



July 16, 2020

Presbytery News



JUL WEEK 4	MONDAY 20 Publish Council Packet	TUESDAY 21 3:30 pm HP Staff Meeting	WEDNESDAY 22 1:00 pm Weekly Zoom Forum	THURSDAY 23 5:30 Council Meeting
	FRIDAY 24	SATURDAY 25	SUNDAY 26	NOTES:



Adult Summer Faith Studies

Friends, Faithful!

Here is the information you will want/need to join us online for the Adult Study

on Monday, July 20th (at 6:30 p.m.) via a Zoom meeting. Please peruse this material early if you get the chance. And I look forward to being together with you in the Word....soon!

In the Grace of the Holy Ghost,
Rev. Jeff Hopson
Lincoln Heritage Presbyterian Church

[Download Reading Material](#)

[Download Study Handout](#)

[Zoom Link](#)

Faithful Emergency Preparedness Workshop

A Faithful Emergency Preparedness workshop will be held virtually. Faith Leadership is invited to join us July 28th, 9am-4pm, to discuss emergency preparedness within your faith community, emergency planning, active shooter response, FEMA assistance to houses of worship, and how to get involved in community emergency planning. This is a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) supported workshop. The last few years have emphasized the need for our partnership within our communities. Please join us to discuss how we can work together to provide resilient communities.

REGISTRATION IS FREE

REGISTER by July 23rd, 2020

Contact Dodge County Emergency Management at: dodgecoema@gmail.com

Virtual workshop information will be provided in registration confirmation.

Participants must have access to computer, tablet, or phone to attend.

Catch up on what happened at General Assembly!



from
Lament to Hope
Lamentations 5:20-21

Good News! If you were unable to view the Live Streams as General Assembly was happening you can click below to watch the recorded ones!

[Watch GA224](#)

New Worshiping/Church Vitality Committee

A series of articles on the 7 Marks of a Vital Congregation.

We, Presbyterians, place a high value on education. Whether, it is establishing schools, referring to pastors as “*teaching elders*” (as we did for a period of time), or following up on our baptismal promise to “guide and nurture this child by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging *them* to know and follow Christ and to be a faithful member of the church” by providing what has been traditionally called “Sunday School”; education is an important part of our church.

Much of our educational emphasis is likely rooted in John Calvin’s *practice* (e.g., wearing an academic, Geneva gown as a preacher) and *belief* in the primacy of the mind. Interestingly, the following statement by Calvin is cited in the Vital Congregations (VC) Manual: “*True religion must come first, to direct our minds to the living God. Thus, steeped in the knowledge of God, they may aspire to contemplate, fear, and worship his majesty; to participate in God’s blessings; to seek God’s help at all times; to recognize, and by praise to celebrate, the greatness of God’s works — as the only goal of all the activities of this life.*” (page VIII-1). According to Calvin, our mind is the primary means by which we learn the knowledge of God to live rightly. I do not want to argue with Calvin, but I wonder if his view is somewhat narrow.

On a related note, Calvin claimed elsewhere (I need to dig through my notes to find the reference) that our ears are more “spiritual” compared to our eyes with regard to knowing God. Yet, God created us with both the senses of hearing and seeing, along with several others. We are more than rational beings; we have emotions that often play a greater part in our decision making. It seems contrary to the incarnation to privilege one sense over another. God became fully human so that we may know God more deeply with all our senses.

The first mark of vital congregations appears to be leading us to move beyond an educational emphasis in our churches in order to pursue “Lifelong Discipleship Formation.” I have placed an emphasis on “formation” because it reminds us that our role is more than speaking to rational beings and transferring information, which are often connoted with “education.” We are called to lead people as Christ’s disciples in all aspects of life. We can participate in this Christian formation as we seek the following objectives listed in “Extended Descriptions of Seven Marks of Vital Congregations” (page VIII-7 of VC Manual):

- An intentional plan for discipleship formation of all ages; from the cradle to the grave theology.
- A regular practice of Bible Study, prayer, and other spiritual habits, inside and outside where we gather.
- Church teaches rituals and faith traditions, biblical literacy and spiritual practices to all members.
- Church equips and empowers all people to interpret faith in daily life. It engages in, not hides from, difficult conversations of society and cultures today.
- Fostered environments of diversity which help enhance and deeply enrich Biblical study, worship, and communal life.

The mark of “Lifelong Discipleship Formation” challenges us to constantly address the question: “Does Christian formation in your church lead people to change the way they

live?” We also need to challenge our congregants to answer the following: “As a disciple, what uncomfortable things do you need to let go of, truths do you need to be aware of, places you are afraid to follow, things you are afraid God might call you to do?” (both questions in page VIII-7 of VC Manual) These are not easy questions; neither is “Lifelong Discipleship Formation” as easy journey. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit guides and helps us in our journey to truly being the body of Christ in this world.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Edward Yang, Ph.D.

Acting Head of Staff & Associate Pastor for Children, Youth & Families

Federated Church (PCUSA + UCC) of Columbus, NE

Homestead Church Technology Upgrade Grant

Homestead Presbytery, through the Program and Grants Committee, is offering Technology Upgrade Grants of up to \$1000 to congregations who demonstrate need and vision. During this time of the coronavirus pandemic we seek to assist and support those congregations who would like to upgrade their technology to facilitate new models and platforms for worship and congregational gatherings.

Below you will find two versions of the Grant application. One is a fillable PDF form that you can download and just type in your responses and e-mail back the form; the second form is a word document if you prefer to print and hand write your application.

[Fillable PDF Grant Application](#)

[Word Doc Grant Application](#)



Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation
Opening Doors to Brighter Futures

Stepping Into Leadership

OPSF is offering fully paid scholarships for the July online Adaptive Leadership series.

Stepping Into Leadership

Wednesdays in July from 4-5 pm (central) via Zoom

[Scholarship Application](#)



2020 Racial Ethnic Student Scholarship

The Racial Ethnic Scholarship Fund is an educational assistance program designed to encourage Racial Ethnic students to complete their college education and graduate with an academic degree to prepare for life-long employed, elected or volunteer service.

Funds for this program are provided by the Committee on Racial Ethnic Ministry, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Deadline to apply: September 30th

[Scholarship Application](#)



Pandemic Support Grants

Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic could materially diminish income streams and threaten staffing and ministries across presbyteries, churches and camps, the Synod has identified approximately \$251,000 to date which can be used to support the staffing needs of affiliated organizations. \$104,000 of these funds were made available in the form of a new Pandemic Support Fund from revenue streams that would otherwise have supported the Synod's own personnel budget. It is intended that loan funds from the federal Paycheck Protection Program will enable the Synod to avoid staffing reductions itself.

Grants will be offered on the basis of need within three organizational segments:

- Churches whose vitality would be threatened by disruption to staffing and ministry programs;
- Churches and ministries in need which serve historically marginalized communities; and
- Camps, particularly as they seek to maintain programs staffed by college students.

[Complete Grant Directions & Applications](#)

The Art of Transitional Leadership

Learning Ministry Skills for Today's and Tomorrow's Church Pastors, Staff, COMs and Congregational Leaders



October 11-15, 2020

Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo, Minnesota

Whether it is a change in leadership or a changing community, leading a congregation through change is both challenging and rewarding. It takes knowledge, skill, resilience and spiritual strength to navigate the waters of change in a way that leaders and congregations thrive. This training is for individuals who are considering ministry in temporary settings (as an interim, transitional or designated pastor) or are experiencing ministry in these transitional times. It satisfies Week 1 requirements for those who wish to be Interim Pastors.

Note: This event will be held. We will decide by the of July whether it will be in person (our hope) or online. The retreat center has instituted pandemic guidelines for physical distancing, masks and hand cleaning that all participants will be expected to follow. They will be sent out in early August if we can meet face to face.

[More info & Registration](#)

Weekly Homestead Zoom Forum



Click the video above to watch yesterday's Zoom forum. They happen weekly on Wednesday's at 1pm. Click the link below to register. You will receive a confirmation e-mail from Zoom with the link to connect to the meeting.

Register now!

Weekly Prayer Requests

Akron

Thank you for including Akron Presbyterian Church in the prayer calendar. We are appreciative of the prayers of all. Like all of you, we are dealing with the pandemic the best we can. Grateful for Zoom. On June 7 we gathered in person for the first time since March 15. We remained outdoors, and found that the most sheltered place was actually in the road ditch and by the side of the road. We stayed a good six feet apart, and all wore masks. We ask prayers for several of our members and/or their loved ones who are health care professionals. Asking prayers for good to come forth from the present protests seeking needed change in our society. We ask prayers for the upcoming search for a new pastor as Mary A. plans to retire next year.

Homestead Presbytery

840 S. 17th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

Monday-Thursday 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday 9:00am-12:30pm

Office: 402.474.0612

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