

GOOD NEWS FROM GREAT RIVERS

June 21, 2010



[PRESBYTERY OF GREAT RIVERS](#)

1230 W Candletree Dr, Suite D, Peoria, IL 61614
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Special Presbytery Meeting

Wednesday, June 30, 1:30 p.m.

[First Federated Church](#)

3601 N. Sheridan Rd., Peoria, Illinois

The purpose of the meeting is to address issues with regard to the recommendation from the Mission Responsibility Through Investment committee of the General Assembly Mission Council that the PCUSA should denounce Caterpillar, Inc. for its profit-making from its activities in the Middle East.

All minister members and commissioners are urged to attend.

Information/papers can be found on our website or by clicking [Here](#).

News From GA

Sue Krummel will be sending video blogs from the General Assembly in Minneapolis. You can access them from [Presbytery of Great Rivers](#) website.

Mark Your Calendar

SUMMER HOURS

Mon.-Thurs. 8:00 - 4:00
Closed Friday

COM

Tuesday, June 22
10:00 - 3:00
Northminster, Peoria

Nominating Committee

Tuesday, June 29
10:00 - 2:00
PGR

Administration Council

Wednesday, June 30
10:00 - Noon
PGR

Special Presbytery Meeting

General Presbyter's Perspective

Rev. Susan Krummel

Having attended several 175th anniversaries of congregations in our presbytery in the last few months, I decided to turn to a book in our very small library in the Presbytery office. It is entitled, "The Presbyterian Synods of Illinois." It is by Wm. Irvine Blair and was published by Mattoon Presbytery. It is dedicated "To the honored memory of those resolute pioneer souls who braved The Wilderness and who counted not their lives a possession to be greedily grasped at, but laid them upon the altars of God in order that he might find praise in Illinois, this book is affectionately dedicated." I venture to guess that it has never graced a best seller list.

But, I am finding it fascinating reading, especially as we approach the General Assembly this summer. As I read about our ancestors in the faith in this state, I am constantly reminded about how brave the people were who first moved here to face malaria and cholera and the native peoples who were defending their land against these invaders. My own family came to Peoria County at some point in the 1800's. And, I know that my great-grandmother was a Presbyterian because I have her Presbyterian hymnbook (remember, in those days, you carried your Bible and your hymnbook back and forth to church.) It has inside its front cover the mimeographed bulletin from the church in Glasford (there is no longer a

Wednesday, June 30
1:30
First Federated, Peoria

Clergy Group

Thursday, July 1
10:00 - 11:30
PGR

General Assembly

July 3 - July 10
Minneapolis, MN

Office Closed

Monday, July 5
In observance of
Independence Day

PCUSA congregation there) from a Sunday only a few weeks before her death. I wish I had asked more questions about what my grandma remembered of her mother and those who came before her.

It is not only the bravery that impresses me. I am also struck by the similarity to our own time. The issues that will come before this General Assembly—standards for ordination; questions about marriage; issues of peace in the Middle East and the culpability of particular corporations—are different in detail from the days of the 1830s in the Presbyterian churches of Illinois. But the fact that Presbyterians had dearly held beliefs that were the polar opposites of one another is exactly the same kind of political landscape for us as it was for them.

The issue, of course, in the Illinois Presbyterian churches of the 1830's and 1840's especially was that of slavery. Think about where Presbyterians came from to settle here. A large group came from Kentucky, having come there from Virginia and North Carolina. They brought their southern heritage to the plains of Illinois, including their attitudes toward slavery. Some brought slaves with them, who were often then called servants in the Prairie State. Others may never have owned slaves themselves, but were sympathetic to those who did and thought that the economic burden that the end of slavery would bring should not be imposed on their kinsfolk back home. There was another large group of Presbyterians who came here from New England because they were abolitionists and wanted to be sure that Illinois remained a free state. They were in favor of ending slavery as soon as possible, of harboring runaway slaves, of denouncing anyone who had ever owned a slave. The southerners were called "Whites." The Northerners were called "Yankees." And they soon found themselves sitting side by side on a pew on Sunday morning or worshipping in neighboring Presbyterian churches. This did not lead to harmony.

Presbyteries and Synods and, ultimately, the General Assembly were asked to settle questions like "Can the session accept as a new member a person who once owned slaves?" In most cases, the higher governing bodies returned this question to the sessions and told them that, in effect, the position of the denomination was one of local option. As you may know, the denomination split and split and reconfigured only to split asunder along the Mason-Dixon line in the 1860's.

When the General Assembly is gaveled to a close this year, there will be decisions that have been made and decisions that will be before us that will make it seem like the church has never faced anything like this before. That would, of course, be untrue. My hope is that in the midst of whatever controversies and animosity and sorrow that result from particular decisions in Minneapolis, we can keep those decisions in perspective. The over-arching social dilemma for this country and this state and this denomination in the 19th century was slavery. We look at that issue now and wonder how anyone who professes Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior could have possibly championed the ownership of one human being by another. Two centuries from now, people who worship in Presbyterian churches will look at our controversies and wonder how people could have held one position or another. But, the good news is that in spite of us, the gospel will still be preached, children will still be baptized, the hungry will be fed, the naked will be clothed and those who need to hear it most desperately will come to know that they are beloved children of God through Jesus Christ.

Give With An Open Heart

The Pentecost Offering is unique in that congregations direct 40 percent of what they receive for ministries which benefit children at risk. The remaining 60 percent supports mission through child advocacy (10 percent), youth ministry (25 percent), and Young Adult Volunteer opportunities (25 percent). When submitting your church's Pentecost Offering, don't forget that only 60% is sent to

the Presbytery.

Sabbatical Grants

We at the Louisville Institute are pleased to announce our 17th annual competition for Sabbatical Grants for Pastoral Leaders.

Details of our grant application process and eligibility requirements are available on our website, [Louisville Institute](#). I invite you to peruse the website to familiarize yourself with our sabbatical and study programs, and to pass our website address along to your network of regional officials.

By way of summary, here are some core program facts:

- Applicants must be regularly employed in a recognized religious leadership position. Applicants may be ordained or lay, and may or may not have a formal theological degree. Eligible positions include pastors and other parish ministers, chaplains, faith-based community agency leaders, and church judicatory officials.
- Awardees will ordinarily have been in their current place of ministry at least five years, and will plan on staying in their current place for at least a year beyond their sabbatical. They will be at least five years away from retirement. Exceptions are possible, especially in church polities built on an itinerancy model.
- Awards are made for either eight- or twelve-week sabbaticals. Sabbaticals are taken in a continuous single period. Applicants choose whether to apply for an eight-week sabbatical, with a \$10,000 award, or for a twelve-week sabbatical, which bears a \$15,000 award. The size of award request has no bearing on the chances of receiving an award.
- Applications are due no later than September 1, 2010. Award announcements will be made by December 1, and sabbaticals must be taken between March 1, 2011 and August 31, 2012.
- For the Pastoral Study Project grants, rules are somewhat different; please see our website for that program's eligibility and project guidelines.
- Full program information and application materials are available at our website, [Louisville Institute](#).

We look forward to a day when giving pastors a sabbatical will be a widely practiced standard in the church. Until then, we're working to make sabbaticals more widely available to pastors, many of whom would not otherwise have opportunity for one.

"The Big Questions"

2nd Annual Great Rivers' Pastors' Retreat

Featuring Dr. William Greenway
Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Friday, September 24, 2010

9:30am - 2:30pm

[WeaverRidge Golf Club](#)

5100 WeaverRidge Blvd.

Peoria, IL 61615

Go to [AustinSeminary.edu](#) or click [here](#) for more information regarding Bill Greenway.

Session Record Review

There are three Session Record Reviews left this year (one has already been completed!) The reviews will be held on Saturdays from 9:30 am to noon. Clerks of Session, please RSVP as soon as possible to [Julie](#) which date you will attend. **REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR COVER SHEET and FORM!**

July 17 - First, Springfield **RSVP by July 8**
August 14 - First, Macomb **RSVP by August 5**
September 18 - United, Woodhull **RSVP by September 9**

Be sure to bring your worksheet and fill it out, in pen, prior to the meeting.
[2010 Session Record Review Cover Sheet](#)
[2010 Session Record Review Form](#)



Green Energy By Laurie Vial, Energy Consultant

Since my column two weeks ago about recycling in more rooms of your house than just the kitchen I have been discovering more items I can recycle. It's never too late to teach an old dog new tricks. I have started washing the cold "to go" cups (like those from Starbucks) and recycling them. A fellow employee at the Presbytery office reminded me to check over-the-counter medicine and vitamin bottles. And I am recycling more and more in the bathroom such as shampoo and mouthwash bottles. Keep scouring your house for more of those little triangles that mean RECYCLE!!

If you have a secondary refrigerator or freezer manufactured before 2001 you may be spending about \$100 year to run it - especially if it is on a porch or in the garage where the air is not heated or cooled. If you are an Ameren customer you can have it picked up, safely recycled and receive \$35. Now that's a win, win, win. And although they offer no rebate, Ameren will at the same time pick up an older room air conditioner. Go to [Act on Energy](#) for all the details. About 95% of the appliance is recycled. This is a great program to take advantage of.

We may have to quit calling compact fluorescent bulbs "curly" or spiral bulbs as they come out with more shapes, types and styles for almost every use. Remember they use about 75% less energy and last up to ten times as long as incandescents. CFL's manufactured after 2009 usually achieve full brightness almost instantly. Older bulbs took up to three minutes, or longer in extreme cold. So if you have not already done so jump on the CFL band wagon and change out a few every month until you have converted your entire house. CFL's contain a small amount of mercury so when they no longer work, take to a center that knows about proper disposal. And churches should challenge themselves to convert over to CFL's where applicable.

Remember when rechargeable batteries were a novelty and the units and the batteries themselves were very expensive? Like most technology both have come down in price. If your family goes through lots of batteries think about switching over to rechargeables. Make sure nonworking rechargeable batteries are not going into the landfill; throw them in the container at your local battery store. These retailers graciously participate in recycling programs: Batteries Plus, Best Buy, Cingular Wireless, The Home Depot, Radio Shack, Sears, Staples, Target, US Cellular, Verizon Wireless, and Wal-Mart.

Learn more about FREE energy audits for all churches in our Presbytery using the hot link below. Contact me at [Laurie](#). Until next week let's all strive to be good stewards of God's earth.

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