and a piece of homemade pie that makes my mouth water as I write this. This past Sunday morning as I was driving to church, the parking lots at all of these places were full. I passed churches along my way that looked like they were deserted (maybe it wasn't time for worship or Sunday School yet) but the "greasy spoons" were packing 'em in.

Anything we can learn about Sunday morning hospitality from these places? Well, I imagine they are all "come as you are." One of the parking lots was completely full of pick-up trucks. I kid you not, there were probably 20 vehicles and they were ALL pick-up trucks. If anyone had a tie on in that place, it would have been purely by coincidence. You know that the unspoken dress code in most of our churches is intimidating to many people who feel that they are not sure what to wear or do not own what we expect them to wear. These places were also meeting a very basic need-food. Of course, our churches are meeting a very basic need as well-worship. The Westminster Divines remind us that our chief purpose in life is to glorify God and enjoy God forever. What could be more basic than that? Can we find a way to serve up worship in such a way that it is as inviting as a plate of pancakes and eggs, or a hot roast beef sandwich on a cold day?

Maybe we can also remember that the food that is served up in diners like this is simple and traditional. For most people, it is evocative of a simpler time-a time before some pipsqueak of a doctor was telling them not to eat eggs, a time when their grandma was still around to make that special kind of fried chicken that only she could make, a time when everything being served on the menu could either have come out of your own garden or could be deep-fried and you did not have to have a dictionary with you to figure out what the words on the menu meant.

If there is one thing that most Presbyterian Churches can do pretty well, it is traditional worship. Even when we use new music and big screens and let people drink coffee in worship, we still usually have enough elements in worship to remind people of a simpler time. Now, if we could somehow find a way to pipe in the smell of French Fries and serve big pieces of warm pie with whipped cream during the offertory, we could be packin' em in on Sunday mornings, too!

We Prayed For You This Week

During our staff meetings each week, the presbytery staff prays for some of our churches. We are sharing those churches with you, so that you, too, can pray for them. How strong we all are through the power of prayer.

Carthage, First United Presbyterian Church
Carthage, Fountain Green United Presbyterian Church
Chatham, [Chatham Presbyterian Church](#)
Chenoa, First Presbyterian Church

Presbytery Night at the Ballpark

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Friday, June 11, 2010

If your choir would like to sing the National Anthem before the game, contact [Julie](#) by March 25.

It Might Be You!

Who is the most creative person you know when it comes to planning worship? (It might be you.) As we move into a new way of doing presbytery meetings, we need to gather a group that thinks in new ways about how to go about worship in a non-traditional setting and in a Reformed way. Do you know of someone who might like to work on this, who is available during the day, and who could meet once or twice before each presbytery meeting this year? If so, please let [Sue Krummel](#) know who that person is.

Need Help Writing Your Grant?

From time to time someone will call the presbytery office to ask for help in writing a grant proposal. We now have a resource to which you can turn. Steve Akins, pastor at Rushville, has some experience with this and would be glad to give you some pointers. You can contact [Steve](#) with your questions.

Foundations for Relationship Success Seminar

Six Hour Seminar with Roger Shaw

February 6th and 13th

9:00am - 12:00pm each day

First Presbyterian Church

2000 E. College Ave.

Normal, IL 61761

\$75/Individual \$125/Couple

Pre-Registration Required. Registration Deadline February 1.

[Flyer](#)

[Registration Form](#)

Do You WANT Your Church to Grow?

SAVE THESE DATES.

April 23 & 24, 2010

[Click here](#) for more information and [Brochure](#)



Broadway Spirit Grows

Rock Island church steps out to save itself

Doug Schorpp | Quad City Times Posted: Sunday, January 3, 2010 3:00 am

As they have for years and years, members of Broadway Presbyterian Church in Rock Island gather on Sunday mornings to worship with organ music, a choir and hymns. The traditional service is this historic church's staple. It's constant. The people, many of them with family roots that are decades deep, gather in the parlor for cookies and coffee afterward. They celebrate milestones. They mourn each other's losses.

Meanwhile, the transformation inside the sanctuary begins. Next up is a newly expanded contemporary service with rock band-like music. It's called Mosaic. Then comes a Spanish-language service, just launched in an effort to reach nearby neighborhoods. All are led by Broadway's pastor, the Rev. Ron Stewart. And, finally, for the past several months, the Rev. Bizimana "Jack" Tahiro wraps up Sundays with his African congregation in vivid and enthusiastic praise.

Broadway is changing. The usual way of doing things is now one of many ways of this church. The expansion has not been without challenge. But with stagnant membership, the church decided to reach outside its "usual" and embrace people and worship types well beyond Presbyterian norms. It appears as if a miracle might be happening at Broadway.

Pastor Jack and Zion Temple

The miracle got its beginning in May. Members of Zion Temple, a small group of African refugees who now call the Quad-Cities home, approached leaders of Broadway. They wanted a place to conduct worship services. The people at Broadway agreed but with one stipulation: They asked Zion Temple members to pray for Broadway and its needs.

"We did it on a trial basis, to make sure we were all compatible," said Vikki Blair, the church administrator. It was a perfect match. During the Dec. 13 African service, Blair came forward and shared a testimony with Zion Temple members, thanking them for becoming part of their lives.

"It is your risk-taking that has given us the opportunity to take a risk ourselves," she told them.

"It is their enthusiasm, their prayers," she said later. "It is knowing them and how they could take a step outside themselves and come to America, and we are afraid to get up and change our service time. "They made us aware of how comfortable we were with our faith. You have to be uncomfortable with your faith. It is the whole American thing. We don't know what it is like to do anything different."

Tahiro remembered asking: "What do you want from us? I thought they would want a check for \$100 or something for rent," he told his congregation in Swahili before his message was translated into English. "For sure, all they asked us to do is pray for us, and we have prayed for them."

Since Zion Temple's members arrived and began praying for Broadway, the church's Mosaic contemporary service has expanded from twice a month to weekly, and the Spanish service was launched in November, Blair said.

Broadway's Step Out

It is an issue common in many traditional denominations these days: walking a tightrope between members who grew up with, and prefer, traditional ways and those who seek a different approach, a more contemporary slant in both words and music. Broadway is taking its walk one step farther, reaching out to different cultures, too.

According to Presbyterian Church U.S.A., nearly 93 percent of Presbyterians are white. Blacks comprise 3 percent of membership, Asians a bit more than 2 percent and Hispanics a little more than 1 percent. Nationally, Presbyterian membership is declining, too. The numbers peaked in the early 1960s and then began a "steady, slow decline," according to church statistics. Smaller churches are more likely to lose members than larger congregations.

At Broadway, membership reached a peak of more than 600 members about the time a 1947 fire destroyed the bulk of the structure at 710 23rd St., leaders said. Today, membership stands at 268, but attendance averages closer to 120 for all four Sunday services combined.

Christopher Scott is the church's coordinator of music ministry. He is an artist-in-residence at Augustana College in Rock Island while serving at Broadway. "The choir at this point is very small," he said. "Back in the day, way before my time, it used to be the big church, the place. They had a 40- to 50-person choir. But I am glad to be at Broadway now because they are growing."

Brian McMaster of Rock Island is one of 12 church elders. For 40 years, he has belonged to Broadway. Some are hesitant about the changes, he said. "There might be a tendency for anyone that they are going to lose out," he said. "There is a natural fear of identity and what they fear most: It is change. Everyone fears change. The famous last words are, 'We have never done that before.'" He believes otherwise.

"It is spiritual growth, a spiritual process we have been going through the last six years, searching to find what we are supposed to be doing," he said. "Some of us, and other key folks, would say we are being led by God to reach out to the community." Pastor Stewart believes all preferences should be acknowledged. "People have different needs, and traditional hymns speak to a person in a way that is powerful and meaningful, and that should be respected," he said. "Others want to sing hymns and other music or worship in a way that fits their experiences. It is not a question of judging

one or another but providing an opportunity for people to express their faith."

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