

# PRESBYTERY CONNECTION

A Bi-Weekly Newsletter of the Presbyteries of North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill  
February 20, 2020

The Presbytery Connection is a bi-weekly joint newsletter for the Presbyteries of North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill. If you would like to contribute to the Presbytery Connection, please contact Jeannie Stolee in the Presbytery office at 319-233-1747 or [northiowapresby@gmail.com](mailto:northiowapresby@gmail.com)

If you know of someone who would enjoy receiving this communication, please email or call Jeannie.

Please consider making copies of this newsletter for your Session and running several copies to make available to your congregation.

[www.presbynciowa.org](http://www.presbynciowa.org)

[www.prospecthillpresby.org](http://www.prospecthillpresby.org)

To see North Central Iowa's calendar of events, please click [here](#).

To see Prospect Hill's calendar of events, please click [here](#).

---

## Presbytery Meeting Presbytery of North Central Iowa Tuesday, March 3, 2020

United Presbyterian Church  
219 First St. NW  
Clarion, Iowa

10:00 a.m. Registration

11:00 a.m. Call to Meeting and Worship

**Please contact the Presbytery Office no later than Monday, February 24, 2020, with your lunch reservation: 319-233-1747 [northiowapresby@gmail.com](mailto:northiowapresby@gmail.com)**

The proposed docket, minutes and reports are posted on the website: [www.presbynciowa.org](http://www.presbynciowa.org).



## Prayers of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa

Week of February 23	United Presbyterian Church, Goldfield – Rev. Sara Sutter
Week of March 1	First Presbyterian Church, State Center – Rev. Dr. Tom Bower
Week of March 8	United Presbyterian Church, Traer – Rev. Brice Hoyt
Week of March 15	First Presbyterian Church, Conrad – Rev. Kerry Carson

## Prayers of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill

Week of February 23	Lake City Union Church – Rev. Randy Russom
Week of March 1	First Presbyterian Church, Armstrong – Rev. Suzanne Wobig
Week of March 8	United Presbyterian Church, Manilla – Rev. Joel Sutton
Week of March 15	Ebenezer Presbyterian Church, George – Rev. John Pea

---

## Additional Prayer Concerns

Please pray for Rev. Donald Gibson, HR, and family as they mourn the loss of their wife and mother, Beth Gibson, who passed away on February 12, 2020.

Please pray for Eric Olson, husband of Rev. Jennifer Olson of United Presbyterian Church in Denison. Eric is scheduled for surgery to remove a kidney on Thursday, February 27, at Methodist Jennie Edmundson Hospital in Council Bluffs.

Please continue to remember Doug O'Bannon, son of CRE Shari O'Bannon, in your prayers as he continues to battle a liver disease and all the symptoms that come with it.



Sympathy is extended to Rev. Donald Gibson and family on the death of their wife and mother, Beth Gibson, on February 12, 2020. Funeral services were held on February 14, 2020 at First Christian Church in Sac City, Iowa.

Condolences may be sent to:

Rev. Donald Gibson  
Box 579  
Wall Lake, IA 51466

## Churches in Transition

Please pray for the following churches that are in transition:

### Presbytery of North Central Iowa

First Presbyterian Church, Boone  
First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Falls  
First Presbyterian Church, Dows  
First Presbyterian Church, Grundy Center  
First Presbyterian Church, Jesup  
First Presbyterian Church, Kamrar  
First Presbyterian Church, Reinbeck

### Presbytery of Prospect Hill

Wheatland Presbyterian Church, Breda  
Elliott Creek Presbyterian Church, Bronson  
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Ida Grove  
First Presbyterian Church, Lake Park  
Community Presbyterian Church, Lawton  
First Presbyterian Church, Manning  
First Presbyterian Church, Odebolt  
First Presbyterian Church, Paullina  
Lakeside Presbyterian Church, Storm Lake  
Westlawn Presbyterian Church, Sioux City  
First Presbyterian Church, South Sioux City

---

## Scholarship Opportunity

The Dorothy Horn Scholarship provides financial assistance to women from Presbyterian churches who attend the University of Northern Iowa. Dorothy Horn attended the University of Northern Iowa and her estate established this scholarship endowment, which is administered by First Presbyterian Church in Cedar Falls.

Those interested in more information, or an application packet, should contact First Presbyterian Church in Cedar Falls. Materials can be requested by calling 319-277-3930 or by email at [firstpres@cfu.net](mailto:firstpres@cfu.net). All applications must be returned by April 1, 2020.

---

## The Great Plains Small Church Connection May 4-6, 2020

The Small Church Connection Conference (formerly the Great Plains Wee Kirk Conference) will be held May 4-6, 2020 at Camp Calvin Crest, outside Fremont, Nebraska. This year's theme is Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord. Kevin McChesney, composer and handbell arranger and musician, is the featured speaker. There will also be workshops on doing newsletters and blogs, technology for the small member churches, music in worship, self-care, prayer and creative/playful art. There will be archery during Tuesday break time led by level 3 NTS Coach Kim Nofel (ably assisted by level 2 NTS instructor Steve Nofel). (FYI – Steve Nofel is the new pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Algona and First Presbyterian Church in Irvington.) Please click [here](#) for the conference brochure and registration information.

## Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM) Worship and Music Conferences at Montreat

- Registration is open for the annual PAM Worship and Music Conferences at Montreat. 2020 is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PAM and they are excited to bring this conference, which features clinicians from PAM's past and new faces of PAM's future. Among the clinicians are: Mel Bringle, Routley Lecturer; David Eicher, Service Organist; Byron Wade and Jessica Tate, Worship Leaders; Eric Nelson, Adult Choir; and Dave Harris, Handbells.

Early registration rates are good through February 29<sup>th</sup>. Scholarship money is available too! For more information, please visit <https://www.presbymusic.org/montreat>.

- This summer at the PAM Worship and Music Conference at Montreat, they will be offering a Confirmation course for middler youth (entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and their mentors to prepare them for Confirmation at their home churches. This course, offered during the second week of the conference, will utilize the *Big God, Big Questions* curriculum from Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. In addition, the leader of the course, Rev. Meg Rift, is one of the curriculum writers.

This course can be beneficial to youth from churches of any size that may not have a large number of confirmands this year. There is scholarship money available as well! For more information about the program, please visit <https://www.presbymusic.org/confirmation-course>.

- Thanks to a generous grant from the Central Mission Endowment Fund of St. Philip Presbyterian Church in Houston, PAM is delighted to offer more scholarships for their 2020 Worship and Music Conference at Montreat. These St. Philip/CMEF Scholarships are available to large groups, small groups, and individuals too! In addition to the conference registration fee, these scholarships can cover lodging, meals and – for large groups – even travel costs. If you would like more information or would like to apply, please visit <https://www.presbymusic.org/montreat-registration> and click on Scholarships.
- 



**2020**  
**Synod School**  
**July 26-31**

**Theme:**  
What Shall We Tell Them?

Registration begins March 2, 2020. Catalogs will be mailed to homes and churches in mid-February. In the meantime, please click the link below to view the catalog online.

[\*\*2020 Synod School Catalog\*\*](#)

A few copies of the catalog will also be at each of the upcoming spring Presbytery meetings for both North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill.

---

## Poor Richard's Almanac

by Richard Francis, Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Prospect Hill

A conversation the other night reminded me of the time when jokes were making the rounds that all started, “How many \_\_\_\_\_ does it take to change a lightbulb?” I remembered this classic:

Q: How many Presbyterians does it take to change a lightbulb?

A: *Change?*

Actually, I think Presbyterians as a body are pretty good at change. At one time we didn't ordain women; now we do. Our liturgical language and hymnology used to be gender-exclusive (“man” and “men”); we are learning to be gender-neutral (“person” and “human”). I won't try to defend how long it has taken us to get where we are, and I acknowledge how far we have to go. I'll just point out that when we know we need to change we get to work on it.

That doesn't mean that change is easy. It often isn't. Whether we're talking about changing a tire or changing the way we think about God, change is hard.

Change is hard, as Ken McFayden points out, because *all change involves loss*.<sup>1</sup> Even positive change involves loss, as anyone who's ever gotten married can testify.

Yet we do change, because the price of staying where we are is too great. Christopher Alt, SJ, puts it well in a blog post for *The Jesuit Post*.<sup>2</sup> He writes,

At the basic level, when you boil it all down, there is a simple calculus.

To change, two basic elements are needed: You have to feel both *the push of discomfort* and *the pull of hope*. (my emphasis)

Discomfort without hope is not gonna do it. You become fixated, apathetic, despairing, resigned.

On the other hand, hope without discomfort, forget about it. It's the mark of an immature, wishful Pollyanna; someone who is aloof and oblivious to their own pain and that of others.

It is only the presence of both – discomfort and hope – that gets us up and on our way.

Alt is writing about personal change, but I think it applies to corporate change as well. To change as a denomination, to change as a presbytery, to change as a congregation, we need both the push of discomfort—we *can't go on this way much longer*—and the pull of hope—*God has something better in store for us*.

It's surely no accident that I have eight books on my shelf with “hope” or “hopeful” in the title.<sup>3</sup> As Christians, as the Church, we are in the hope business:

---

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth J McFayden, *Strategic Leadership for a Change: Facing our Losses, Finding our Future* (Alban, 2009)

<sup>2</sup> <https://thejesuitpost.org/2020/01/to-change-you-have-to-feel-both-the-push-of-discomfort-and-the-pull-of-hope/>

<sup>3</sup> *The Anatomy of Hope* by Jerome Gropman; *Hope in Pastoral Care and Counseling* by Andrew W. Lester; *Hopeful Imagination* by Walter Brueggemann; *Stitches: a Handbook on Meaning, Hope, and Repair* by Anne

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. (Romans 5:1-5, NRSV)

One more lightbulb joke:

Q: How many psychologists does it take to change a lightbulb?

A: Only one—but *the lightbulb has to want to change.*

We are creatures of hope, not because we are naturally optimistic, but because we are servants of God in Jesus Christ, who teaches us to hope for a future that is beyond all we can dream or imagine.



---

## Commissioned Pastor Conference

The Commissioned Pastors Network of the Synod of the Sun presents the Empowering Commissioned Pastors Conference to be held May 13-16, 2020, at Canyon Creek Presbyterian Church, Richardson, Texas (Dallas – Fort Worth area).

This conference will be all about and for Commissioned Pastors in all the varied circumstances and ways that CPs serve the Church. If you are actively training to become a CP, but have not yet been commissioned, this conference is for you as well!

PC(USA) Co-Moderators Rev. Cindy Kohlmann and RE Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri will be there to help lead plenary sessions and the event will also feature excellent workshops that will support Commissioned Pastors and strengthen skills and ministries. This conference is focused on Empowering Commissioned Pastors as they serve an increasing portion of our PC(USA) congregations.

Limited scholarships are available on a first-request basis, offered only to Commissioned Pastors (CPs, CLPs, CREs, etc.).

Early registration (by March 23, 2020) - \$125  
Regular registration (March 23-April 15) - \$150

Please click on this link for more information and to register: <https://www.synodsun.org/ecpc>

---

Lamott; *Liberating Hope: Daring to Restore the Mainline Church* by Michael S. Piazza and Cameron Trimble; *Our Connectional Church: the Hopeful Future of the PC(USA)* by Gradye Parsons; *Almost Everything: Notes on Hope* by Anne Lamott; *Theology of Hope* by Jürgen Moltmann; *Hope in Time of Abandonment* by Jacques Ellul



Millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education and opportunity.

The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People – all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance and hope.

Typically received during the season of Lent, each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing supports efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Communities on the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

**5,676**

work team volunteers served in 2019

**\$3.2 million**

granted around the globe through PDA in 2019

**\$925,960**

granted around the globe through PHP in 2018

**329**

farms and gardens provided healthy food to families in need

**95,500**

trees and seedlings planted around the world

**5,316**

clergy, wage theft monitors, human rights trainees, organizers, policy advocates, and indigenous leaders attended intensive trainings in the U.S.

**5,600**

loans distributed for income generating projects and cooperatives

**Over 5,000**

projects in economically poor communities in the United States and around the world have had the opportunity to develop solutions to their own challenges since SDOP's inception

**946,000**

pounds of fresh produce grown and prepared by five PHP grant partners in the U.S.

**213**

certified PC(USA) Earth Care congregations in 47 states helped care for creation



**S**hared history  
Sustained purpose

## OMAHA PRESBYTERIAN SEMINARY FOUNDATION

Accepting Apollos Applications, Transcripts and References  
**Now thru Monday, April 15, 2020**

Could you use \$4000 per semester for up to 3 years?

**You are eligible** for an Apollos Scholarship from  
Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation if you are ...

- A member of a PC(USA) Congregation
- Under care within a presbytery as an Inquirer or Candidate
- Enrolled as a full-time student in the Master of Divinity degree program in one of the 10 Presbyterian seminaries
- An individual who possesses quality of excellence for ministry

**[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)**

**[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO ABOUT APOLLOS SCHOLARSHIPS](#)**

*1954-2020 66 years of financial aid to seminary students*

Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation  
7101 Mercy Road, Suite 216  
Omaha, NE 68106-2616  
402 397-5138

**<http://www.omahapresbyterianseminaryfoundation.org/>**

## Washington Island Forum with Kaitlin Curtice June 22-25, 2020

Cosponsored by the WI Council of Churches and the Christian Century

“Native: Identity, Belonging and Rediscovering God”

The Wisconsin Council of Churches is excited to welcome Native American Christian author and speaker, Kaitlin B. Curtice as the speaker for the 2020 Washington Island Forum. As an enrolled member of the Potawatomi Nation and someone who has grown up in the Christian faith, Kaitlin writes on the intersection of Indigenous spirituality, faith in everyday life, and the church.

Kaitlin is a prolific writer and has been featured in publications like OnBeing, Religion News Service, USA Today and Sojourners. She has also spoken at places like Why Christian, Evolving Faith, Wild Goose Festival, and The Festival of Faith and Writing.

Lodging, meals and recreational opportunities are offered by Island businesses. When you register, you'll gain access to a closed Facebook group where you can coordinate plans with other registrants if you would like.

The \$299 fee for the full Forum is due at the time of registration. Your fee includes the opening picnic, daily refreshments and all organized Forum activities. Additional picnics for guests may also be purchased for \$15. Other meals and lodging are not included and must be arranged separately,

Not able to attend the full Forum? Daily registrations are also available.

[Register online using EventBrite](#)

---

## Churchwide Gathering of the Presbyterian Women



Presbyterian Women's 2021 Churchwide Gathering will be held August 5–8, 2021 in St. Louis, Missouri!

The theme for the Gathering is “Rejoice in Hope” based on Romans 12:12–13, “Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.”

Please click on this link for more information:

[https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/what we do/build-community/churchwide-gathering/](https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/what_we_do/build-community/churchwide-gathering/)



Westminster Presbyterian Church in Waterloo has replaced the sound desk in its sanctuary. They are willing to give the replaced desk away to any church that may need it. If your church is interested, please contact the Westminster church office at 319-234-5501.

---

## Farm Crisis Ministry Network

The Farm Crisis Ministry Network is a Facebook page dedicated to supporting farmers, farm families and farming communities. Congregations are invited to share their events and programs to help support farms during this difficult time, as well as to exchange ideas and learn about efforts at the regional, statewide and national ecumenical level, and other news and information on the topic.

<http://www.facebook.com/farmcrisisministry>

---

## Your Life Iowa

Your Life Iowa (<http://www.yourlifeiowa.org>) is a new, free resource from the Iowa Department of Public Health for anyone seeking help or information on mental health, substance misuse, and/or problem gambling. The website contains reliable information about each of these topics, and a map of all agencies which treat these conditions in the state of Iowa and their contact information. In addition, the website includes a chat feature that is staffed 24/7 by a trained professional for anyone seeking information or crisis help. In addition, there is also a toll-free number (855-581-8111) and a text line (855-895-8398) also staffed 24/7 by a trained professional. The staff person will then follow up to help the person seeking help set up an appointment with a helping agency of their choice nearest their residence. A person who lives out of state or their loved one may also call and be connected to a reciprocal service in that person's state of residence. You can help spread the word by reprinting this information in your church bulletins and newsletters, or going to the website to request brochures and other outreach materials.

# GODLY RISK



**2020 MEN'S RETREAT AT LAKESHORE CENTER  
FEATURING REV. BEN JOHNSTON-KRASE  
MARCH 13-15, 2020**

Presented in Partnership with  
**the Omaha Presbyterian  
Seminarian Foundation**

## Is your faith "playing it safe?"

Join our group of faith-seeking men and guest speaker Rev. Ben Johnston-Krase for a weekend of relaxation, fellowship, and discussion to explore that question. We'll have great conversations, late night card games, and plenty of downtime to enjoy the weekend.

**Who:** The Rev. Ben Johnston-Krase is passionate about what motivates congregations to move outside of their comfort zones and seek God's heart for their ministry. He is a co-founder of Farm Church, a PC(USA) New Worshiping Community in Durham, NC. He conceived of Farm Church in a dream, and left his traditional pastoral role to start a church that meets on a farm and leverages all of the resources of that farm to address food insecurity. He blogs about life, risk, ministry, and living with stage IV cancer.



**When:** 7pm March 13—11am March 15

**Where:** Lakeshore Center at Okoboji—1864 Hwy 86, Milford, IA 51351

**Cost:** \$95 per person for communal bunk room, \$125 for a Double-Occupancy Lodge Room. Cost covers all lodging, snacks, meals, speaker, and programming for the weekend.

**Register online at [www.LakeshoreCenterAtOkoboji.org](http://www.LakeshoreCenterAtOkoboji.org) under the "Events" Tab.**

Call 712-337-3313 or email [harry@lakeshorecenteratokoboji.org](mailto:harry@lakeshorecenteratokoboji.org) for more information.

The link for on-line registration is:

<http://cwngui.campwise.com/customer/presokoboji/browser-check-reg.html>



Do you have an AED in your church building? The Iowa Heart Foundation recommends that Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) be placed wherever people gather. AEDs have become so advanced that almost anyone can use them safely. Click [here](#) for more information.

---



If you feel as if you're at the end of your rope or the recent floods or low crop prices have left you feeling hopeless, please click [here](#) to find a group or network who may be able to help.

---

## Academy



Deepening faith and  
encountering Christ in a  
new way

Please click [here](#) for information on The Academy.