

PRESBYTERY CONNECTION

A Bi-Weekly Newsletter of the Presbyteries of North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill
September 3, 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

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

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 Office Closed



The Presbytery office will be closed on Monday, September 7 for Labor Day, and on Thursday and Friday, September 10 and 11.

Upcoming Presbytery Meetings

Fall Presbytery meetings are scheduled for both presbyteries. At this point we don't know if these meetings will be in-person or via Zoom. Please save the date and stay tuned for additional information.

Prospect Hill Presbytery Meeting

Saturday, October 24
Lakeshore Center at Okoboji
1864 Hwy. 86
Milford, Iowa
8:30 a.m. Registration
9:30 a.m. Call to Meeting

North Central Iowa Presbytery Meeting

Sunday, November 1
Central Presbyterian Church
932 5th St.
Nevada, Iowa
1:30 p.m. Registration
2:30 p.m. Call to Meeting

Prayers of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa

- Week of September 6 Theological Institutions related to the PC(USA)
- Week of September 13 First Presbyterian Church, Dows – Alaire Willits
- Week of September 20 Greater Greene County Presbyterian Ministries – CRE Wendy Pittman
(Grand Junction First, Jefferson First, Payton First)

Prayers of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill

- Week of September 6 First Presbyterian Church, Battle Creek – Rev. Kevin Freese
- Week of September 13 Lakeside Presbyterian Church, Storm Lake – Rev. Ken Fells, Moderator
- Week of September 20 First Presbyterian Church, South Sioux City – Rev. David Koehler, Moderator

Additional Prayer Concerns

Please pray for Rev. Clarence Beard, honorably retired, who is on hospice. Our prayers surround him and his family at this time of transition. Cards may be sent to: Rev. Clarence Beard, JA Wedum Residential Hospice, Room 8, 9350 Noble Parkway, Brooklyn Park, MN 55443.

Please pray for Rev. Bob Cook, pastor at United Presbyterian Church in Vail and United Church of Westside. This coming Tuesday Bob will have a scan to find the best way to replace an aortic valve and surgery will be scheduled after that.

Please also pray for Rev. Bob Cook and his family on the death of his sister, Pat, whose funeral was held this past Tuesday.

Please pray for all who were affected by the derecho that ravaged the central part of Iowa on August 10. Of the 27 counties that have received disaster declarations from Governor Reynolds, one county lies within the boundaries of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill and seven counties lie within the boundaries of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa.

Please continue to pray for Rev. Dr. Rich King, pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Marshalltown. He is recuperating at home and receiving therapy at On With Life in Ankeny.

Please continue to pray for Josh Ullom, son of Rev. Dr. Dave and Judy Ullom of First Presbyterian Church in Estherville. Josh continues with bi-weekly chemo. Please also pray for Josh's family and for Dave and Judy as they all deal with this and support Josh.

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.

Churches in Transition

Please pray for the following churches that are in transition:

Presbytery of North Central Iowa

First Presbyterian Church, Ackley
First Presbyterian Church, Boone
First Presbyterian Church, Greene
First Presbyterian Church, Jesup
Eden Presbyterian Church, Rudd

Presbytery of Prospect Hill

Elliott Creek Presbyterian Church, Bronson
Memorial Presbyterian Church, Cherokee
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Ida Grove City
First Presbyterian Church, Lake Park
Community Presbyterian Church, Lawton
First Presbyterian Church, Odebolt
First Presbyterian Church, Sioux City
Lakeside Presbyterian Church, Storm Lake
First Presbyterian Church, South Sioux City

Sympathy is sent to Rev. Bob Cook and family on the death of Bob's sister, Pat. Funeral services were held this past Tuesday, September 1, 2020.

Condolences may be sent to: Rev. Bob Cook
P.O. Box 6
Vail, IA 51465



Poor Richard's Almanac

by Richard Francis, Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Prospect Hill



The *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which is Part Two of our Constitution,¹ has this paragraph in Chapter Three, “Councils of the Church:”² “Meetings of councils shall be opened and closed with prayer. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution.”

This may leave you wondering, “Who is Robert, and what makes his rules so wonderful?”

According to the introduction to *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, “Henry Martyn Robert (1837-1923) was an engineering officer in the regular army—finally attaining the rank of Brigadier General as chief of his corps—who was active in church organizations and civic and educational work wherever he was stationed, as much as military duties allowed him time.” (p.xi). His interest in parliamentary law—that is, the rules that govern elected bodies—began when he was asked to preside at a meeting with no warning. “My embarrassment was supreme,” he wrote. “I plunged in, trusting Providence that the assembly would behave itself. But with the plunge went the determination that I would never attend another meeting until I knew something of...parliamentary law.”³ (quoted on p.xi)

This began a lifelong study of parliamentary procedure for Gen. Robert, as he analyzed the procedural rules of elected bodies of all kinds and brought together what he thought the best of all those rules into his first edition of the *Rules of Order*, published in 1876. It's worth noting that Gen. Robert, a Baptist, intended these rules to be particularly useful for church assemblies.

Even though the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* runs over 700 pages, the basic principle that guides the whole volume is summarized by Robert himself on p.xlix: “The great lesson for democracies to learn is for the majority to give to the minority a full, free opportunity to present their side of the case, and then for the minority, having failed to win a majority to their views, gracefully to submit and to recognize the action as that of the entire organization, and cheerfully to assist in carrying it out, until they can secure its repeal.” That rather florid sentence is itself sometimes summarized somewhat like this: The goal of debate and vote is that the will of the majority shall be done, and the rights of the minority preserved.

All this was triggered by a question I received last week “What is the quorum for a session meeting?”

A quorum is the minimum number of members necessary to conduct business, and the *Book of Order* leaves it up to the session, congregation, etc., to decide: “Sessions shall provide by rule for a quorum for meetings; such quorum shall include the moderator⁴ and either a specific number of ruling elders or a specific percentage of those ruling elders in current service on the session.” (G-3.0203) The reason for having a quorum is the same as the basis for *Robert's Rules of Order*: “that the will of the majority shall be done, and the rights of the minority preserved.” To put it another way: if your session has nine elders and only two of them show up for a meeting, you don't want those two and the moderator, however well-intentioned, making decisions for the church. *Robert's* puts it this way: a quorum “should approximate the largest number that can be depended on to attend any meeting except in very bad weather or other extremely unfavorable conditions.” (p.21).

¹ Part One is the *Book of Confessions*, which is an indication of priority: belief (the confessions) precedes and informs practice (*The Book of Order*).

² “Councils” here refers to one of the elected leadership bodies in our system of government. The councils are the Session, the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly.

³ I probably could have written that statement after my first session meeting as Moderator. Can I get a witness?

⁴ Note that if the moderator is not present, the session may not meet. Period.

But all this is moot if we don't remember who we are: "The congregation is the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context." (G-1.0101, the first sentence in the "Form of Government" section of the *Book of Order*). That is why we establish quorums, hold meetings, discuss, and take votes: because we are, each congregation of us, "the church engaged in the mission of God in its"—that is, in our—"particular context." That means that you need to answer two questions:

1. What is the mission of God? and
2. What is our particular context?

Let me encourage you to make that the first order of business at your next session meeting—assuming you have a quorum.

Blessings,



All Iowa Presbyterians Day of Mission

As part of ongoing recovery efforts in the wake of the Derecho storm, the Presbytery of East Iowa (PEIA) is coordinating a one-day mission experience for Presbyterian volunteers from the entire state to gather and work alongside one another as we try to make a difference. **The event will take place on Saturday, September 5 of Labor Day Weekend.** We will gather at Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center in Hiawatha, just outside Cedar Rapids city limits at 120 E Boyson Rd., Hiawatha, Iowa 52233.

Schedule: 9:00 a.m. – Welcome, blessing of day's work and distribution of PDA t-shirts
 12:00 p.m. – Lunch to be provided by the Sisters
 3:45 p.m. – Work ends as we gather for closing reflection and prayer

Please click [here](#) to see the informational flyer.

Please sign up to volunteer using this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0b44aead29aa8-sept> or send an email to Kristin Hutson (kristin.e.hutson@gmail.com) at the PEIA Disaster Recovery Task Force.

DERECHO DONATIONS TO PRESBYTERY OF EAST IOWA

Donations for derecho relief may be made directly to the Presbytery of East Iowa by going to this link: <https://peia.org/disaster-assistance-information/>

North Central Iowa Mission Partnership Grant Applications

The deadline for submitting the North Central Iowa Mission Partnership Grant Application is approaching quickly – **September 18, 2020**. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Please click [here](#) for the application. Please email the completed application to Jeannie at the Presbytery Office (northiowapresby@gmail.com) by Friday, September 18, 2020.

Prospect Hill Session Records Reviews

Dear Prospect Hill Clerks of Session:

You are invited to attend one of two virtual session records reviews: Monday, September 21, or Thursday, September 24. Both meetings will be via Zoom video conferencing, though you will have the option to dial in with voice only if you don't have computer or smartphone access. Both meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. and last one hour. If you would like to participate in one of these meetings, please contact Jeannie in the Presbytery Office for the Zoom link (319-233-1747 or northiowapresby@gmail.com).

We will begin each meeting with a review of the [Clerk's Manual](#).

We will then review the minutes of your session for 2019. Please click [here](#) for the checklist. I will ask you to report whether or not everything is in order in your own minutes. (That means you don't have to report page numbers this year.) When we are finished, I will email you a sheet that you can insert in your session record book at the end of your 2019 minutes acknowledging that those minutes have been reviewed. That sheet will have my digital signature as Stated Clerk. If you prefer, I can send a paper copy with a more traditional signature.

As I said in an earlier email, you have the option of waiting until next year and submitting your records for 2019 and 2020 at what we hope will be a face to face meeting where you can all learn from each other, and your new Stated Clerk.

Richard Francis, Stated Clerk
Presbytery of Prospect Hill
712-265-1167
clerk@prospecthillpresby.org

2021 Board of Pensions



There are several Board of Pensions (BOP) benefits enrollment changes coming in 2021. A webinar was held on September 1, 2021, with Rev. Dr. Ken Green of the Board of Pensions. You may view that webinar [here](#).

Here are some more resources describing the 2021 Board of Pensions Benefits Plans:

- BOP Benefits [website](#) for 2021
 - BOP [brief overview](#) of 2021 Benefits Plan
 - BOP complete overview of 2021 Benefits Plan: [Your Church and the 2021 Benefits Plan Webinar](#)
-

Jesus Christ and the 'Dividing Wall': Race and God's Mission



Please consider registering for this webinar series, which will offer an opportunity to explore issues of racial justice with world-class speakers, and to connect and learn with people from all over the country. The dates are October 7, 14, 21 and 28, starting at 6:30 p.m. (Central Time). Besides these four lectures, there will also be five pre-recorded workshops that can be accessed and used in the future by participating churches and individuals. You may click [here](#) for more information or go to this website to get registered: <https://www.pts.edu/wmi-conference>

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies Presents The Art of Transitional Leadership



Learning Ministry Skills for Today's and Tomorrow's Church
Pastors, Staff, COMs and Congregational Leaders
October 12-15, 2020

The Art of Transitional Leadership training will be held virtually. It is limited to the first 32 participants. Please see the [informational flyer](#). You may go here to register: <https://synod-of-lakes-and-prairies.events.idloom.com/the-art-of-transitional-leadership2020>

Doctor of Ministry at UDTs – 2021 Cohort

The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary (UDTS) is offering an upcoming (2021) Doctor of Ministry cohort that will focus on Crisis and the Church: Ecclesiastical and Pastoral Responses. Led by Dr. Beth McCaw, Associate Professor of Ministry (UDTS) and Presbytery Leader, Glacier Presbytery (PCUSA), and Dr. Bradley Longfield, Professor of Church History (UDTS), this cohort will explore ways the church has addressed crises in the past to develop the theological perspectives and pastoral skills necessary to equip congregations and their members in the present to witness to the hope of the gospel in times of crisis.

The cohort begins online on Tuesday, January 21, 2021, while the first of three annual residencies will be held May 12-19, 2021. The deadline for applications is December 31, 2020. Please click [here](#) to apply for the DMin Program.

For more information, please see this [flyer](#).

If you have questions, please contact The Rev. Timothy Mathew Slemmons, Ph.D. (tslemmons@dbq.edu or 563-589-3578) or Kayla Schween (kschween@dbq.edu or 563-589-3115).

Events at Riverview Conference Center

The Riverview Conference Center in Cedar Falls has three events remaining this fall:

- [3 Heath Brothers](#). Saturday, September 19, 2020. This would be an excellent event for a youth group or families. The student price has been dropped from \$10 to \$5 for this event. These three boys just won first place for a music video at the Christian Film Festival. They love serving the Lord and presenting the gospel through music and testimony.
- [Soul'd Out](#). Saturday, October 17, 2020. This is a men's group of dynamic Christian singers. They encourage people of all ages with their smooth harmonies.
- [Susie Larson](#). Friday, November 6; Saturday, November 7. Susie is an author and Christian radio speaker. This is a women's event hosted by Riverview Conference Center at Bethany Bible Chapel in Cedar Falls, with the assistance of TJ's Christian Book Store in Cedar Falls. Women will be encouraged and inspired in the lessons Susie will be bringing from God's Word.

Digital Content Packs from Presbyterian Association of Musicians



The Presbyterian Association of Musicians is offering affordable digital content packages for churches of all sizes, tailored to different needs that congregations may have. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way the world operates. It has changed our habits, our activities, and our overall behavior. It most certainly has changed the way churches conduct worship, which is a direct concern of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians. As more and more churches express the need for new virtual programming for the year, PAM has redesigned its 2020 Online Worship and Music Conference into individualized resource packs for churches to utilize. For more information and to order, please go to this website: <https://www.presbymusic.org/2020conference>

Peace & Global Witness September 6 – October 4

By giving to the Peace & Global Witness Offering, we work to share Christ's peace with one another, beyond our doors, beyond our community and across boundaries. Together we are building God's house where everyone is welcome; where all can find compassion, peace and justice.

- ◆ 25% of this Offering stays with our congregations to support peacemaking and reconciliation in their own communities.
- ◆ 25% of this Offering will go to our mid council, joining with other congregations in our area to support peacemaking work in our region.
- ◆ 50% of this Offering supports the work for peace and reconciliation being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.

Grants Available from Synod of Lakes and Prairies

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies has three new distinct grant programs to alleviate the threat of the coronavirus pandemic on church and camp ministries across the Synod. The Synod has created procedures and funds for pandemic support grants in three areas:

1. Church staffing and ministry support for churches whose vitality would be threatened by disruption to staffing and ministry programs,
2. Church staffing and ministry support in historically marginalized communities to churches which serve the poor and oppressed, and
3. Camp staffing and programs, particularly as they seek to maintain programs staffed by college students.

It is important to be aware that the program is designed with two application deadlines in each category and that the allocated grants would not exceed \$10,000 or one month of average operating costs. Presbyteries would apply for the funds on behalf of the ministry. The program materials in [this packet](#) provide a more complete description.

For additional information, please contact Jim Koon, jkoon@lakesandprairies.org.

Stewardship Kaleidoscope

Stewardship Kaleidoscope will be a three-day virtual event on September 22 & 29 and October 6 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. each Tuesday. Please click here for more information: www.stewardshipkaleidoscope.org.

Presbyterian Foundation – Church Financial Leadership Grant Program



Grants are available to assist pastors to attend continuing education opportunities which will help them in leading their congregations toward financial and missional vitality. For more information please

click [here](#) or contact Rev. David Loleng, Director, Church Financial Literacy and Leadership, 800-858-6127 ext. 5901.

Transition-to-College Assistance



The Board of Pensions offers a grant program intended to help eligible families of freshmen entering college with transitional expenses, such as a computer purchase or dorm furnishings. Please click [here](#) for more information.

Helpful Links

Academy



Deepening faith and
encountering Christ in a
new way

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



Rev. Shawn Harmon was ordained to service as a mission worker with The Antioch Partners, a mission sending agency that works in partnership with Presbyterian churches in the US. You can read more about them here: <https://www.theantiochpartners.org/>. You may contact Shawn directly at: harmonhusky@gmail.com. To support Shawn financially: www.theantiochpartners.org/giving. For online giving select “partner support for partners not listed for security reasons” and type “Harmon, Shawn.”



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.



Your Iowa Life – if you or a loved one are facing a problem with alcohol, drugs, gambling, mental health or suicide thoughts, you're not alone. That is why the Iowa Department of Public Health has created YourLifeIowa.org so Iowans can chat live, text or call and get reliable treatment options and find nearby help. <https://yourlifeiowa.org/>



Farm Crisis Ministry Network - supporting farmers and those who love and care for them, sharing resources for farm families, congregations, and rural communities. <https://www.facebook.com/farmcrisisministry/>



Spectrum Spirituality Project – support resources for families with one or more children who have a sensory, emotional, and/or behavioral disorder; also equip congregations to welcome and serve these families. https://www.facebook.com/pg/spectrumspirit/about/?ref=page_internal



Iowa Faith Leadership Network – to provide a space for faith leaders to develop interfaith and ecumenical relationships, collegiality, and cooperation; to share resources, ask questions, and learn together; to improve our collective ability to minister to the faith communities we serve as well as to better the lives of people in the communities around us. <https://www.facebook.com/iowafaitheaders/>