

# GOOD NEWS FROM GREAT RIVERS

February 15, 2010



[PRESBYTERY OF GREAT RIVERS](#)

1230 W Candletree Dr, Suite D, Peoria, IL 61614

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## Mark Your Calendar

### COM

Tuesday, February 16  
10:00 - 3:00  
Northminster, Peoria

### Interim Pastor's Group

Thursday, February 18  
11:30 - 2:00  
PGR

### Supplemental Papers on Website

Friday, February 19  
after 3:00pm

### CPM Meeting

Tuesday, February 23  
8:30am  
FivePoints Washington

### Assembly Meeting

Tuesday, February 23  
9:30am  
FivePoints Washington

### Annual Stats DUE

Tuesday, February 23

### PYT Delegation

### Declaration DEADLINE

Wednesday, February 24  
Contact [Maura](#) with your  
Estimated # of Youth/Adults

### Clergy Group

Thursday, March 4  
10:00 - 11:30  
PGR

### Visioning Council

Thursday, March 11  
9:30 - 2:30  
PGR

## General Presbyter's Perspective Rev. Susan Krummel

Our three presbytery meetings this year will not be held in a church building. I do not know how many presbytery meetings in the 173 presbyteries across the country in any given year are not held in a church building, but I know that they are very few. Once, while I was a member of East Iowa presbytery we had our meeting in the Student Union building on the University of Iowa campus in Iowa City. It was interesting to do that since it was a Saturday meeting (the only way we could have had the parking spaces we needed) and we were, of course, not the only group using that building at that time. There was some kind of testing going on for high school students along the same hallways we were using, so it was a mix of elders and pastors and high school students who had no idea what we were doing and, unfortunately, probably could not have cared less. It was a good way to keep the meeting in perspective. Sometimes we get so caught up in what we are doing as a church that we forget that most of our friends and neighbors have no idea what we are so worried about and that it really has very little impact on their lives.

How did the decision come about to rent a space for the meetings? The Visioning Council began talking last year about two ideas that came together to lead to this decision. One of the ideas had to do with finding a way to remind us that what we do must be important out in the real world or we are essentially just having club meetings that would seem as obscure to most people as do the inner workings of any of the thousands of clubs centered around hobbies or other pursuits. Just like those club meetings, we have our own language, our rituals as a presbytery or a congregation that seem unknowable to those outside of the system, our concerns about issues that only have to do with ourselves. So, we looked for a place that was outside of a church's walls where we might even run into real, non-Presbyterian people during the course of our meeting as a reminder that we do not do this only for ourselves.

A second idea was that for many congregations their buildings are a liability not an asset. I have seen about 75% of the buildings in which our congregations worship. I would say that this statement is true much of the time, even for the large, new buildings with which some of our congregations are blessed. How many pastors have had to suddenly become experts in heating and air conditioning, plumbing, or pest control since it is the pastor who is around the building more often than anyone else? How many buildings are not accessible to at least some of the people who come to worship; have dark, scary bathrooms in hard to find places and nurseries that are far away from the sanctuary and far from inviting; or that use up so much of the church's resources simply to heat

and light and irrigate them (let alone provide for a good roof or a new floor or the myriad other repairs that come up) that ministry becomes restricted simply to pay the utility bills?

### ATTENTION Clerks of Session!

The annual stats are due in 8 days! The deadline is February 23, but the earlier the better!!!

Part of the reason for meeting in a non-church building space is to encourage congregations to consider whether meeting in a building of their own, especially in a congregation that may only use that building for a few hours every week, is really the best use of their resources. What about meeting for worship in a public facility in your town or neighborhood and freeing the assets now used for building upkeep for mission and ministry?

We are, then, conducting an experiment with our presbytery meetings this year. We will be seated around tables for the entire meeting. At this first meeting, the sacrament of communion will be shared around each table individually as all of the tables are doing so at their own pace. You will notice some other changes as well.

The world is changing so rapidly around us. Our congregations need to be able to be adaptable and responsive to these changes insofar as it is necessary to do so in order to be able to continue to share the gospel in ways and places in which people can hear and believe it. The presbytery meetings this year are a tiny step in encouraging you to think creatively and imaginatively about what it might mean for your congregation to use its assets and manage its liabilities in such a way that puts its gifts to their best use for the gospel that brings hope.

### Into Africa

[Three new mission appointees](#) will serve in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia.

Mission Connection to [The Rev. Carolyn Weber](#) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

### 2010 Presbyterian Youth Triennium (PYT)

Please contact [Maura McGrath Nagle](#) before **February 24** and tell her how many youth and adult participants your church will be sending to the Youth Triennium. Please make this RSVP by the February 24 deadline, *our presbytery has to turn our numbers in by February 26*.

If you have youth attending the 2010 Presbyterian Youth Triennium, at Purdue University, July 20-24, 2010, please fill out the [PYT Registration Application](#) **completely** and return to [Julie](#) at the Presbytery of Great Rivers office.

**Application Deadline** for Presbytery of Great Rivers is **Monday, May 24, 2010**.

### United Media Resource Center

**Did you know that the presbytery is a member of the United Media Resource Center in Springfield? Our membership allows you to access their entire catalog of resources for the cost of mailing. See the details below.**

#### **The UMRC's entire collection is now available on an online searchable catalog!**

This wonderful service allows persons to search for resources by title, author, subject, publisher, keyword, and more! The shopping cart feature allows you to request resources by email directly from the catalog site. Now everyone in your presbytery can see the wide variety of materials available for them to borrow! [United Media Resource Center Catalog](#)

The UMRC also has an online newsletter in which new and existing resources are highlighted. To view the 2009 newsletters and for a link to subscribe to future editions, go to [United Media Resource Center E-newsletter Archives](#)

My daughter returned from one of her first babysitting jobs about six years ago and I asked "how did it go?" She said the kids were fine but that she drank a soda and placed the can on the counter. When the parents returned she asked where their recycling bin was and they sheepishly admitted that they didn't recycle. My daughter was taken aback - this was her first encounter with a household that did not recycle.

Hopefully this family has since jumped on the recycling band wagon - they lived in a newer home with lots of room in a three-car garage right off the kitchen.

Recycling options vary greatly among the communities in the Presbytery of Great Rivers. They range from the gold standard - curbside recycling to some rural communities where tax payers drive 15 minutes to place items in bins in a dark township shed. If you feel your community is not really served by any recycling options write and let me know.

As I mentioned in my first column our church, St. Luke Union in Bloomington, recycles paper and aluminum. Our family takes our cardboard, glass, plastic and tin to large community bins in Normal. The only hardship is they are often full - especially after weekends and holidays.

My previous house was tiny and finding space for any style of recycle bin was challenging but we kept one on the enclosed porch. My current house has a four seasons room between the house and garage, right off the kitchen and we have four stacking bins there to sort by product.

If you are currently not recycling now might be a good time to resolve to start. Find out the rules in your area - for example our area does not allow lids of any kind. Make yourself rinse out containers as you use them. Be careful about placing containers in the dishwasher with the labels on as the labels can gum up your dishwasher and you may have to run a cleaning solution through it. Parents and grandparents who recycle are teaching the next generation to care for God's earth. Pick up containers thrown out as litter and add them to your recycling.

Does your church recycle? Many churches have huge dumpsters for the trash generated from congregations of all sizes. Does the coffee hour after church produce several large empty juice containers? How about last week's spaghetti supper where 36 jars of sauce came from the wholesale grocery? If your church does not have curbside recycling does someone volunteer to take wash those containers and take them to the recycle bin? Start a discussion about recycling and start a new policy.

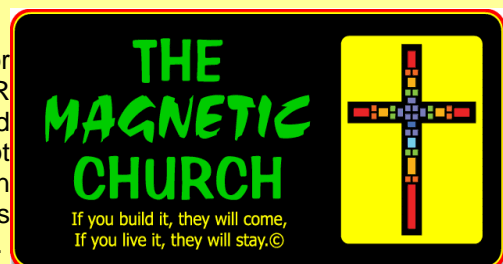
Write and tell me how your church handles recycling, [Laurie Vial](#).

Please forward this newsletter to others and urge them to sign up. They can sign up by going to the upper right-hand corner of the [Presbytery of Great Rivers](#) website.

Until next week. . . let's all strive to be good stewards of God's earth.

### Do You WANT Your Church to Grow?

Have you or members of your congregation registered for The Magnetic Church event **April 23-24**? COME FOR YOUR CHURCH! Do you want to become more involved in the mission and ministry of your church? But you're not sure where to begin, what to do, or how to apply your own unique gifts and personal talents. Begin by coming to this event to learn a whole lot about practical evangelism. AND ALONG THE WAY ... You may discover new ways to apply your talents and skills.



[Click here](#) for more information and [Registration Form](#).

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