

GOOD NEWS FROM GREAT RIVERS

November 2, 2009



[PRESBYTERY OF GREAT RIVERS](#)

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

800-537-8592 / Peoria 309-683-6980 / Fax: 309-683-6983

Assembly Meeting Tuesday, November 10

Workshops to Challenge, Inspire & Educate Your Congregation

Don't forget to RSVP for two of the workshops, being held at 9:30 and 10:50, offered **during** the Assembly Meeting.

[Workshop Brochure](#)

Mark Your Calendar

Supplemental Papers on Website

Friday, November 6
after 3:00

Elder Training

Saturday, November 7
8:30 -3:00
Third, Springfield

Commissioning of Mike Claver

Sunday, November 8
4:00
First, Morton

Assembly Meeting

Tuesday, November 10
9:30 Meeting
First, Normal

[Remember to RSVP for Two of the Workshops](#)

Elder Training

Saturday, November 14
8:30 - 3:00
First, Elmwood

Commissioning of Nollan Harwood

Sunday, November 15
3:00

General Presbyter's Perspective Rev. Susan Krummel

November--the month that strikes fear into the hearts of those associated with the finances in many churches. Probably some date in this month has been set as a deadline for pledges by your stewardship committee or finance committee or the session itself--whichever group takes on the task of putting together a budget based to some degree on an estimate of income for the coming year. Depending on the level of trust, faith, and daring residing in that group in your congregation, you may have a budget for 2010 that is based on what you believe that God is calling you to be and do regardless of income projections. Most congregations do not find themselves in quite that circumstance.

My husband and I ran into a pastor friend of his in a restaurant at lunchtime over the weekend. Very quickly the conversation turned to stewardship. Fretting over the rate of return of pledge cards and the amounts on those pledge cards can occupy pastors as well as lay leaders of congregations in November. Now, not all congregations receive pledges, of course. Some of our congregations can easily predict their income for the coming year since it will be coming from the same people it has come from for many years and there is no expectation that it will change appreciably. But, in other congregations the population has changed significantly or, as this pastor was relating, there has been a concerted effort to encourage church members to move closer to the Biblical standard of giving one tenth of your income to God through the church. (That is, of course, the literal meaning of tithe.)

The pastor we met was bemoaning the fact that with the pledge cards so far returned to his congregation, he and his wife are the third highest pledgers. He knows that they are always among the top five and expects that a couple of pledges that are still outstanding may move them to that number five position. His circumstance is not unique. In many congregations, the pastor's family, although very rarely in the top echelon

Eureka Pres., Eureka

Elder Training

Saturday, November 21
8:30 - 3:00

St. Luke, Bloomington

Installation of

Rev. Mark Bedford

Sunday, November 22

New Windsor Pres.,
New Windsor

COM Meeting

Tuesday, November 24
10:00 - 3:00

Northminster, Peoria

OFFICE CLOSED

Thursday, November 26
Friday, November 27

Installation of

Rev. Troy Agema

Sunday, November 29
First, Princeville

of income in the congregation, will be among the top givers. He has been ordained about the same amount of time my husband and I have--about 30 years. He said that he feels like all of his stewardship education and preaching in those years have fallen on deaf ears since most Protestants' giving in this country remains around 2-3%.

What do you find most interesting about this discussion? Did you not realize that the word "tithe" means one-tenth? Sometimes we hear "churchy" words like that and do not know their real meaning. Are you surprised that pastors are almost always among the highest givers in their congregations? I think it has to do with the idea of not being a hypocrite. It would be hard for most pastors to lead the charge for stewardship every year and then turn around and not live up to the standard they are calling the church members to. Or perhaps you were most interested in the idea of pastors knowing what you give. It is as vital a part of your spiritual life as is your worship attendance, of course. Besides that, in many congregations the pastor is an integral part of the Stewardship campaign each year, being expected to lead the session in its discussions of budgets and giving, and expected to preach sermons that will loosen up the purse strings of the members so that important mission and ministry can be accomplished. Surely we cannot expect the pastor to be a part of this aspect of the church's life without having knowledge about it.

I am writing this on Sunday morning (having woken up way too early since I don't wake to an alarm clock, but to some inner clock that has no idea about daylight savings time) while I am waiting to go to a breakfast for spiritual mentors for confirmands at the church my husband serves. I will be the mentor for a young teenager who was my assistant for Bible School this summer. I imagine that a part of the discussions that we will be expected to have will center around Christian practices, including the practice of stewardship and joyful giving of money to the church. It strikes me as a little odd that here I might be expected to have a fairly detailed chat with her about how she will handle this part of her Christian life, but when I was a pastor there were people who thought I should not be privileged to know that information about their spiritual lives.

If you have received a pledge card from your congregation, I hope you have carefully considered your response to God's grace for next year and that you have returned the card with a generous pledge. Doing so as soon as you are able is an act of grace for the people who are worrying about getting the cards in and trying to figure out how they will follow up with people who do not return their cards. If your church does not use pledge cards, I hope you have prayerfully considered your usual contributions and thought about whether you could make a step up in the coming year so that your session does not have to agonize over the treasurer's report each time they meet. And, if you are a pastor, I hope that you will continue your generous giving to your congregation and take no particular pride in your place near the top of the list of givers, since you are probably merely doing what you are asking others to do as well.

Summer Collegium

The Summer Collegium is an ecumenical project fully funded through the Lilly Endowment and seeks to offer encouragement, education, refreshment and renewal to 25 small-church pastors each year. The dates of the Summer Collegium are June 23-July 1, 2010. Single clergy and locally ordained persons are welcome to apply. Our keynote this year is the Rev. Dr. Alice Mann, and music will be led by John Bell of the Iona Community in Scotland.

DEADLINE for postmarking applications is December 15.

FDIC Fraudulent E-Mail

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has received numerous reports of a fraudulent e-mail that has the appearance of being sent from the FDIC.

The subject line of the e-mail states: "check your Bank Deposit Insurance Coverage." The e-mail tells recipients that, "You have received this message because you are a holder of a FDIC-insured bank account. Recently FDIC has officially named the bank you have opened your account with as a failed bank, thus, taking control of its assets."

The e-mail then asks recipients to "visit the official FDIC website and perform the following steps to check your Deposit Insurance Coverage" (a fraudulent link is provided). It then instructs recipients to "download and open your personal FDIC Insurance File to check your Deposit Insurance Coverage."

This e-mail and associated Web site are fraudulent. Recipients should consider the intent of this e-mail as an attempt to collect personal or confidential information, some of which may be used to gain unauthorized access to on-line banking services or to conduct identity theft.

The FDIC does not issue unsolicited e-mails to consumers. Financial institutions and consumers should NOT follow the link in the fraudulent e-mail.

If you would like to verify that your funds are FDIC insured and the amount of coverage you have, you may do so at the [FDIC web site](https://www.fdic.gov/edie/index.html) <https://www.fdic.gov/edie/index.html>.

Adjunct Staff Position: Stewards of Energy and the Environment

The presbytery is looking for a person to serve in a very part-time role to help our congregations think about energy conservation, use of new technologies and other efforts toward being good stewards of the earth's resources. The job will involve research into energy issues as well as investigating possible grants that may be available to churches. It will also involve the interpretation of the information to the congregations of Great Rivers. The contract will initially be for one year. If you are interested or if you know someone who is, please contact [Sue Krummel](#).

Elder Training

Each training event will be held on a Saturdays from 8:30am - 3:00pm with lunch served at noon. Registration is required for the purpose of preparing the meal and providing training manuals. Registration is accomplished by contacting Julie at the presbytery office. Let Julie know how many will be attending and which event they prefer. If there are not at least ten registrations per event, cancellation is possible. We want to be good stewards of time and resources.

Please RSVP by the dates listed below.

November 14	RSVP before November 5	@First Pres., Elmwood
November 21	RSVP before November 12	@ St. Luke Union, Bloomington
January 9	RSVP before January 4	@ First Pres., Lewistown
January 16	RSVP before January 7	@ United, Woodhull
January 23	RSVP before January 14	@ United Pres., Peoria

Do You WANT Your Church to Grow?

SAVE THESE DATES.
April 23 & 24, 2010

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



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