



GOOD NEWS FROM GREAT RIVERS

PRESBYTERY OF GREAT RIVERS

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July 26, 2010

Mark Your Calendar

SUMMER HOURS

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

COM

Tuesday, July 27
9:00
Five Points Washington

Presbytery Assembly Mtg.

Tuesday, July 27
9:30
Five Points Washington
Registration starts at 8:30

Budget Meeting

Wednesday, July 28
10:00
PGR

Clergy Group

Thursday, August 5
10:00 - 11:30
PGR

Visioning Council

Thursday, August 12
9:30 - 2:30
PGR

Session Record Review

Saturday, August 14
9:30 - 12:00
First, Macomb

COM

Tuesday, August 24
10:00 - 3:00
Northminster, Peoria

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

General Presbyter's Perspective Rev. Susan Krummel

Even the most dedicated gardener gets to the point about this time of the year when they dread having to go into the garden. If you go out there earlier in the morning before it gets too beastly hot, the relative humidity is so high (remember, it is *relative* humidity) that everything is soaking wet, including-very soon-you. If you wait until later in the day, you get so hot that you start to see stars before your eyes and dread going inside into the air conditioning because your clothes are so wet that you are afraid of catching pneumonia. (At least that is what your grandma would tell you.) So, what to do, what to do. Because you have to get out there. The vegetable garden is producing so many things so quickly that they just have to be picked. The bushes are taking over the borders. The flowers have so many deadheads on them that their stems are being weighed down and you can hardly see the flowers that are still blooming. The weeds are almost drowning out some of your most important plantings. And the things in flowerpots need to be watered, watered, watered since they heat up so fast. This is what separates the true green thumbs from the merely chartreuse. Can you take it? Do you have the stamina to hang in there through the dog days? Because if you do, you will be rewarded with the harvest of the vegetable garden and the beauty of the flowers that will soon come out of their doldrums and begin to flourish again in longer, cooler nights for that last burst of glory before the fall.

On Tuesday at the presbytery meeting we will be looking together at the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Book of Hebrews. I have adopted a new way (to me) of getting prepared for preaching. I have preached for a long time and do not usually find too many new things in commentaries when I use them in my preparation (which I still do to refresh my memory about the setting of the text and what some of the details of the text really mean.) To help me to get a sense of the flow of the passage and how it fits into the original whole of the book or section of a book, I read long passages out loud since many of the books of the Bible were first experienced in that way. Hebrews, most commentators say, was probably originally a sermon. Wow-those people must have been taking notes and sitting in a straight-backed chair. It is a complicated logical proposal and loooooooong. When I read it out loud, I am not sure I followed all of the conclusions of the author. The commentators say that it was written to help re-inspire people who had kind of fallen into the mindset of the July gardener in Central Illinois. "Is it worth it? Can I really go out there again? Does anybody really care about the fruits of my labors? I will just have to repeat all of this again next week or next month."

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Of course, those early Christians were not feeling equivocal about weeding. They were worrying about whether all of the hardships that professing their faith in Christ had brought into their lives with little sense of accomplishment were worth it. Was the world really changing? Were people responding to them in the same numbers and in the same way as had the people in the stories of the very first Christians decades before? Day to day they were getting discouraged and worse. For some of them, they were risking their livelihoods by professing their faith. Some of them were risking their lives.

Not every gardener makes it over the hump of mid-July. Many a vegetable garden is left to go to seed. Many a border gets overrun with morning glories and out of control forsythias and creeping Charlie. Many a flower pot turns into a still life resembling the inside of a blast furnace. But, there are those gardeners who because they are new to it and are still enjoying the thrill of what happens when planning and hard work combine to bring forth a harvest; or who, because they are experienced at it, know that the discomfort of a few weeks of feeling like a wet dishtowel when you come in from the garden is just part of the territory—there are those gardeners who continue in the partnership they have with God to see what can be produced.

Where are you in your faith journey—worn out, too hot to keep going, seeing such paltry results in your own life and the lives of others that you are ready to give up? Or, are you remembering those who went before you to set an example and those who will come after you who will grow in their faith? Ready to get out there and pull a few weeds?

Session Record Review

There are two Session Record Reviews left this year (two have 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 AND, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS IS A REQUIREMENT OF THE BOOK OF ORDER!

August 14 - First, Macomb **RSVP by August 5**
September 18 - United, Woodhull **RSVP by September 9**

Prior to the meeting fill out your worksheet in pen.

[2010 Session Record Review Cover Sheet](#)

[2010 Session Record Review Form](#)

Tips For Organizing Youth Volunteer Projects *From Church Mutual Insurance Company*

Making sure a volunteer project doesn't turn into confusion, with duplicated efforts and unnecessary risks, takes some planning and coordination. Here are steps you can take to help make your next youth volunteer effort an enthusiastic success.

[read more...](#)

Presbyterian Youth Triennium

The Triennium took place, July 20-24, at Purdue University in W. Lafayette, IN with almost 5,000 youth. Our presbytery had 50 youth and 9 adults attend from 11 of our churches. If you know of any teenagers that attended Triennium, be sure to ask them about their experience. To help tell the story of the 2010 Triennium follow this link to our [Presbytery PhotoBucket page](#).

"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.

Seminar And Pastor's Workshop

New Covenant Community is pleased to announce the Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers will be speaking in Normal, IL October 29-30, 2010. Dr. Meyers, senior minister of the Mayflower Congregational UCC Church in Oklahoma, author of several books, and a member of the Jesus Seminar, will be presenting a free lecture on the evening of October 29 at Heartland Community College at 7 p.m. He will also be facilitating a workshop for pastors and lay people on Saturday, October 30 at Heartland from 8:30am to 12:30pm. For more information, please refer to the [New Covenant Community](#) website.

United Campus Christian Foundation

Did you know that the United Campus Christian Foundation (UCCF) is YOUR Presbyterian related campus ministry at Illinois State University? UCCF is an ecumenical campus ministry at ISU, related to the PC(USA), the Christian Church (Disciples), and the United Church of Christ, and is staffed by Presbyterian minister Rev. Susan Ryder. If you have a student attending ISU this year, please send their contact information to [Susan](#) (normalsue@aol.com) so she can send them information about UCCF and it's programs.

Helping Immigrants

The Presbytery of Great Rivers is pleased to announce that Ann Kelson has agreed to help churches in the Presbytery who are ministering to and with immigrants. Ann is an elder, ordained at First Presbyterian Church, Springfield, IL, having served two terms on their session. She is retired from Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Springfield, IL, where she was Assistant Professor of Medical Education. Her professional work involved developing curriculum and training faculty around Problem-Based Learning and assessment in professions education. Her work included consulting in many professional schools and colleges around the country and internationally including programs in Brazil, Cambodia, Ecuador, Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan and Tanzania.

Ann is a certified lay pastor and has served as a commissioned interim pastor, has preached monthly for the church development group in Quincy for the past two years and does other pulpit supply work. She has served on the Committee on Ministry, was a commissioner to the 216th General Assembly in San Jose, and is currently serving on the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod of Lincoln Trails. She is moderator-elect of the Presbytery.

Ann will be serving the Presbytery as follows:

- Working with immigrant populations within the congregations in assessing and meeting needs.
- Assisting pastors of congregations with immigrant populations to find and utilize available resources for this ministry.
- Working within available time as determined by this adjunct staff member and the General Presbyter to meet identified needs of immigrant populations and pastors of their congregations.

To contact Ann for more information, please email her at annkelson@comcast.net

You also may leave a message at the Presbytery office and Ann will call you.

As many of our churches find immigrants in their parishes, Ann's ministry with us will be valuable! Welcome her to this work in the Lord's world of Great Rivers!



Air Conditioning Suggestions By Laurie Vial, Energy Consultant

As I write this column in an air-conditioned coffee shop the heat index today was 110 degrees F. Now that's hot (and humid). So far I have only used my air conditioning for two hours this summer during my daughter's graduation party when the house was full of people and it was hot and humid. But a front came through mid afternoon and I flipped it off and opened the windows.

I know I am an extremist in this area and I'm not asking you to turn off your a.c. but instead think about keeping it a few degrees warmer and turning it off whenever possible. I live in the country and have a well-insulated house and mature shade trees. Plus, since I live in a wind farm, I can document that I almost always have air movement. I picked green beans at noon in the full sun and it wasn't that hot due to a brisk breeze. And I have ceiling fans in every room of the house including a waterproof one in my screened -in porch.

When I'm working at home I can wear 100 percent cotton shorts and a tank top. If your basement is "finished" or least clean escape to the basement with a couple of projects or a good book when the weather turns hot.

I participate in a program from the electric co-op where they turn off my electricity during "peak" air conditioner times. I then get my electricity at a reduced rate. Without the ceiling fans it got a little toasty (87 degrees in the living room) even for me so I headed to town to run errands. I dropped off my recycling at my church. Now I'm ensconced in the coffee shop sharing in their a.c. where it would be pumping away any way.

I spend the whole summer wrapped up in sweaters begging managers at grocery stores and restaurants to turn up the a.c. a few degrees. If every store and restaurant in the United States turned up their thermostat two degrees I wonder how much energy we would save?

My church keeps its thermostat at a pretty comfortable temperature because I rarely need to slip on my sweater. What temperature does your church keep the thermostat in the summer? Are you air conditioning spaces when they are not in use? How long do you think it takes to cool down your sanctuary for Sunday services if it was properly turned up during the week. Is your church still not air conditioned?

I'm working on an entire column on thermostats in churches and temperature settings year-round. Watch for it in the next couple of weeks. If you're old enough to remember life without air conditioning in our homes and vehicles make sure to tell the younger generation about the "good old days."

And I'll close with some a.c. suggestions from the Earth Day issue of Good Housekeeping magazine. Plant shade trees that will shade the south and west sides of your home - especially try to shade the central air unit itself. This could save you \$250 a year. Install a programmable thermostat and use it - this could save you \$150 a year. Install an attic fan - especially one that operates on a thermostat. And again turn off the a.c. whenever possible and throw open the windows - an added bonus - fresh air!

Learn more about FREE energy audits for all churches in our Presbytery by contacting me, [Laurie](#). Until next week let's all strive to be good stewards of God's earth.

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