



*September 3, 2020*

## Presbytery News

**Don't forget to Nominate by October 1st!!**

**THE ROBERT L. GILES  
OUTSTANDING HOMESTEADER AWARD**



The award, in memory of the Rev. Robert Giles, former Stated Clerk of Homestead Presbytery, honors clergy and laity in the Presbytery who have made outstanding contributions to church and community life.

One Award is made each year, consisting of an appropriately framed certificate, the addition of the recipient's name to an on-going plaque in the Presbytery office, and the opportunity for the recipient to designate a gift of \$100.00 to a special mission or ministry within the bounds of the Presbytery.

***Nomination Information***

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### **Summary of August 15, 2020 Presbytery Assembly**

Fifty-six commissioners participated by Zoom at the August 15 stated meeting of Homestead Presbytery. We heard reports from our delegates and commissioners to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and the 224<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (GA). GA was quite different this year in that it was done by Zoom due to the Pandemic. Many of the actions were referred to the 225<sup>th</sup> GA in 2022. We heard from the Homestead Presbytery Strategy Team, who has begun work on examining and making recommendations about our governing structures, committee work, financial commitments, priorities for mission, and more. Presbytery adopted a revised Manual of Operations and there was the first "reading" of a revision of the bylaws. The bylaws will be

brought to the November meeting for approval. A new process for Presbytery leadership was approved. The Moderator-Elect will serve as vice-moderator of council and of the presbytery their first year, as Presbytery moderator the second year, and then as Council moderator the third year. Steve Niles, pastor of the Clarkson New Zion Church was granted Honorable Retirement effective July 31, and Duane Westing, pastor of the United Presbyterian Church, Pawnee City was granted Honorable Retirement effective September 30. Rev. Niles has moved to Omaha and Rev. Westing will be moving to Lincoln. Westminster Presbyterian Church, Lincoln, has extended a call to Rev. Chris Peters as Head of Staff, beginning September 14, 2020. Rev. Peters has been the Associate Pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Fairhope, Alabama. Upon recommendation from the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Ashtyn Bratt, a member of the Hickman Presbyterian Church, and a student at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, was enrolled as an Inquirer. The contract for our Interim Executive Presbyter, was extended to the end of 2021 year. The Per Capita for 2021 will be \$45.10, the same as it was for 2020. Approval of the 2021 budget was postponed to the November Presbytery meeting. The Disaster Response Team and Beyond has two documents available for local congregations to use to be better prepared for disasters. And that's the way it was on August 15, 2020.

[Download Summary Here](#)

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## **Disaster Plan. Are you serious? What's in it for me?**

Church Leaders – was that your reaction to this headline? We don't blame you – there is so much going on these days and likely you are saying, "Why, when I am slammed with figuring out new ways to worship, tight budgets, Covid-19 etc. etc. would I willingly say yes to another task?"

Well, allow us to tell you a too often forgotten secret! Completing the disaster plan for your church and the corresponding information sheet has the potential to save you more work than you ever imagined.

What if a disaster strikes - flood, tornado, fire? Instead of you figuring it all out on the fly and not being able to care for your flock, a Disaster Plan lets the you, the Pastor, do just that, provide Pastoral Care for the flock.

Let's say a severe thunderstorm with straight line winds hits the church and one-third of the town sustains damage. If you have a plan, a Calling Tree is mobilized, members are checked on, church property is secure, records are safe. Your congregation and the back up people of your plan are mobilized. You can make sure your family is safe and begin to care for your congregants.

You don't need to be the one finding tarps to minimize damage to the facility. That is a role for others who already know it is their job. Instead you are with the family of a critically injured person, you are leading your congregation in prayerful response and you can lead while others in your congregation take on important roles. If you are a nearby church, your congregation is ready to respond as the disaster team mobilizes resources. Instead of spending time securing resources, you are Pastoring your volunteers in response.

What is in it for you? Lots. Lots of peace of mind that you and your congregation can respond faithfully when called.

Please complete the **Congregational Preparedness Checklist AND the Church Information For disaster plan**. Both of these documents are found on the Homestead Presbytery website – directly under the blue rectangle Disaster Plan for your congregation. You can download the two documents – complete – and return one copy of each to the Presbytery and then share with those individuals in your congregation needing to have such information PLUS file a copy in a site away from the church (should it be necessary to retrieve from somewhere else were the church building to have been damaged by the disaster.)

What's in it for you? Peace of mind; the knowledge that should a disaster hit - the congregation you are serving is PREPARED; a plan that shows wisdom and compassion and the confidence that you and your congregation are being faithful to God in being good stewards of what God has blessed you with in great abundance.

**ONE LAST SECRET TO SHARE – YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THE ONLY ONE DOING THIS – DELEGATE AND MAKE THIS AN ALL CHURCH PROJECT.**

The Disaster Team of Homestead Presbytery

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## Opportunities to Be Helped and to Help with Challenges Due to the Pandemic

**Opportunity #1** --- Pastor Zac Wolfe of Beatrice First Presbyterian Church has announced that their Session will be donating \$500 for use by churches in Homestead Presbytery that have special ministry needs related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. An application for such funds follows and is due (postmarked or emailed) by October 31, 2020. At Beatrice Session's request, the Homestead Presbytery Disaster Response Team will review applications and make decisions regarding distribution of funds. If interested, please complete the application entitled "Application for Funds to Help Cover Pandemic-Related Ministry Expenses."

**Opportunity #2** --- Beatrice First Presbyterian Church Session is also presenting a challenge to other churches and individuals in Homestead Presbytery inviting any that are interested and able to donate funds for the same purpose. They will match dollar for dollar up to another \$1000 to help churches with special ministry needs related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This opportunity to give and have gifts matched will extend through December 31, 2020 or until the \$1,000 is matched. If interested, please complete the form entitled "Donation of Matching Funds to Cover Pandemic-related Ministry Expenses in Homestead Presbytery."

**Per Business and Finance Committee of Homestead Presbytery:**

*That the Business and Finance Committee endorses the matching gift program sponsored by the Beatrice church for churches facing financial struggles in the time of the pandemic (a \$500 gift with matching donation from the Beatrice church up to an additional \$1000) and that the assistance fund be managed and dispersed by the Disaster Response Committee in accordance to guidelines and procedures developed by the Disaster Response Committee.*

*The funds should be sent to the Presbytery for accounting purposes, with immediate notification upon receipt of a donation being sent to the Pastor and Clerk of Session in addition to the chair of the Disaster Response Committee. Should, at the end of the pandemic, there be funds remaining, then the balance shall be designated for use by the Disaster Response Committee to respond to financial needs in the Presbytery due to disaster.*

What an incredible blessing this is for both churches with needs and for churches and individuals



who can step up to meet those needs. Thank you, Beatrice First Presbyterian Church, for your wonderful spirit of generosity!

[Download Application Here!](#)

## GRANTS & EMERGENCY FUNDS FROM NEBRASKA PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION



Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation

### SPRING GRANT CYCLE BEGINS IN DECEMBER

Everyone has been forced to be more creative in their ministries since COVID began, so what opportunities has this pandemic created for your congregation? Does your congregation want to increase their impact in your neighborhood or community but lack the funds to get your big idea started? Are you facing challenges with an online presence with your current technology? Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation could be the answer to help you fund your project or program. We are offering annual grants to PCUSA churches and related organizations in Nebraska for new or ongoing outreach activities which enhance or expand some aspect of your ministry. The online application process begins in December and grants will be awarded in April.

### KESSLER EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUNDS AVAILABLE

The Nebraska Presbyterian Foundation offers financial assistance for PCUSA pastors, or a surviving spouse, who is experiencing an urgent financial crisis. Applicants must be an active or retired installed or commissioned pastor who has, or is currently serving, a Nebraska congregation and currently residing in Nebraska.

For more information on our grants or funds, please visit our website at [www.nebpresby.org](http://www.nebpresby.org) or contact Audrey Richert at [arichert@nebpresby.org](mailto:arichert@nebpresby.org), or 402-420-9877.

## The Art of Transitional Leadership: 2020 Virtual Training

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

October 12-15, 2020  
Online

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,



Synod of Lakes and Prairies  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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.

[Register Now](#)

[Event Flyer](#)



Due to the COVID 19 Crisis, the in-person conference Monday, September 21 - Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at Calvin Crest Camp & Conference Center has been CANCELLED.

Instead, we invite you to join us via Zoom from 1-3 pm on Monday, September 21 to worship with the Rev. Eunice "Junior" McGarrahan as she discusses Hope and Joy in the Unknown, and immediately following, attend a workshop with the Rev. Kim Nofel - Default to Hope and Joy

[Registration](#) is required for each day  
[REGISTRATION for DAY 1](#)  
and/or

1-2 pm on Tuesday, September 22 for a workshop, Adapting, Learning, and Becoming Stronger with the Rev. Darin Bentzinger

[Registration](#) is required for each day  
[REGISTRATION for DAY 2](#)

This virtual conference is offered free of charge. However, if you or your congregation would like to make a donation to our ministry to help fund future in-person and virtual conferences, you may do so at [www.calvincrest.org/GPSCC](http://www.calvincrest.org/GPSCC)

*Weekly Prayer Requests*

# *Cedar Bluffs*

Members of the Cedar Bluffs First Presbyterian Church give thanks for the blessings of protection thus far from COVID 19. No one from our congregation has been stricken by it and we are blessed to have a large enough sanctuary to spread out and worship together while following proper precautions. Although too small to support a full time pastor, we have two wonderfully dedicated pastors who regularly serve us the first three Sundays of each month and others who fill in the remaining one or two. Together they offer consistency as well as a variety of variety of styles and perspectives. Our assigned moderator of session volunteers additional pastoral services such as conducting weddings, funerals, hospital and home visits. We are a small but close knit church family who care for and take care of each other. Our primary concern is for the general state of despair in our world which desperately needs more faith in God and less hatred toward his children. God is good - all the time!

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## **Homestead Presbytery**

840 S. 17th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

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

**Friday** 9:00am-12:30pm

Office: 402.474.0612

Interim EP: 803.556.3355

Stated Clerk: 402.217.3684

