



### The Great Ends of the Church

by Chaz Ruark, Executive  
Presbyter, Presbytery of the  
Twin Cities Area

Those who were present at our last Presbytery meeting (btw a special thanks to all the good folk at Presbyterian Church of the Master in Coon Rapids for being such gracious hosts) know that we began a year of worship at Presbytery meetings that focuses on the Six Great Ends of the Presbyterian Church. Just to re-cap for those of you who haven't memorized them, the Six Great Ends of the Church are:

-The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;

-The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children

of God;

-The maintenance of divine worship;

-The preservation of the truth;

-The promotion of social righteousness;

-And the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world. (BoO G-1.0200)

The Great Ends have enjoyed a bit of a resurgence since they were highlighted by the 209<sup>th</sup> General Assembly meeting in 1997. They were written and adopted in the early 1900's as a part of a great optimistic era at the start of a new century. And while they are excellent



Executive Presbyter Chaz Ruark speaks at the July Presbytery meeting. Photo by Dennis Sanders.

### In this issue:

From the Moderator: More from on the **Six Great Ends of the Church**.

Mission: Details on the **Forgotten Storm** and how you can help.

Beer Summits: Rev. **Gordon Stewart** talks about a "beer communion" and **Dries Coetzee** shares a beer of reconciliation in **Soweto**.

Tidbits: **Westminster Presbyterian** encourages biking or walking to church, **new PTCA website** goes live in September, **Synod Conference for Communicators** takes place in Eagan, Sept 1 and 2.



## Great Ends, Continued



**“When we recently entered a new century, and a new millennium I’m not sure we shared the same sense of optimism that our counterparts of 100 years ago possessed. In fact we live in a time of tumult with cultural shifts and transitions that often leave us with many more questions than answers. Yet the beauty of these carefully crafted words still inspire us and still call us to action even today.”**

**-Rev. Chaz Ruark,  
Executive Presbyter,  
Presbytery of  
the Twin Cities  
Area.**

goals that can be affirmed by any Christian denomination they are uniquely Presbyterian. Still in all the Great Ends are too easily forgotten once the Polity Ordination exam is passed.

When we recently entered a new century, and a new millennium I’m not sure we shared the same sense of optimism that our counterparts of 100 years ago possessed. In fact we live in a time of tumult with cultural shifts and transitions that often leave us with many more questions than answers. Yet the beauty of these carefully crafted words still inspire us and still call us to action even today. Churches around the country have adopted the Great Ends as a focus for their congregation.

Your Presbytery Council has come to the same conclusion as those many congregations. As we seek to be a faithful presbytery, fulfilling the calling of our Lord Christ to be the church that demonstrates God’s glory, there is no better starting point than the Great Ends. If you haven’t thought much about the Great Ends lately I encourage you to read the first three chapters of the Book of Order (Yes, READ the Book of Order) to hear the calling that Christ has for our church. As congregations and as a presbytery we have much work and much hope ahead of us, but we have a wonderful blueprint in the Great Ends to help us down this path.

## Congregations in the PC (USA) take the Ends to Heart

*Several congregation across the breadth and depth of the Presbyterian Church USA have studied and worked to apply the Six Great Ends of the Church. Hus Presbyterian Church in*

*Cedar Rapids, IA designed a brochure about how the Great Ends are practiced in this Iowa congregation. Below is the first great end: The First Great End of the Church: The proclamation of the Gospel for the Salvation*



*of Humankind.*

**Jesus Christ is God’s proclamation to us. The Gospel, the Good News, is that God has been revealed and is with us in the birth, life, teaching, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who offers us all forgiveness of sins and new life everlasting.**

**Hus Church Guiding Principle: Proclaiming Christ In The World**

**Believing Christ is the one true way to God, we go into the world to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to all seekers, attracting them to a life of discipleship through what we say and do.**

**The Symbolism:**

**The dove is rising from the Scriptures. The same Spirit that inspired the original writers must work in us if we are to receive the Gospel. The cross in the background reminds us that the heart of the Gospel is Jesus Christ, God with and for us.**

## The Forgotten Storm

By Presbyterian Disaster Assistance



On Sept. 13, 2008, the third costliest hurricane in U.S. history swept across the Texas Gulf Coast, wiping out thousands of homes and causing an estimated \$20 billion in damage. But in the midst

of an historical presidential election and a declining economy, the storm received far less media attention than Katrina and similar disasters.

Nearly a year later, the effects of the storm are still being felt and much work remains to be done. Donations and volunteers are desperately needed in Lake Charles, Port Neches and Texas City. Please help Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) respond to the needs of the people in the Texas Gulf Coast.

### What You Can Do:

**Contact the PDA Call Center** at (866) 732-6121 if you are interested in taking a group of volunteers to Texas to work on recovery efforts. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has posters available to help with volunteer recruitment. The posters have space for you to put your trip information and are large enough to be placed in strategic locations in your neighborhood. The posters are available at no charge and can be ordered online at the Presbyterian Marketplace ([www.pcusa.org/marketplace](http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace)) or by emailing Presbyterian Disaster Assistance at [pda@pcusa.org](mailto:pda@pcusa.org).

**You can also donate online** by going to <http://www.pcusa.org/pda/donate.htm> or by check payable to PDA, account DR000184 to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

**Help us publicize this relief effort.** Re-publish this article in your church, presbytery or synod newsletter. Use the "Minute for Mission" about Hurricane Ike to help educate others about the need for help and donations. View the video (found at <http://www.pcusa.org/pda/response/usa/gustav-index.htm>) and embed it in your organization's Web site or blog. The video is also available free on DVD; order online at the Presbyterian Marketplace.

*Photo: Hurricane Ike was the third most destructive hurricane to make landfall in the United States. Photo by Jocelyn Augustino, FEMA.*

**Learn More  
About the Six  
Great Ends**

**Witherspoon Press  
has a number of  
books and study  
materials handy to  
help you and your  
congregation learn  
more about the Six  
Great Ends of the  
Church. You can  
order these  
resources by going to  
the Witherspoon  
Press website at  
[http://  
www.pcusa.org/  
witherspoonpress/  
index.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/witherspoonpress/index.htm).**

## Presbybriefs: News At A Glance

**Synod School 2009 is a Wrap:** Nearly 600 people in all age groups took part in the activities (and there were many) of Synod School



last week on the campus of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. Kim Coulter, director of communication for the Presbytery of Des Moines, blogged daily from Synod School as she taught, took classes and enjoyed a family vacation. Her blog can be found at [http://presbyteryofdes-](http://presbyteryofdes-moines.blogspot.com/)

[moines.blogspot.com/](http://presbyteryofdes-moines.blogspot.com/).

- The Rev. Bill Humphreys, chaplain at Carroll University in Waukesha, Wis., wrote a summary of the week's events which can be found in the discussion area of the [Facebook](#) group: Synod School - "Is this Heaven? No, it's Iowa!" The group has nearly 100 members. There are also nearly 50 photographs from Synod School on the Facebook group. Coulter and Humphreys' posts can also be found in the discussion area of the synod's Facebook group. (Synod School photos by Kim Coulter.)



-Written by Duane Sweep, Synod of Lakes and Prairies

**Macalester Grad to Become Associate at UN Office:** The [Presbyterian United Nations Office](#) announces the appointment of Jessica Hawkinson as associate for International Relations and Education. This is a one-year term position.

In her new position, Hawkinson will help cultivate educational and advocacy programs for the Presbyterian United Nations Office. She will help facilitate the office's long-standing seminar program that encourages Presbyterians to contribute to the work of the faith community at the United Nations. Additionally, she will help manage the January term course in conjunction with [Columbia Theological Seminary](#), and will strengthen Presbyterian participation at official United Nations advocacy sessions.

Hawkinson sees her role and the office as, "... a fundamental avenue through which partnerships with the global faith community can be strengthened. The office is an integral component of ministry as the PC(USA) works across boundaries, pursuing a more just and peaceful world."

The Presbyterian UN Office is one part of the [Compassion, Peace and Justice](#) Ministries of the PC(USA). Sara Lisherness, director of Compassion, Peace and Justice, commented, "Jessica has a real sense of what it means to be Christ's ambassador, living out a ministry of reconciliation amidst some of the world's most urgent challenges. We are delighted she has accepted this position."

Hawkinson graduated with degrees in political science and international studies from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn. While at Macalester, Hawkinson was strongly involved in the College's Center for Religious and Spiritual Life and highly engaged with the newly created Institute for Global Citizenship.

"Both experiences were formative as I began to discover the profound links between promises of faith and the challenges of global citizenship," said Hawkinson.

-Written by Mindy Marcal, PC(USA)

**Christian Vocation Sunday:** God's call is more than a job — daily service in the world through our jobs, talents and interests is a cornerstone of our lives as Christians. The programmatic emphasis for the Sunday before Labor Day — September 6 — is appropriately, Christian Vocation Sunday.

Cultivate a culture of call in your own congregation by claiming our theological perspective of the priesthood of all believers. Find ways of including this emphasis on call in your congregation's worship and activities. Get help with resources from the office of Christian Vocation, including a call to worship, dramatic reading and a downloadable bulletin insert by going to [www.pcusa.org/christianvocation/christianvocationsunday.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/christianvocation/christianvocationsunday.htm).

**Church World Service Needs Kits:** Deb Braun, Field Assistant in the CWS Minn-Kota Regional Office reports that the CWS Emergency Response Office (ERP) is currently working on some large shipments of material aid to Liberia, Moldova and the West Bank. "Once those shipments are completed, we will have greatly depleted our supplies of Hygiene and Baby Kits," Braun



## Presbybriefs: News At A Glance

says. Donna Derr, Director of the ERP Office, has issued an urgent appeal for the Kits, also noting that our current inventory of Clean-up Buckets is only 1,700, which is a concern as we head into hurricane season. Providing assistance to one major hurricane could easily deplete the current inventory of the Clean-up Buckets, which are heavily used in domestic disaster response.

Braun adds, "we often get calls from our kit donors and denominational partners, asking if there is a particular need for specific kits. As kits are being assembled this summer and fall for denominational meetings, we ask that you keep in mind this current urgent need for Hygiene and Baby Kits, Clean-up Buckets, and Shipping & Processing Funds. Monetary donations to cover the cost of kits are also welcome."

Please contact the Minn-Kota Regional Office ( phone: 1-888-297-2767 or [dbraun@churchworldservice.org](mailto:dbraun@churchworldservice.org)) for more information about these programs, or to request promotional materials. We appreciate your help in supplying these urgently needed resources, and greatly value your partnership.

Completed Kits may be shipped pre-paid to:

Church World Service  
Brethren Service Center Annex  
601 Main Street  
PO Box 188  
New Windsor, MD 21776-0188

Kit Funds and Processing/Shipping Funds may be sent directly to CWS, PO Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515-0968.

**Winnebago Presbytery taking steps in going "green":** Winnebago Presbytery is contemplating a "green strategy," according to a note in the July 24 issue of News and Notes, the presbytery's newsletter. The note stated: "An 'interest only' meeting to determine how many people might want to participate in a task group to pursue a green strategy for Winnebago Presbytery

and its congregations and what the focus of the group would be is scheduled in the meeting room on the first floor at Neenah First Presbyterian at 1 p.m. Aug. 13." Persons interested in attending the meeting are being asked to notify Sarah Moore-Nokes, associate executive presbyter, at [sarah@winnebagopresbytery.org](mailto:sarah@winnebagopresbytery.org).

## Second Annual Bike/Walk to Church Sunday, August 30 @ Westminster, Minneapolis

Members of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Downtown Minneapolis are encouraged to walk or bike to church on the last Sunday in August as part of their Sustainability Challenge. Last year, 30 individuals and families either biked or walked to church and the hope is to double the amount of participants trying to reduce their carbon footprint.

A mobile van from Erik's Bike Shop will be in the church parking lot to give each bike a tune up and safety check. Participants can sign up at [www.westminsteraugust1623.com](http://www.westminsteraugust1623.com)



## Positions Available

For more information on the positions listed below, please go the PTCA website at <http://www.ptcaweb.org/RESOURCES/openpositions.htm>.

- Nursery Attendant, Plymouth Presbyterian, Plymouth
- Pastor, Zion United Church of Christ, LeSeur
- Director of Music, Presbyterian Church of the Way, Shoreview
- Church Business Administrator, North Como Presbyterian Church, Roseville
- Church Administrative Assistant, Peace Presbyterian Church, St. Louis Park
- Youth Ministries Director, First Presbyterian Church, White Bear Lake
- Christian Education Director, First Presbyterian Church, White Bear Lake
- Youth Ministry Coordinator, North Como Presbyterian Church, Roseville
- Children & Family Ministry Coordinator, North Como Presbyterian Church, Roseville

*Do you have a church staff position that needs to be filled? Send in your job announcements to Dennis Sanders at [communications@ptcaweb.org](mailto:communications@ptcaweb.org). (Oh, and let us know when you fill the position, so we can remove it from the job listings.)*

The following PTCA Congregations are accepting Personal Information Forms (PIF):

- Associate Pastor– St. Luke Presbyterian, Wayzata
- Pastor– Buffalo Presbyterian, Buffalo
- Pastor– First Presbyterian, Claremont
- Interim Pastor– Community Presbyterian, Plainview

*To find out more information about these openings, please go the Church Leadership Connection Opportunities web-page ([www.pcusa.org/clc](http://www.pcusa.org/clc)).*

## Events Calendar

**Do you have an event you'd like to publicize? Please send it to Dennis Sanders at [communications@ptcaweb.org](mailto:communications@ptcaweb.org).**

### **Celebrating Community Together at North Como:**

Celebrating Community Together, or CCT, is a Children and Family program for the summer. Through three evening sessions and one afternoon session, the intention of CCT is to bring children and families of North Como together to learn more about what North Como does outside of its walls and celebrate those activities and affiliations. Each evening activity is from 6-7:30 pm, intended to fit just after dinner and just before bed. Activities are geared toward children up through 5th grade, to be done alongside and with parents. There is no fee for the first three sessions, while only a nominal fee for the Twins game!

### **Saturday, August 15th: CCT – Play!**

In celebration of the end of the summer and as a capstone to the CCT series, we will attend a Twins Game on Saturday, August 15th. The game starts at 3 pm, so we will gather at the church to carpool and then enjoy the game together versus the Cleveland Indians. (The cost is \$10 per person, including a ticket, hot dog, and soda!)

We would love to see you there...if you are interested in attending, please contact the North Como church office by calling 651-488-5581.

If you have any questions, please contact Bobbie Bigwood, NCPCC Elder serving Education and Nurture, at [gbbigwood@hotmail.com](mailto:gbbigwood@hotmail.com) or by leaving a message at the church office.

### **Job Support Groups at Christ Presbyterian:**

Christ Presbyterian in Edina offers the following groups to help those in transition:

- **CHRIST IN CAREER SUPPORT GROUP:** Meets first and third Saturdays of the month from 8:30-10:30AM in Room 316  
Contact: Jack Baloga at 952.944.5194  
\*A ministry of Christ Presbyterian Church
- **INDIVIDUAL MENTORING/COACHING\***  
Contact the CPC Lay Care office at 952.920.8515  
\*A ministry of Christ Presbyterian

### Church

- **MINNEAPOLIS JOB SUPPORT WORKSHOP**

Meets every Tuesday at 6:30PM

Contact: John Wetzel at [john.wetzel@right.com](mailto:john.wetzel@right.com)

Visit [www.mjsw.org](http://www.mjsw.org)

- **WOMEN'S NETWORKING GROUP**

Meets second Tuesday of the month at 6:30PM in the Parlor

Contact: John Wetzel at [john.wetzel@right.com](mailto:john.wetzel@right.com)

Visit [www.mjsw.org](http://www.mjsw.org)

### **Job Support Group at Lake Nokomis:**

The South Minneapolis Job Networking Group meets at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian on Fridays at 9am for support, resources and networking. For more information, please contact the congregation at (612) 721-4463.

**Garage Sale at Faith Presbyterian:** August 13 and 14, at Faith Presbyterian in Minnetonka. The Proceeds will go towards missions. For more information on the sale, please go to the Faith Presbyterian website at [www.faithpres.org](http://www.faithpres.org).

**Boundaries Training Available:** This training is offered on three different dates in three different regions of Minnesota. All sessions are from 8:30am to 4:30pm. Lunch and materials are included.

- Thursday, October 8th 2009 - Fergus Falls, MN
- Thursday, October 22nd 2009 - Hinckley, MN
- Thursday, November 5th 2009 - Lakeville, MN

For more information or to register contact Aundrea Billings at [aun-](mailto:aun-)



## Events Calendar

### Summer Office Hours @ the Presbytery Office

**Monday-Thursday:**  
8:30am-4:30pm

**Friday:**  
8:30am-12:30pm

### Per Capita for 2010:

**General Assembly:**  
\$6.15

**Synod:** \$4.80

**Presbytery:** \$19.06

**Total=**  
**\$30.01**

drea.billings@mchurches.org or 612-230-3236 or visit [www.mchurches.org](http://www.mchurches.org).

#### Important News about the Bible Content Exam

The PC(USA)'s Bible Content Examination will now be administered **ONLINE ONLY**. The online Bible Content Examination is a proctored examination administered at seminary testing sites. Test takers will need a computer with internet access in order to take this examination. The examination will be available in English, Korean and Spanish. The exam will be offered twice each year beginning **October 2, 2009**. [Applicants must first read the instructions and explanatory material before visiting the new site](http://www.pcusa.org/exams/bible.htm) ([www.pcusa.org/exams/bible.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/exams/bible.htm))

which allows for online registration and payment for the exam.

#### Synod Communicator Event Set for September

Communicators, and anyone else who might want to attend, are being invited to the second Synod-wide Communicators Conference Wednesday through Friday, Sept. 2-4, at the Hilton Garden Inn, Eagan, Minn. Sarah Moore-Nokes, associate executive presbyter in Winnebago Presbytery, will lead the conference's first session Wednesday evening on Google Tools. Attendees are asked, if possible, to bring their own laptop computer. Shane Whisler, communications director in the Synod of the Sun, will provide details about working with Presbyterian Neighbor News on Thursday morning, and Bethany Furkin will also address the conference about the Presbyterian News Service during that time. There is also a possibility that the executive director for the Committee on Local Arrangements for the 2010 General Assembly will be on hand before Thursday's lunch. Full registration is \$100 and includes all sessions, accommodations, opening dinner, two breakfasts and a lunch. For those who do not need accommodations, registration is \$40 for all sessions. Registration is easy, simply send an email to Duane Sweep, associate for communications at the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, at [dsweep@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:dsweep@lakesandprairies.org). The email should include name and position. The registration fee can be mailed to Duane Sweep, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, 2115 Cliff Drive, Eagan, MN 55122.

#### A Conversation on the Future of Faith Communities

Saturday, September 19th, 2009, 9am - 3pm, Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 1620 East 46th Street, Minneapolis MN 55407. Does the church have anything to say anymore to the big questions in people's lives? if so, what? How can the church be engaged with the questions: What is a lifetime? Why do we live it? We will learn about the loss of identity and loss of belonging that characterize so much of life today, and explore how the church might imagine hope and community with and alongside people. We'll talk about how the church can wrestle with questions, enter into suffering, and speak of hope in reality. We will hear from Andy Root (from his forthcoming book, "The Promise of Despair: The Way of the Cross as the Way of the Church"), and also get into some good theological conversation with one another - from many different churches and perspectives.

This is for church leaders, and for regular folks: **it is a day of theological conversation for everyone.**

Registration Including Lunch: \$20 (Lunch by Pepito's) **Registration is limited.** To register, call Jan at 612-721-4463. Download a flyer at [www.ptcaweb.org/News/Root%20Event%20Flyer-4.pdf](http://www.ptcaweb.org/News/Root%20Event%20Flyer-4.pdf).

Dr. Andy Root is a theologian and professor of Youth & Family Ministry at Luther Seminary, St. Paul and the author of Revisiting Relational Youth Ministry, Relationships Unfiltered, and the forthcoming The Promise of Despair: The Way of the Cross as the Way of the Church.

*Co-hosted by Randolph Heights Presbyterian Church, Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church, Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, and Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church.*



## Events Calendar

### Next Presby- tery Meeting:

**Saturday  
September 12,  
First  
Presbyterian,  
Shakopee  
9AM-3PM**

**Presbytery Packets  
will be available in  
early September.  
Go to  
[www.presbyterytwincities.org/  
presbyterypacket](http://www.presbyterytwincities.org/presbyterypacket) to  
download materi-  
als.**

**Workshop on Mental Illness:** The Disability Concerns Task Force is sponsoring a workshop called, **Mental Illness: A Challenge to our Churches**, September 19, from 9AM to Noon at Presbyterian Church of the Way in Shoreview. This workshop is open to Parish visitors, pastors, family members of persons who live with mental illness, deacons, elders, anyone who wants to understand mental illness and cares about ministry with the one in five who live with mental illness. To register, find more information and for childcare, please contact Rev. Bebe Baldwin at [randbonmarquette@hotmail.com](mailto:randbonmarquette@hotmail.com).

**Outdoor Worship Service: Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church:** Edgcumbe and Randolph Heights Presbyterian will host an outdoor Bluegrass worship service on August 23 at Edgcumbe's Outdoor chapel. A family fun day will follow.

**Prayer at the Fair:** You don't have to miss church to attend the Minnesota State Fair. Once again the Minnesota Council of Churches presents **Prayer at the Fair**, *an ecumenical service of thanksgiving and praise for God's creation on the Sunday mornings of the Fair*. The Minnesota State Fair is a celebration of abundance.

Each year more than a million people come to partake in all that has been created for us - from the miracle of new life in the birthing barn to the silliness of deep fried candy bars on a stick. Join Leslie Ball, Liturgist and Fair Fanatic for a morning of readings, prayer, and choral singing.

*Prayer at the Fair takes place at the Bandshell on Sundays, August 30th and September 6 from 9:15 - 9:45am. We even have bulletins on a stick!*

**Festival of Fun at North Presbyterian:** August 16 from 4-7pm. A fete complete with ice cream, hot dogs, carnival games and bounce castle and much more. North Presbyterian is located at 2675 East Highway 36 in North St. Paul. For more info, contact the church at 651-777-4044.

**Spirituality Event at St. Thomas, St. John's:** The Jay Phillips Center for Inter-faith Learning presents:

*Terry Gips on Religion and Sustainability  
How Caring for Creation Benefits Our  
Spiritual Life, Finances, Business, Com-  
munity, and Planet*

Wednesday, September 9, 8:00 p.m.  
Stephen B. Humphrey Theater  
Saint John's University, Collegeville

Tuesday, September 29, 7:30 p.m.  
O'Shaughnessy Educational Center Audi-  
torium  
University of St. Thomas, St. Paul

The events are free and open to the public. For more information, please go to the St. Thomas website at [www.stthomas.edu/jpc/calendar/default.html](http://www.stthomas.edu/jpc/calendar/default.html).

**Scottish Heritage Festival:** 11am-5pm, September 12, First Presbyterian, Hudson, WI. Bake Sale, Highlight Games, Scottish Foods and more. For more info, go to First Hudson's website at [www.fpchudson.com](http://www.fpchudson.com).

**"unChristian" Event at Bethel:** Christianity has an image problem. Christians are supposed to represent Christ to the world. But according to the latest Barna Group report card, something has gone terribly wrong. Using descriptions like "hypocritical," "insensitive," and "judgmental," young Americans share an impression of Christians that's nothing short of . . . unChristian.

Find out why these negative perceptions exist, learn how to reverse them in a Christ-like manner, and discover practical examples of how Christians can positively contribute to culture. Enjoy this interactive seminar with an extended Q & A time.

The guest speaker for the event is Gabe Lyons, a coauthor of *unchristian*. The event takes place Friday October 9 from 10am-3:30pm. To register, please go to [bethel.edu/church-ministries](http://bethel.edu/church-ministries). To



## Events Calendar

### Presbytery @ Prayer

find out more, please email church-ministries@bethel.edu or by phone at 651-638-6301.

**Children's Sabbath:** October 16-18, 2009. This year's theme, Create Change for Children Today: Bring Hope and a Better Tomorrow focuses on children in poverty, children's health care, and the pipeline to prison. In this time of economic hardship, it is more important than ever to insure that our children do not fall through the cracks. Children's Sabbath is a great way to get your congregation aware of and involved in children's issues. Join congregations across the country that will be participating in the National Observation of Children's Sabbath. See the Joint Religious Legislative Council (JRLC) website (<http://jrlc.org>) for more information about Children's Sabbath and to find stories from congregations who have participated in the past.

### Monday-Friday 9:00am-9:30am

**Spiritual Vitality in Turbulent Times** – Personal and Corporate Practices – is the theme of the upcoming Minnesota Area Five Day Academy for Spiritual Formation. The Academy will be held November 8-13, 2009 at Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo, MN.

The focus on corporate practices will be taught by Don Saliers, who was the William R. Cannon Distinguished Professor of Theology and Worship at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia until his retirement in 2007. Don received his B.A. from Ohio Wesleyan University, and both his B.D. (Bachelor of Divinity) and his Ph.D. from Yale University. An accomplished musician, theologian, and scholar of liturgics, Don is the author of numerous books on the relationship between theology and worship practices. He recently co-authored *A Song to Sing, a Life to Live* with his daughter Emily Saliers, a member of the Indigo Girls.

The focus on personal practices will be led by Kathryn Damiano. Kathryn is a Quaker who brings over 20 years of experience as a spiritual director to her ministry. She has a Master of Divinity, a Master of Arts in counseling psychology, and a Ph.D. in spiritual psychology.

The Academy for Spiritual Formation is open to laity and clergy. The total cost is either \$575 for a single room or \$525 for a double. This includes linens, private bath, meals and tuition. To receive a brochure with additional information about the

Academy, please email Deb DeMeester, Retreat Leader, at [demeesterd@aol.com](mailto:demeesterd@aol.com). To register, click on "Events Registration" at <http://www.minnesotaumc.org/>. The

## New PTCA Website Set to Debut in September

**The Presbytery is hard at work in trying to have a brand new website up and running in September of 2009. The new website will be more interactive and more helpful to you and your congregation.**

**The web address: [www.ptcaweb.org](http://www.ptcaweb.org), will remain the same, so don't worry about learning a new address.**

**The target "live" date is Friday, September 11. There might be some potential disruption of the current website as we get ready, so please bear with us during the week of September 7-11.**

**Also, there will be a brief announcement of the website at the September 12 Presbytery meeting in Shakopee.**

**Stay tuned for more announcements on this exciting endeavor!**

**Please note that the staff of the PTCA gathers for morning prayer and devotions each day.**

## No bread, no wine, but a sacramental beer



by Gordon C. Stewart

Sometimes having a beer is a sacramental act. The president and vice president of the United States having a beer with Prof. Henry Louis Gates Jr. and police Sgt. James Crowley, at a round table in the White House backyard, strikes me as that kind of moment.

There was no bread and there was no wine.

There was no prayer and no elevation of the host or cup. There was beer.

And a most unlikely congregation -- the arresting officer who responded to a 911 call regarding a suspected break-in; the Harvard professor whose keys wouldn't work, arrested in his own living room for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest; the vice president with blue-collar roots from Scranton, Pa., and the president, who, in the aftermath of the most debated arrest since Rodney King, had stumbled on his words, and who had brought them all together for beer, conversation, and a "teachable moment."

What was the teachable moment? What was it teaching us?

Sacramental purists, teetotalers and partisan ideologues will not see it. Nor will those who accuse the president of a public relations stunt to cover over a confessed political blunder that captured the news for 10 days. Their biases will not allow them to see it.

We see the world through the eyes of our experience. As a child I believed that the call of the Christian life was a call to purity, the call to clean hands. We were "Christian soldiers, marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before." The world was a dirty place; our job was to clean it up in the march against evil.

Then, as a college student, I read Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus.

They pulled me down from my high perch into a radical crisis, a crisis that led me to the ideas of practicing Christian theologians Karl Barth, Paul Tillich and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, men whose faith did not suffer the illusion of the recovery of lost innocence, but rather took the form of responsibility for one's behavior on behalf of a gospel of reconciliation.

This gospel of reconciliation has become the primary lens through which I see the world. I share this view, expressed in my tradition by the Presbyterian Confession of 1967, which made the shift from the paradigm of innocence to the paradigm of reconciliation as the work of the Christian life.

It calls the church to work toward the end of "discrimination based on racial or ethnic difference, real or imaginary ... practice forgiveness of enemies and ... commend to the nations as practical politics the search for cooperation and peace."

The gathering of these four men in the backyard of the White House strikes me as a visible sign of such reconciling work. As in his speech to the Muslim world and in his historic Philadelphia speech on race, President Obama has brought to the White House a nonsectarian gospel of reconciliation.

Although they shared beer rather than wine, the scene of Gates, Crowley, Biden and Obama, each with his own dirty hands in a world without innocence, seemed like a reflection of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

**"Although they shared beer rather than wine, the scene of Gates, Crowley, Biden and Obama, each with his own dirty hands in a world without innocence, seemed like a reflection of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "**

**Rev. Gordon Stewart, pastor of Shepherd of the Hill Church in Chaska.**



## Beer, continued



**"Sometimes having a beer is a sacramental act, a kind of holy moment, a foretaste of the kind of world we seek, the dissolving of the divisions, community created boldly by grace out of the vain searches for innocence and the broken, rancorous claims of righteousness."**

**-Rev. Gordon Stewart.**

"The Lord's Supper is a celebration of the reconciliation of people with God and with one another, in which they joyfully eat and drink together at the table of their Savior ... They rejoice in the foretaste of the kingdom ... and go out from the Lord's Table with courage and hope for the service to which he [Christ] has called them," says the Confession.

Sometimes having a beer is a sacramental act, a kind of holy moment, a foretaste of the kind of world we seek, the dissolving of the divisions, community created boldly by grace out of the vain searches for innocence and the broken, rancorous claims of righteousness.

*Gordon Stewart is the Pastor of Shepherd of the Hill Presbyterian Church in Chaska, MN. This article originally appeared on Minnesota Public Radio and can be read online by going to [www.minnesota.publicradio.org/your\\_voice/commentaries/](http://www.minnesota.publicradio.org/your_voice/commentaries/).*

## Conference Set for Communicators

Are you in charge of the church newsletter or website? Are you interested in acquiring more skills? Do you want to find out how to communicate more effectively while keeping costs low?

Communicators (administrative assistants, communication specialists, pastors, lay leaders, etc.) , and anyone else who might want to attend, are being invited to the second Synod-wide Communicators Conference Wednesday through Friday, Sept. 2-4, at the Hilton Garden Inn, Eagan, Minn. Sarah Moore-Nokes, associate executive presbyter in Winnebago Presbytery, will lead the conference's first session Wednesday evening on Google Tools. Attendees are asked, if possible, to bring their own laptop computer. Shane Whisler, communications director in the Synod of the Sun, will provide details about working with Presbyterian Neighbor News on Thursday morning, and Bethany Furkin will also address the conference about the Presbyterian News Service during that time. There is also a possibility that the executive director for the Committee on Local Arrangements for the 2010 General Assembly will be on hand before Thursday's lunch.

Full registration is \$100 and includes all sessions, accommodations, opening dinner, two breakfasts and a lunch. For those who do not need accommodations, registration is \$40 for all sessions. Registration is easy, simply send an email to Duane Sweep, associate for communications at the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, at [dsweep@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:dsweep@lakesandprairies.org). The email should include name and position. The registration fee can be mailed to Duane Sweep, Synod of Lakes and Prairies, 2115 Cliff Drive, Eagan, MN 55122.

## Visiting Soweto



by **Andries Coetzee**

*Editor's Note: Dries Coetzee is the Associate Pastor at Oak Grove Presbyterian Church in Bloomington, MN. He is currently on sabbatical and visiting his native South Africa with his wife and two children. Below is the latest entry from his blog which can be found at [driescoetzee.wordpress.com](http://driescoetzee.wordpress.com).*

**"As I was listening to her I became aware that he could have been one of my own two children who now are at the same stage in their lives. It was then that Hector came alive to me and I envisioned the cost of the ultimate price he and his family paid for a free and just South Africa."**

**-Rev. Dries Coetzee, Associate Pastor, Oak Grove Presbyterian Church, Bloomington.**

I am back in the Cape Town area in a town called Paarl, where I am visiting my sister Emily and her family; I also spent five years of my life (grades 8 through 12) here at [Paarl Boys High](#). I am fortunate that my Sabbatical coincided with my 20<sup>th</sup> high school reunion and homecoming for my alma mater against Paarl Gymnasium. On Thursday and Friday we will watch my nephews play rugby on their various teams and then Saturday we will be watching rugby the whole day with the epic final game in the afternoon between the first teams of the two schools. Hopefully Boys High can turn the tide around as Gymnasium has been winning for the past five years.

A great and life-changing experience I had these past weeks was spending a night and the following day in Soweto. Soweto is an urban area in the City of Johannesburg and its name an English syllabic abbreviation, short for South Western Township. What makes Soweto unique is that it is infused with the history of the struggle against apartheid and was home to people like [Nelson Mandela](#) and Archbishop [Desmond Tutu](#).

Very memorable were my visits with Antoinette, the sister of Hector Pieterse, a 12-year-old boy who died during the Soweto uprising on June 16, 1976. Hector was killed when the police opened fire on students protesting against the apartheid state's policy of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in schools, regard-

less of the student's first language. He became the iconic image of the 1976 Soweto uprising after a news photograph by Sam Nzima of the dying Hector being carried by an 18-year-old school boy, Mbuyisa Makhubo with Antoinette (then 17 years old) running next to them was published around the world.

Although I was too young to remember the events of June 16<sup>th</sup>, it was truly amazing to visit with Antoinette, who now is a tour guide at the [Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum](#). During my visit with her I once again realized how apartheid dehumanized people to the effect that we could forget that Hector was **really** a child, and not just an image in the newspaper. Antoinette helped me recognize that he was a normal 12-year-old boy who was very close to his mother, loved to play in the garden collecting bugs of all sorts, and that he dreamed dreams.

As I was listening to her I became aware that he could have been one of my own two children who now are at the same stage in their lives. It was then that Hector came alive to me and I envisioned the cost of the ultimate price he and his family paid for a free and just South Africa. Most amazing to me is that Antoinette does not hold any grudges or bad feelings against the people or system who took her brother's life. She has made a choice not to allow hate to hold her life captive. For her to be truly free and to do justice to her brother's sacrifice is to forgive and to let go.

For me personally I broke a barrier spending the night in Soweto. Growing up white in apartheid South Africa we lived with a tremendous fear of the black majority, a fear that still sepa-

Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area

112 W. Franklin Ave.  
Suite 508  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Fax: 612-871-0698  
E-mail: [communications@ptcaweb.org](mailto:communications@ptcaweb.org)  
Web: [www.ptcaweb.org](http://www.ptcaweb.org)  
Blog: [www.presbyterytwincities.org/emergetheblog](http://www.presbyterytwincities.org/emergetheblog)

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**"EMerge," is a biweekly publication from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (PTCA). The mission is to share brief highlights with links to resources and news. Recipients include congregations, minister members, other members, committees, and friends. Please send submissions and e-mail corrections to Dennis Sanders, editor, at [communications@ptcaweb.org](mailto:communications@ptcaweb.org). Usual distribution: Mondays. Deadline: Thursday (two business days before distribution).**

## Visiting Soweto, continued

rates many people today. For me it was unbelievable to be there, walking down the streets of Soweto, watching the Bafana Bafana's (South Africa's national soccer team) semi-final FIFA Confederation Cup match against Brazil, hearing the sounds of the [vuvuzelas](#), and drinking a beer with my gracious host.

I left Soweto with a sense of wholeness, realizing that our biggest fears sometimes keep us from living our lives as people who are set free, which in turn minimizes the sacrifice of those who paid the ultimate price.

**"For me personally I broke a barrier spending the night in Soweto. Growing up white in apartheid South Africa we lived with a tremendous fear of the black majority, a fear that still separates many people today...I left Soweto with a sense of wholeness, realizing that our biggest fears sometimes keep us from living our lives as people who are set free, which in turn minimizes the sacrifice of those who paid the ultimate price."  
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### Presbytery Staff

**Chaz Ruark, Executive Presbyter: [ep@ptcaweb.org](mailto:ep@ptcaweb.org)**

**Nancy Grittman, Stated Clerk: [statedclerk@ptcaweb.org](mailto:statedclerk@ptcaweb.org)**

**Risa Anderson, Office Manager: [office@ptcaweb.org](mailto:office@ptcaweb.org)**

**Dennis Sanders, IT/Communications Specialist: [communications@ptcaweb.org](mailto:communications@ptcaweb.org)**