

GOOD NEWS FROM GREAT RIVERS

March 15, 2010



[PRESBYTERY OF GREAT RIVERS](#)

1230 W Candletree Dr, Suite D, Peoria, IL 61614
800-537-8592

Mark Your Calendar

Interim Pastor's Group

Thursday, March 18
11:30 - 1:30
PGR

CLP & Spouse's Luncheon

Saturday, March 20
11:00 - 1:30
Barrack's Cater Inn

COM

Tuesday, March 23
10:00 - 3:00
Northminster, Peoria

CPM

Thursday, April 1
9:30 - 4:00
Northminster, Peoria

OFFICE CLOSED

Good Friday
Friday, April 2

Personnel Committee

Tuesday, April 6
9:30 - 1:00
PGR

Ordination of the Rev. Joshua Erickson

Sunday, April 11
4:00
Second, Bloomington

Clergy Group

Thursday, April 15
10:00 - 11:30
PGR

Administration Council

Wednesday, April 21
9:30 - 2:30

General Presbyter's Perspective Rev. Susan Krummel

There are two Midwestern phrases that I would like you to think about this week. One of them is "seed money." You probably know what this phrase means in modern parlance. It is often used when talking about some kind of investment in a new business. As in, "If only we could find someone to give us seed money to get our new idea into production." Now, you might wonder what that has to do with seeds. If you grew up around farmers from any region--or like many of the people who read this newsletter you grew up around farmers from the Midwest--then you know that the origin of the term has to do with actual seeds. "Seed money" was once literally the amount of cash that you would need to buy seed in the spring in order to plant a crop for that year. Many a family guarded that seed money with their lives over the course of the winter, foregoing even necessities at times so that they would be able to afford the seed needed to provide their livelihood. "Seed money" was also sometimes borrowed from the bank or from a family member so that family could start a farming operation or restart one that had experienced a year or more in which no crop or a meager crop was produced. It was this "seed money" that made the new venture possible or that poured new life into a venture that had become stagnant or worse.

The other phrase is "priming the pump." You know that this is often used now in financial discussions as well, referring to a way to get money flowing into a new venture. When I hear the phrase I always think of the old metal pump arm that was reached by standing on a concrete platform at the farm that was my grandma's home and that was still in my family until the 1990's. As a child, I would often be at the farm on Saturdays. No one in my family lived there anymore, but we still had a big garden there. I would go out to the farm with my grandma, grandpa, dad and brother. While the men worked in the garden, my grandma would often take me across the road to the big barns. We would search for stray kitties (and would often find some, although we could never catch them) and then we would go to the pump and work to pump up the coldest, sweetest water I have still ever tasted. What I did not know then is that if a well stops pumping water but there is still water in the spring or cistern below it to be pumped, then one must "prime" the pump by sending water down the plumbing in order to force water up from below and start the pump working again.

"Seed money." "Priming the pump." These two phrases describe the money available to your congregation through the Mission Initiative Funds. This is the way our presbytery now funds mission and it is both very simple and very labor intensive to do. In order to access the funds, your

PGR

The Magnetic Church

Friday, April 23 thru
Saturday, April 24
Fri. 7:00pm - 10:00pm
Sat. 9:00am - 4:00pm
United, Peoria

COM

Tuesday, April 27
10:00 - 3:00
Northminster, Peoria

session must simply vote to ask for the funds and fill out the application. [2010 Mission Initiative Funding Application](#) The hardest thing to do is to think creatively as a session to find ways to start new mission as an outreach of your Christian witness. The funds are given to congregations that have identified something new, or have greatly expanded an existing program, as a way of reaching beyond their own members to share the joy and hope of the gospel. The money is not given to existing programs--they need neither "seed money" nor "pump priming." The money is used to help a congregation get started on some exciting new outreach that has the potential to change the lives of congregation members and recipients alike.

Most sessions that I have known have not very often said "no" to a great idea. Instead, they often keep congregations from taking risks and reaching out in new directions by saying "We don't have the money for this." What if money were no object? What if you could step out boldly in a new direction to see what ministry might be available to you? The funds are ready for the asking. How bold will you be?

Congratulations

Congratulations to Rev. Joshua Erickson on his upcoming ordination. Joshua will be ordained Sunday, April 11, 4:00pm at Second Presbyterian Church in Bloomington.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Rev. Steve Akins and his wife, First Presbyterian Church, Rushville on the birth of their daughter, Erin Michelle Akins, born February 15, 2010 at 8:00am, weighing in at 6lbs 6oz, and stretching to 19.5 inches long.

2010 Presbyterian Youth Triennium (PYT)

Presbytery of Great Rivers will have **41** youth attending the 2010 Presbyterian Youth Triennium, at Purdue University, July 20-24.

Now that you have made this commitment, your next step is to 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.**

Continuing Education Funds for Small Church Pastors

Boudinot Library Fund

Provides grants of \$200 to small Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations to purchase books for the church library selected by the pastor, for the pastor's use.

Leadership Training Scholarship

Provides grants of \$200 to pastors of small churches to use to attend training events.
Available Now.

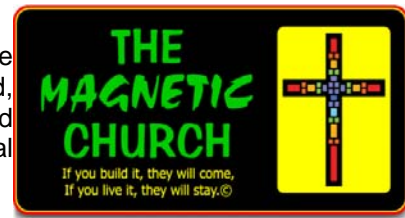
Continuing Education Grant

Provides grants of \$1000-\$1500 for the first three years of a Doctor of Ministry program.
Available Now.

More details and application information can be found at [Financial Aid for Studies](#).

Do You WANT Your Church to Grow?

Have you or members of your congregation registered for The Magnetic Church event April 23-24? COME! Be challenged, motivated, and enthused, as Andrew Weeks, a lay speaker and author, presents fresh ideas for fellowship, community, spiritual growth, and personal connections.



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

Presbyterian Hunger Program

Heaven on Earth

An Agrarian Road Trip to the U.S. Social Forum

June 13-26, 2010

You're invited to the Presbyterian Hunger Program's [Heaven on Earth](#) Agrarian Road Trip to the US Social Forum from June 13-26. Join this delegation of college students, farmers, musicians, bloggers and other adventurous souls. Starting in Louisville, Kentucky, we will make stops in six other states along the way to Detroit, Michigan to visit with congregations and community groups who are participating in the grassroots sustainable and just food revolution that is sprouting up everywhere.

Ellen Davis, professor at Duke Divinity, and author of *Scripture, Culture and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible*, will ground the trip in the Bible.

Jud Hendrix - a young pastor at PC(USA)'s Covenant Community Church - will help the journeyers process the experience and facilitate conversation cafes with congregations and folks along the way. We will attempt to develop a living theology as we experience the growing local agrarian renaissance.

[Download the application](#)

[Get all the details](#)

[See the route](#)



Green Energy

By Laurie Vial, Energy Consultant

I recently attended the summit on Renewable Energy in the Public Sector - a free conference sponsored by Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC). Technology in solar, geothermal and wind is changing and improving at almost incomprehensible speeds. Environmentalists want to jump on the green band wagon but, with improvement occurring almost daily, it's scary to determine when to jump in. If my church installs a solar system today that is state-of-the-art will it be outdated by the time it is installed?

Funding is of course the big question. Many of the programs available to the public sector are not available to nonprofits (churches). And the pools of money that become available are quickly awarded almost before you know you should be applying. A top priority of mine will be to evaluate all funding sources and make them available to congregations along with dates so we are poised to submit applications when and if the pools are replenished.

Like many seminars I met lots of new people that can help our churches. If they deal only with large scale projects or only with government projects they know others in the industry who deal with smaller projects and who are willing to work with nonprofits. And they know people who work in the geographic boundaries of the Presbytery of Great Rivers. Most of all they know designers, engineers and contractors we would want to work with and a few who might best be avoided.

A pleasant surprise was that the conference did not just focus on new construction but spent a majority of resources and time addressing retrofitting current structures. If any church is considering building or adding an addition there are many options to make the new construction as green and as energy efficient as possible. Government standards will likely require public buildings to be energy self sustaining by the year 2030. But for the vast majority of our congregations our focus will be on retrofitting our current church buildings to be more efficient.

And for many of our congregations it's not a question of whether or not it is the right thing to do but how to fund the improvements.

There were three break-out sessions - one each on geothermal, wind and solar. Geo-thermal can

be used to harness the constant temperature on the earth's interior to heat and cool our church buildings. Some new systems are designed so a back up system is unnecessary even in climates north of here. Butler University is currently installing a system that will heat and cool over 40 buildings on a 600-acre campus. Many of our churches have lots that would allow room for horizontal wells. If lot size is an issue there is a building in Chicago with no set backs on three sides and very tiny set back on the smallest side of the triangular lot. The building will be heated and cooled with geothermal using six 1000-foot deep wells.

Much of the wind session dealt with large scale wind farms. It is still difficult to erect a wind turbine that will generate enough energy for the electricity used by a church with a reasonable pay back time and to meet local zoning and building codes. But small vertical turbines might be an option to provide some of the church's energy needs. They are much more unobtrusive and meet many codes.

Solar panels are very efficient and as they increase in popularity they hopefully will start to decrease in price. Thin solar films including paints and roof shingles are the wave of the future. Again, churches may want to consider a small solar project to offset some of their electrical costs rather than a large scale plan trying to offset 100% of the church's energy usage. Some public housing projects, for example, are using solar powered lights for parking lots.

Churches offer unique challenges when they use most of their energy on Sundays and other scattered days throughout the month unlike homes and businesses with more steady or predictable usage.

Feel free to post this column on your church bulletin board or reproduce it in your church newsletter. If you received this newsletter as a forward and want to subscribe go to [Presbytery of Great Rivers](http://PresbyteryofGreatRivers.org) website and use the form in the upper right hand corner. To contact me e-mail greenenergy@greatriverspby.org. Until next week let's all strive to be good stewards of God's earth.

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