

GOOD NEWS FROM GREAT RIVERS

April 19, 2010



[PRESBYTERY OF GREAT RIVERS](#)

1230 W Candletree Dr, Suite D, Peoria, IL 61614
800-537-8592 / Peoria 309-683-6980 / Fax: 309-683-6983

Mark Your Calendar

Administration Council

Wednesday, April 21

9:30 - 2:30

PGR

COM

Tuesday, April 27

10:00 - 3:00

Northminster, Peoria

Retired Pastor's

Tuesday, April 27

10:00

First, Lewistown

Clergy Group

Thursday, May 6

10:00 - 11:30

PGR

Presbytery Night

at the Ballpark

RSVP DEADLINE

with the Peoria Chiefs

Friday, May 7

18 days left to RSVP

Visioning Council

Thursday, May 13

9:30 - 2:30

PGR

Youth Triennium Registration and Fee

DEADLINE

Monday, May 24

Please turn information in to

[Julie](#) at the presbytery
address

COM

Tuesday, May 25

10:00 - 3:00

General Presbyter's Perspective

Rev. Susan Krummel

Once in awhile I have people ask me for advice about preparing to preach. There are, of course, volumes written on this topic. So, my advice is just a little drop in the ocean of all of that wisdom. I usually talk about staking out the time in a week that it takes to really prepare oneself to preach. It is not something that can just be one more task to be checked off a list. I know that when I am preparing to preach, the sermon kind of takes over my life in both my waking and sleeping moments. The details of the Biblical narrative can easily be managed by reading and studying the available literature. The preacher's task involves trying to find the seam where the life of the people who will be hearing the sermon and the truth of the gospel meet one another in a meaningful way.

One piece of very practical advice I have sometimes given is that a person should read widely and in a way that exposes the preacher to interesting ways to use the English language and in such a way that the preacher's thought patterns and vocabulary can be expanded. One of the things that I read to do this for myself is The New Yorker magazine. You may have heard me mention before that I often have to turn to a dictionary for at least one word that I read in an article therein.

As I was looking at the latest edition I came across the word "parallax." I was not familiar with the term, although once I looked it up, I realized that I was familiar with the basic concept. Here is a simple definition: "An apparent change in the direction of an object caused by a change in observational position that provides a new line of sight." You have experienced this. Look at an object across the room with both of your eyes. Then look at it with your right eye closed; now your left. The object will appear to move a little bit. That is a parallax. Apparently this phenomenon is used to measure the distance of far away objects like stars; there is a mathematical equation for doing so. I also had never really thought about this, but this measuring of distance is the reason we have two eyes. They create the parallax measurement for us which creates depth perception.

I think the reason the word jumped off the page for me was a conversation I had during a continuing education event I attended last week and a conversation I had with friends on Saturday night. At the educational event, we were talking about how churches can have one perception of something in their lives together while those who might join them as newcomers in worship could have a totally different perception. Specifically we were talking about the lengthy verbal announcements and sharing of joys and concerns that dominate the life of many congregations.

Northminster, Peoria

OFFICE CLOSED

Memorial Day

Monday, May 31

Sometimes this part of the service is longer than the sermon. This phenomenon must have value to some of the worshipers or it would not be part of worship. With my friends, who are very regular church goers, I was saying that this use of worship time has meaning for those who are part of the community. They laughed and said that it drives them absolutely crazy in their own congregation. They used the example of someone sharing as a joy that their dog had been missing for two hours that morning, but had returned. They thought that went a little too far and took up a little too much of worship.

Perhaps the verbal announcements and joys and concerns are an example of something that creates a parallax. For some members of the regular church community (especially in smaller churches) this is the heart of their life together. The sermon, the sacraments, the music are all secondary for some people. The reason they get up and get dressed and get to church on Sunday morning is to catch up on the news. (Of course, with the advent of social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter and so on, it will be interesting to see how long this once a week, face to face sharing of information is the main source for most people.) For some in that church, and for outsiders who do not know the people being mentioned or the concerns being voiced, this phenomenon may feel like it is a waste of time and far too much personal information for their comfort. It is like looking at an object with one eye closed and then the other. Neither view gives us the whole picture. How do we combine those views to help us measure the importance of these "sharings" and how do we reconcile the needs of the two views? That is a question for every congregation to answer.

Presbytery Planning Calendars & Mission Year Books

If you would like to purchase the [2010-2011 Planning Calendars](#) or [2010 Mission Year Books](#) for your church, please call the Presbyterian Distribution Center at 800-524-2612 or follow the links in this article. If your church would like to receive the same quantity of these items each year you can place a standing order with the PDC.

Session Record Review

There will be four Session Record Reviews offered this year. The reviews will be held on Saturdays from 9:30am to noon. Clerks of Session, please RSVP as soon as possible to [Julie](#) and let her know which date you will attend.

June 5	United, Peoria
July 17	First, Springfield
August 14	First, Macomb
September 18	United, Woodhull

Be sure to bring your worksheet and fill it out prior to the meeting.

[2010 Session Record Review Cover Sheet](#)

[2010 Session Record Review Form](#)

Presbytery Night at the Ballpark



Come join churches from our presbytery on Friday, June 11, 7:00pm at O'Brien Field. Peoria Chiefs vs. the Great Lake Loons. Tickets cost \$7.00

Information has been mailed to your church. *Sign-up with your church today.*

REMEMBER to have your church "Ticket Order Form" turned into [Julie](#) at the presbytery office no later than Friday, May 7, 2010. *18 days left to RSVP*



Green Energy
By Laurie Vial, Energy Consultant

I took in the Sustainable Living Expo last weekend at Illinois Wesleyan University sponsored

by: the Ecology Action Center of Normal. The expo was brimming with interesting booths pertaining to almost every aspect of living green. I met some valuable contacts - especially the Citizen's Utility Board. I also gathered information from several contractors who can help our churches conserve energy and save money.

The expo was also very inspiring. The attendees and the exhibitors were passionate about environmental stewardship, energy conservation and related topics. I'll take you on a virtual tour in hopes that you will catch some passion and enthusiasm. And maybe next year you can attend in person or keep your eyes open for "green" functions in your area. A member of my church who spends her winters in Florida was lamenting that by returning to Illinois at Easter time she was missing a green living weekend event. People of all ages are catching "green" fever and that's exciting.

About a third of the booth space was unrelated to the mission of the expo - I hope in the future planners will take the tough stance to limit exhibitors to the topic at hand. About a third of the booth space was related to taking better care of our bodies. This is really not a defined goal in my job description but we Americans do need to take better care of ourselves. Booths ranged from massage therapists, chiropractors, vitamin and herbal supplements, yoga, triathlon, organic foods and much more. It was really interesting to explore so many healthy options under one roof - and to pick up some free samples.

Several booth exhibitors featured rain water collection systems. The options range from small versions, 55-gallons home versions to large underground reservoirs perfect for large church roofs. Our church has new landscaping and a community garden. Wouldn't it be great to water them with free rain water rather than chlorinated city water that we have to pay for?

The Old House Society had a booth. This great organization salvages items from period homes, schools and other buildings that are going to be torn down and sells them to restoration contractors and home owners in their warehouse. You know the saying reduce, reuse and recycle - this is the epitome of reusing!!

The Citizen's Utility Board was giving out free compact florescent bulbs. I asked questions about alternative electrical and gas suppliers now that parts of our utility providers have been deregulated. Their staff is always on hand to answer our questions in the future - and we're sure to have some good ones.

A local electrical supply house had a lighting and light bulb expert. The "expert" is willing to travel to most if not all the churches in our Presbytery to assess your church's current lighting plan. She can tell you how much you can save by switching out light bulbs to the new energy efficient options. Of course they also sell the light bulbs and offer delivery. If a church has a small budget this is a very good place to start. A small investment can capture large savings. If you are interested in a lighting consultation I can set you up with this company or I can explore other options in your community.

A wind turbine company was exhibiting but their booth was so busy every time I tried that I never did get to speak to them in person but picked up their brochures.

If you have any green events going on in your community let me know so I can promote them in this column and make sure you try to drop in and check them out. You'll probably learn a new tip or two and you will come away inspired to keeping greening your lifestyle.

Hopefully you all read last week's column announcing a new opportunity to bring FREE energy audits to all of our Presbytery churches. If want to get on the list shoot me an e-mail using the hot link below.

Feel free to contact me, [Laurie](#), with questions or suggestions. Until next week let's strive to be good stewards of God's earth.

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