

MARCH, 2011

CONNECTING PRESBYTERIANS

AN UPDATE FROM BLACKHAWK PRESBYTERY

February 8, 2011 Presbytery Meeting

Blackhawk Presbytery met February 8, 2011, at First Presbyterian Church of DuPage in Bolingbrook. Information sessions were led by GA 219 Commissioners Alan Manchester and Bill Schaeffe on *Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the PC (USA)—Amendment 10-1: Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and Form of Government* (commonly known as “New Form of Government”) and *Proposed Amendments to the Book of Order, Form of Government Section—Amendments 10A-10H*.

The presbytery then voted as follows:

- The motion to approve amendment 10-1, the *New Form of Government*, failed. The vote was 51 to approve and 61 not to approve.
- An omnibus motion to approve amendments 10B-10H to the *Book of Order, Form of Government Section* passed by voice vote.
- A motion to approve amendment 10A to the *Book of Order, Form of Government Section*, passed by written ballot with a count of 66 to approve and 46 not to approve.

Blackhawk Presbytery will vote on the remaining proposed amendments—the Belhar Confession and amendments to the Book of Order Worship and Discipline Sections—at the May 11, 2011 presbytery meeting at Oswego Presbyterian Church. As of this week, more than 50% of the presbyteries have completed all or part of their voting process. The deadline for completion of voting is June 2011.

In other business, the presbytery:

- Approved a “Process for Congregations of Blackhawk Presbytery Considering Leaving the PC (USA) developed by an administrative commission led by Rev. Carl Gray (Geneva, Fox Valley) and dismissed the commission with thanks.
- Approved a motion from the Stated Clerk that all churches in Blackhawk Presbytery with a member of 250 and greater be entitled to have 2 elder commissioners to presbytery meetings. The change will be effective with the May 10, 2011 meeting.
- Examined Sam Perkins for candidacy for the office of Minister of Word and Sacrament and approved his enrollment as a candidate. Sam’s home church is Oswego.
- Commissioned lay pastor Jack Briggs to serve First Presbyterian Church, Franklin Grove.
- Examined Brad Rogers for approval for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament and approved his ordination. The presbytery then approved his installation as Associate Pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Rockford with responsibility for the Westminster Stateline Project.
- Welcomed Rev. Nathaniel L. Manzo as pastor of New Hope Presbyterian Church in Coal City.

Meeting papers and minutes are available at the Blackhawk Presbytery website.



Our Vision

Grounded in the biblical image for human community,

As disciples of Jesus,

Following His witness & command for His church,

Guided by the principles of trust, open communication, & genuine relationships,

We will challenge & support our congregations to be thriving faith communities by

Providing competent pastoral leadership,

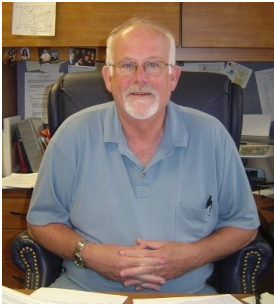
Resourcing to energize ministry, &

Developing networks & partnerships of Presbyterians

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John's Space



Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has emerged over the last decade as a significant and valuable ministry of the Presbyterian Church. If you have been part of Blackhawk Presbytery's mission trips to Slidell, LA, you have seen one way that PDA is active to help people recover. If you live in Savanna, Streator, Watseka, you also know of PDA support and help. Each of these towns has experienced some disaster in the last few years. Flooding in Watseka, a tornado in Streator, and flooding and accidental deaths of two young people in Savanna. In each of these circumstances PDA has supported recovery financially, but also by sending trained responders to assist. The pastors and other leaders in these areas have been more than a little grateful for the larger church's response through PDA.

Where does the money come from so that the Presbyterian Church can respond to disasters nationally and internationally? Of course, there are always the generous contributions of Presbyterians when something big happens. But the foundation, the backbone, the basic funding for regional and smaller responses is the offering of One Great Hour of Sharing.

Since soon after World War II, this offering has allowed the church come into people's lives during some of their most vulnerable and dangerous times, help them recover, and to be touched by God's love through God's people— us.

I hope during this season of Lent that you will consider giving generously to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering as one discipline of preparation for Easter.

And, on behalf of all those who will be touched by God's gift of love shown through our generosity: Thank you.

*Peace,
John Rickard*

One Great Hour of Sharing: sharing resources, changing lives

Since 1949, Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through One Great Hour of Sharing to share God's love with people experiencing need. Our gifts support ministries of disaster response, refugee assistance and resettlement, and community development that help people find safe refuge, start new lives and work together to strengthen their families and communities. Recognizing that the hope we have in Christ is lived out in our hope for one another, we respond with gifts that help our sisters and brothers around the world find the hope for a brighter future.

Where does the money go?

The Presbyterian Hunger Program receives 36 percent of undesignated One Great Hour of Sharing gifts, while the Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance each receive 32 percent.

When is the offering received?

Most congregations receive the offering on Easter Sunday, Palm Sunday or both, while many receive it throughout Lent.



Good News from Our Congregations!

Editor's Note: I've been reading church newsletters and marveling at the variety of mission, faith formation, and fellowship that engages our congregations. Here are some samples!

Ottawa, First—from the *Presby Press*

Debbie Damron and Dianne Jamison will be in Uganda March 18-26 to dedicate Glory Primary School in Kahondo. This is the fruit of a previous trip where Debbie talked about Ottawa Labor of Love as a possible model for building a school. Innovations for Transformation Initiative Labor of Love Project was born! The people of the village come together every Wednesday to help build the school. The men are busy building, the women prepare porridge for them, and the children help any way they can.

The Ottawa congregation is now gathering contributions to equip the school. Debbie and Dianne will take these to Uganda to purchase necessary material.

Piper City, First—from *The Staff*

Members are delivering Meals on Wheels in the community and planning the annual church rummage sale. The Mission Committee recently made a donation to the Needy Student Fund for school supplies.

DeKalb, Westminster—from *News & Views*

The Presbyterian Campus Ministry group is planning a Mission Trip to the San Diego area. The Vocal Choir is providing meals for Hope Haven. The Deacons are planning a churchwide Hawaiian luau potluck and auction. The Youth Fellowship Team is

looking for bowlers and contributions for the Bowl for Kids Sake service project.

Winnebago, Middle Creek—from the *Middle Creek Bridge*

The Middle Creek Session has given approval for the Win-Bur-Sew Fire Department to use its Middle House facility or the church in case of emergency situations such as stranded motorists. The Middle Creek Men's Group Breakfast and Study is discussing *A Man of His Word—Calling Men to Integrity and Leadership* by Adrian Rogers. Consider this: "The greatest mission field in the world is where Christians go to work every Monday morning." MIT (Mothers, Infants & Toddlers) meets monthly for parent support and fun parent/child activities.

Waltham—from the *Waltham Courier*

The members of Waltham Presbyterian Church are making and filling Bunny Baskets for the Illinois Valley Food Pantry. They gave 288 baskets in 2010! Sunday school youth are decorating cookies for nursing homes and shut-ins. Waltham is the host church for the upcoming Spring Gathering of Presbyterian Women in Presbytery, April 9.

Princeton, First—from the *Presbyterian Light*

Princeton member Susan Barlow is the representative from Presbyterian Women in the Synod of Lincoln Trails to the Presbyterian

Women Global Exchange to India in October 2011. The congregation received a thank you letter for its participation the Gateway Services' Christmas Wish Program, providing gifts for children and adults with disabilities. The congregation held some conversations about its history and values and developed a timeline that goes back to 1856! This is in preparation for beginning the Missional Analysis Process (MAP) in March.

Gibson City, First—from the *Presbytidings*

The congregation is planning their annual adult work trip to Kemmerer Village in July. Members volunteer for Meals on Wheels and support the local food pantry.

Freeport, United—from the *UPC Today*

UPC is planning a potluck and afternoon of board games—sounds like fun! Pastor Kathie offers Lunch with the Pastor weekly at a local café. And the men's group meets weekly for breakfast. A Prayers & Quilters group meets monthly and they are joined by the Comfort Shawl knitters. UPC is testing weekly e-updates for members with email addresses.

Harvard First—from the *Chimes*

The congregation is in a mission partnership with Githiga Children's Home in Kenya. They support the home through prayer, financial contributions, and cards and letters. They regularly receive letters from the Home Manager, Tabitha Mbura.

Don't see your news here? Share it with us—make sure we're on your newsletter distribution list, via email or snail mail. Or send us an article highlighting your church's ministry.

Welcome New Clergy!



Rev. Beth Wagner
Interim Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Rockford

A life long Presbyterian, Beth is a second career pastor and an intentional interim. Beth received a Masters of Divinity from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago in 2002.

Beth and her husband live in Normal, IL she is currently serving as Interim Pastor at 1st Presbyterian Church in Rockford, IL. She splits her time between Rockford and Normal. While living in two worlds has its moment, it allows her to concentrate on ministry while in Rockford and family while in Normal.



Rev Nathaniel Manzo
Pastor, New Hope Presbyterian Church, Coal City

I'd like to introduce myself, my name is Nate Manzo and I am the new pastor at New Hope Presbyterian. Instead of taking this time to just tell about myself I would like to tell some of the reasons my family and I know God has called us here to New Hope. New Hope is an open and loving congregation of believers who really want others to know the love and forgiveness a relationship with Jesus Christ has to offer. My wife and I have served in different ministries over the years that have stressed the importance of a relationship with Christ, and really appreciated New Hope's attitude. New Hope is also welcoming and growing with young families, being a part of young family myself (two great kids and a great wife) I knew we would be welcomed and loved here. I am blessed to serve New Hope and the Coal City area.



Jack Briggs, Commissioned Lay Pastor
First Presbyterian Church, Franklin Grove

Jack M. Briggs has been commissioned to serve as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Franklin Grove. He was in the pulpit throughout the past Advent season, and assumed pastoral duties on January 1. A Commissioned Lay Pastor, Jack completed his training through the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary CLP program, and was formally commissioned at the recent February presbytery meeting. He was previously an elder at First Presbyterian Church of Oregon. Jack brings a particular passion for the special challenges and opportunities of rural, smaller congregation ministry with a strong focus on pastoral care. Jack and his wife Janet reside in Oregon.



Rev. Brad Rogers
Designated Associate Pastor for the Westminster Stateline Ministry Project
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Rockford

Brad is a son of Westminster Presbyterian Church—baptized, confirmed, married, ordained there—and recently installed as designated associate pastor for the Westminster Stateline Ministry Project. Brad received his M.Div. at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. He is married to Lauren, a teacher at Harlem High School working towards a degree in counseling. They share their home with two dogs, two cats, a rabbit, and all of the “stuff” it takes to nurture a new ministry.

Stronghold Stories

Air-Conditioning Comes to Stronghold!

One of the recommendations of the Timber Restoration and Management Plan is the periodic harvest of mature trees. Stronghold sold a number of walnut trees this past winter and we are able to use most of the proceeds to install *central air-conditioning at the Carriage House, Sears Center and Hickory House*. New, energy efficient furnaces have been added in these buildings and also at the Bunk House. In addition, Sears and Carriage House have new energy efficient, double-hung windows with screens. Retreats, camp activities and other events held during July, August and September will be much more comfortable for all our guests. Call Maia at 815 732-6111, ext. 600 to plan your stay. Coming soon --- new windows for the Castle.

Stronghold Summer Camp Preview and Open House – Saturday, May 14

Come visit on Saturday, May 14 from 9 a.m. till 3 p.m. to meet Summer Camps Staff, try your hand at Archery, learn to play Ga-Ga ball and make s'mores by the campfire. Campers and their families can tour the camp cabins area and other lodges where camp activities are held, participate in arts and crafts and enjoy the beautiful grounds at Stronghold. Ryan, Jan and Maia will be on hand to answer your questions and Early Bird registration will still be available. Be sure to stop by for the activities and fun!

Spring Clean-Up Day – Saturday, May 21

Church groups or individuals are invited to Stronghold May 21 to help with spring clean-up. We will be grooming trails, trimming shrubs and other light grounds preparation. Stronghold will provide lunch and extra drinking water, so plan to come out and prepare for the summer season. We will work from 9 a.m. till 3 p.m. Please call Maia or Tim to register your group so we can plan accordingly.

Summer Camp Registration

You can register on-line for the camps of your choice. The camp season begins on June 17th with Grand-Camp and concludes the week of July 24. In between are the “tried and true” Adventure Camps and several special interest camps including **NIGHT OWLS** for both Jr. and Sr. High campers.

Family Camp, for campers age 3 to 103 is being held July 1-3. Last summer, campers ranged from 15 months to 60+ years and included cousins, grandparents, empty-nesters, single adults, moms and dads and children of all ages. Heritage Lodge, Sears Center or the tent site of your choice are housing options for this camp. Child care for toddlers and infants is provided by summer staff at no additional fees. Come join the fun and make new friends! Worship outdoors on Sunday morning.



Stronghold Mission

To provide opportunities for people to experience the biblical vision for human community through a retreat and camping environment.

Stronghold Values

Intentionally and unashamedly
Christian
Engaging life's realities
Respect for creation
and creatures
Hospitable
A safe place
Hope-full
A place of second chances
and grace

Stronghold Camp & Retreat Center
PO Box 199
1922 N. IL Rte. 2
Oregon, IL 61061
Phone: 815.732.6111
info@strongholdcenter.org
www.strongholdcenter.org

Jan Hartman
Director of Operations
& Program Development
jan@strongholdcenter.org

Ryan Anderson
Program Director
ryan@strongholdcenter.org

Resourcing to Energize Ministry

Presbytery Meetings 2011

- Feb 8 First Presbyterian Church of DuPage, Bolingbrook
- May 10 Oswego Presbyterian Church
- Sept 13 Westminster Presbyterian Church, DeKalb
- Nov 7-8 Stronghold Camp & Retreat Center, Oregon

Transitions

Arrivals

Rev. Nathaniel Manzo, pastor, New Hope Presbyterian Church, Coal City

Rev. LaVerne Davenport, interim pastor, Willowcreek Presbyterian Church, Caledonia

Rev. Brad Rogers, designated associate pastor for the Westminster Stateline Ministry Project, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Rockford

Jack Briggs, commissioned lay pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Franklin Grove

Departures

Sandi Graber, commissioned lay pastor, from Waterman Presbyterian Church

We want to share news of what our congregations are doing in mission and ministry! Tell us about it—with photos, if possible.

Submit your news to Pat Wakeley, patw@blackhawkpresbytery.org or call 815.732.3258 x 610.

Deadline for the next issue is

May 10, 2011

Blackhawk Presbytery
PO Box 157
1922 N. IL Rte. 2
Oregon, IL 61061

Phone: 815.732.3258

Fax: 815.732.2569

Email

office@blackhawkpresbytery.org

Website

www.blackhawkpresbytery.org

Rev. Dr. John E. Rickard
General Presbyter
johnrickard@blackhawkpresbytery.org

Rev. John C. Huff
Stated Clerk/Treasurer
johnhuff@blackhawkpresbytery.org



2011 Presbytery-Wide Mission Trip

May 16-20, 2011

(traveling weekend before & after)

Help Rebuild the Cedar Rapids Area

**Volunteer Coordination, Housing, and Support:
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
& Presbytery of East Iowa
www.peia.org**

**Trip Coordinator & Registrar: Art Drummond
andinil@att.net**

Contact Art for details!

**Sponsored by the Mission Strategies & Resources Board
Blackhawk Presbytery**

Deadline: March 31, 2011