

# PRESBYTERY CONNECTION

A Bi-Weekly Newsletter of the Presbyteries of North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill  
November 12, 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](mailto: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](http://www.presbynciowa.org)

[www.prospecthillpresby.org](http://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 Hours



The Presbytery Office will close at noon on Fridays for the remainder of 2020.

The Presbytery Office will be closed Tuesday, November 24 through Friday, November 27, during Thanksgiving week.

---

## 2021 Per Capita

Prospect Hill's 2021 per capita has been set at:

General Assembly	\$ 8.98
Synod	5.50
Presbytery	<u>28.00</u>
	\$42.48

North Central Iowa's 2021 per capita has been set at:

General Assembly	\$ 8.98
Synod	5.50
Presbytery	<u>24.52</u>
	\$39.00

---

## Prayers of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa

Week of November 15 Burt Presbyterian Church, Burt – CRE Kent Madison & CRE Walt Reemtsma

Week of November 22 First Presbyterian Church, Woden – CRE Diane Wilson

Week of November 29 East Friesland Presbyterian Church, Ackley – CRE Lynn Arends  
First Presbyterian Church, Steamboat Rock – CRE Lynn Arends

## Prayers of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill

Week of November 15 Pastors who serve as Members at Large –  
Rev. Donna Gray

Week of November 22 Pray for the Presbytery Staff –  
Rev. Ian McMillen, Temporary Supply General Presbyter  
Rev. Richard Francis, Stated Clerk  
Jeannie Stolee, Administrative Assistant  
Karen Kaiser, Treasurer

Week of November 29 First Presbyterian Church, Sioux City – Rev. Erica MacCreaigh, Moderator

---

### Additional Prayer Concerns

Please pray for Cathy Sydnor, wife of Rev. Michael Sydnor, pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Schaller. Please pray that they might discover the reason for Cathy's mobility issues.

Please continue to pray for Rev. Dr. Rich King as he had another lumbar puncture and doctor consultations this week. Pray that there will be a decisive diagnosis and that it is something that can be treated. Pray that there will be hope of restored vision and other healing to return to a more normal, independent life.

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.

---

### Application for Pastors' Educational Debt Relief from the Presbytery of North Central Iowa

Pastors in the Presbytery of North Central Iowa may apply for educational debt relief assistance from the Presbytery. [Applications](#) are due by December 15, 2020.

---

## 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  
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Waterloo

### Presbytery of Prospect Hill

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



### Poor Richard's Almanac

by Richard Francis, Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Prospect Hill

This week, I'm turning Poor Richard's Almanac over to my colleague, Dr. Rebecca Blair, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of East Iowa. I know that all of you have figured out how to do worship by now, and that you are doing everything from full in-person worship to full virtual worship.

Congregational meetings, however, are another story, especially if you are planning a virtual meeting or a hybrid meeting with some people in the church and some connecting electronically. If you've been wondering how to go about it, Rebecca has come to your rescue with the following document. As always, I'm available to answer your questions or consult with you about process and procedure, and Jeannie has become a Zoom expert.

#### Rebecca writes,

First of all, I think it is absolutely essential in formal electronic meetings to adopt Special Rules of Order at the beginning of the meeting (if they don't exist in a permanent form in your church's Manual.)

#### **SIMPLIFIED SPECIAL RULES OF ORDER AND STANDING RULES**

*For Electronic Meetings Using Zoom Technology.*

The Following Special and Standing Rules are applicable to meetings of this organization when holding meetings utilizing "Zoom" electronic meeting technology:

1. Unless the meeting is an otherwise in person meeting to which one or more participants are joined electronically, participants are required to join the meeting on individual devices (one person, one device).<sup>1</sup>
2. Participants are encouraged to join the meeting on a desktop or laptop computer. The following are requirements for such computers:
  1. High speed internet access.
  2. Sound output device. While speakers are allowed, this will preferably be a headset, earbuds, or Bluetooth device that delivers the sound directly to the participant's ear rather than into an open room.
  3. A microphone device.
  4. A webcam (optional).
3. If joining by computer is not possible, a tablet or smart phone may be used, using the free "Zoom" app, available from the device's app store. Regarding audio/visual devices, the same requirements and preferences exist as for computers.
4. Only if joining by one or the other of the above options is impossible, participants may dial into the meeting using either a traditional or cellular phone.
5. Upon entering the meeting, those on computers or smart phones/devices will click on the word "participants" at the bottom of their screens to see a list of participants and have access to the "raise hand" icon (at the bottom of the participant list), and then click on the word "chat" to see a participant chat. They will then click on the word "mute" on the main screen.
6. Those entering the meeting via a traditional phone call will enter "\*9" on their keypads, which activates the "raise hand" beside their phone number which is displayed in the participant list. When a host calls out their phone number, they will identify themselves by stating their full name.
7. The raise hand feature will be used both for seeking recognition and voting. Please only raise your hand for those purposes. The hosts are responsible for lowering hands. Please *do not* lower your own hand. When multiple participants are seeking recognition, once the Chair has called on someone, all other hands raised will be lowered. If you have an "interrupting motion" (a point of order, a request for preference in recognition, etc.), raise your hand *again* after it has been lowered by a host. If you are not immediately recognized, you may unmute your microphone and say "Mr./Madam Chair!"<sup>2</sup>
8. If you have a motion to make other than a procedural motion, it should be entered in writing into the participant "chat," after which you should seek recognition. When called upon, you should note that the motion is in the chat and move it. If calling into the meeting on a tradition phone, however, you may offer a motion orally.
9. A vote taken by means of raised hand is a "division," not a "counted vote" – meaning that the chair will quickly scroll through the list of participants for a sense of how many have voted first in favor, and then against the motion, and rule which side has it. If the chair is uncertain, he or she may order a counted vote – or a member may move that a counted vote be taken (a motion for a counted vote must be seconded, is not debatable, and requires a majority vote).

And one of the items that should be addressed is voting and a "division of the house" – because *Robert's Rules of Order* (29:1) says that a "Division" can be demanded "whenever a members doubts the result of a voice (viva-voce) vote, or a vote by show of hands . . ."

Here's the rule in my suggested rules:<sup>3</sup>

A vote taken by means of raise hand is a "division," not a "counted vote" – meaning that the chair will quickly scroll through the list of participants for a sense of how many have voted first in favor, and then against the motion, and rule which side has it. If the chair is uncertain, he or she may order a counted vote – or a member may move that a counted vote be taken (a motion for a counted vote must be seconded, is not debatable, and requires a majority vote).

---

<sup>1</sup> Exceptions are possible—see number 8 under "Suggestions for Successful Zoom Meetings" below

<sup>2</sup> Or "Moderator!"

<sup>3</sup> That is, rules to be adopted by your congregation before doing anything else.

In other words, the first vote taken electronically is a division. So the demand for a division is out of order.

## Suggestions for Successful Zoom Meetings

1. Be sure you have turned on the ability to make participants “co-hosts.” For a congregational meeting following the attached rules, I would have at least one host and one additional co-host.
2. The co-host should NOT be a voting member if at all possible, as for some reason Zoom thinks hosts/co-hosts never need to raise their hands, and that feature is not available (although they have the other icons available).<sup>4</sup>
3. Hold a practice session with the leadership team – including the co-hosts and moderator. Co-hosts should have assigned tasks:
  1. Helping people who are having connection issues
  2. Muting participants who don't do so when their audio is a distraction in the meeting
  3. Lowering hands after a member is recognized, or in the voting process
  4. The moderator needs to specifically practice “working” motions – voting by unanimous consent when possible (by saying “are there any objections – if you object please raise your hand,” scrolling through the list quickly to see if anyone does so, and if not, saying “it is so ordered”). And then when voting by raised hands, understanding that it is a division not a counted vote as stated in the attached rules.
5. Consider having a few key leaders (moderator, clerk/parliamentarian, lead technical advisor) together in a large space if necessary (for social distancing) but where they can still see each other, and can talk “offline” as necessary.
6. Consider holding one or more “pre-meetings” for participants to log in, check out their equipment, make changes to their screens for optimal viewing, and receive instructions for seeking recognition, submitting motions, and voting.<sup>5</sup>
7. Regardless of whether or not any pre-meetings were held, begin the actual meeting with a technical briefing going over those points.
8. Encourage people to log in from separate devices! For the handful who can't, it is permissible to allow those who needed to cast an "extra" vote from their device to do so in the chat box and add this to the totals. In one smaller congregation where some participants were on the phone, the clerk was able to take a verbal roll call of those who were either the second person on a device or who were joining by phone.
9. It's also wise to disable the “share screen” option as well as the chat (or at least private chat). In the settings I only allowed host and co-hosts to share screen.
10. Use polling.<sup>6</sup> Set up an initial poll that is simply ayes/nays, yes/no, or for/against. You can reset it and use it over and over for any motions from the floor. Set up other polls for written resolutions received in advance. Do not use the yes/no buttons for anything. Raised hands should be used only to request the floor, nothing else. Otherwise, people get confused, and use the wrong buttons. *However...*
11. In smaller congregations, it is easier to use the YES and NO buttons at the bottom of the participants panel. Simply instruct folks to click Participants and then look at the bottom of the panel that appears on the right side of the screen. Similarly, the blue “Raise Hand” feature can be used to seek permission to address the assembly.
12. Mark all non-voting members with a z- when they are admitted. It pushes them automatically to the bottom of the participants list. Remind the body on every vote that only members can vote--same as a face to face meeting, where you can't clearly identify visitors from commissioners. If a vote is close, entertain a motion for a roll call votes following *Robert's Rules of Order*.

That is the end of Rebecca's document. I would add that if you are doing a hybrid meeting where there are people present in the room *and* on Zoom, set up a large screen (TV or projector and screen) to display

---

<sup>4</sup> Since you probably won't have anyone available to co-host the meeting who is not a voting member, you could make provision for the co-host to cast their vote another way, in the chat for example

<sup>5</sup> We have done this for presbytery, synod, and General Assembly, and I recommend it highly. - RF

<sup>6</sup> This is an available feature of Zoom. Jeannie can walk you through the process if you need help.

those who are connecting remotely, and a camera so that those who are connecting remotely can see the room or at least the Moderator.

As Red Green used to say, "Remember: I'm pullin' for ya. We're all in this together."  
Blessings,



---

### **Rev. Anna Small Installation Postponed**

The service for Rev. Anna Small to be installed at First Presbyterian Church in Glidden that was originally scheduled for November 15 has been postponed. Watch the Presbytery Connection for the new date when it has been established.

---

### **Advent Series – Annunciations: Disruptions and Invitation**

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has produced an interactive Advent study series using award winning documentary resources. This four week Advent study explores the sacred stories of Advent and Christmas through the biblical narratives of Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary in dialogue with short excerpts from film. Click this link for more information, to view the videos that accompany the study and to download the study: <https://pda.pcusa.org/pda/resource/advent-series-annunciations/>

---

### **Some Assembly Required**



Some Assembly Required is a workshop to help you design a Winter Solstice, Blue Christmas, or Longest Night service for your community in 2020.

Christmastime is not easy for some of us anyway, but this year? Come on.

More than ever, it would be good to acknowledge the reality of heartbreak amid the high, glittery expectations of Christmas joy. Join Pastor Lisa Janke and Richard Broxvoort Colligan for Some Assembly Required, a free 60-minute workshop, on

Thursday, November 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. CST. Click this link for more information:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/some-assembly-required-blue-christmaslongest-night-tickets-128666319425>

## Don't Miss the Opportunity to Dialogue with PC(USA) GA Co-Moderator Elona Street-Stewart



On Sunday, November 15, at 9:00 a.m., don't miss the opportunity to dialogue with Moderator Elona Street-Stewart on Central Presbyterian Church's (Des Moines) Adult Education Class hosted by the Rev. Dr. Annika Lister Stroope.

Elona is the first Native American to serve as a General Assembly moderator. She is a ruling elder and serves as the executive for the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. A member of the Delaware Naticoke Tribe, Street-Stewart has been active in racial justice matters on behalf of the church for 40 years, focusing on mission development, denominational policies, and educational programs. Elona will join Central Presbyterian Church via Zoom and take questions from participants. All are welcome!

To join by video, using your computer, tablet or smart phone, use this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85709103669>

To join by telephone conference call, dial 1-312-626-6799, at the prompt enter Meeting ID: 857 0910 3669 followed by the # sign

---

## Annual Statistical Report Season to Begin

It is now statistical season in the PC(USA). You may begin entering your church's 2020 Statistical Report on November 20, 2020. Below you will find all of the information you need concerning the completion of the 2020 Annual Statistical Report and other important items:

- Go online to <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/churchwide-ministries/stats/statistical-reporting-faq/>
- Under the heading "Statistical Reporting and Frequently Asked Questions" you will find a link that is labeled "Go to the Online Statistics Entry System." Click on this link.
- You will be taken to the statistics entry page. Please enter your User ID (your church PIN preceded by a zero) and your password. Contact Jeannie Stolee (319-233-1747 or [northiowapresby@gmail.com](mailto:northiowapresby@gmail.com)) if you need your User ID or password.
- This year's form is much shorter than in past years. Also, there is no workbook this year. Instead, the instructions for each entry are included with that entry. The form also automatically calculates as you enter data, so no advanced math is required!
- Click "Accept" when you finish each page – and you are done. It's that easy!

The deadline for completing the required Annual Statistical Report is February 15, 2021. After that date, no further statistics will be entered into the system.

November 2, 2020

## Good news from the South Sudanese Scholarship Task Force!

The South Sudanese Scholarship Task Force is proud to announce the graduation of two more nurses! Mary Bhom and Nyamat Kang have completed their studies and have graduated nursing school. **THANK YOU!** We are all so very appreciative of the prayerful and financial support you have provided.

Here are some pictures of our graduates:



### Mary Bhom

She has two children and has adopted four more. Her family had no education. She wants to help more children with education and health care.



### Nyamat Kang

She has two children. They come from a poor family. She wants to be a midwife to help suffering women deliver babies.

There are four students who have yet to enroll in this school year for lack of funds. If you can help send these future nurses to school, they would be on their way to serving their impoverished community. Tuition is \$450/year; please send your donations to the Presbytery with "South Sudanese Nurses" in the memo line.

THANKS again, for helping make the world a safer place during this pandemic!

-The South Sudanese Scholarship Task Force

## Board of Pension Annual Enrollment is Now Open



Make sure you have the coverage you need – make your elections for 2021 benefits by November 13!

Annual enrollment – your chance to make changes or elect benefits effective January 1, 2021 – is open now through November 13. This is your only chance to make changes or elect benefits for 2021 unless you have a qualifying event during the year (such as getting married or adopting a child). Click [here](#) to learn more and to log on to [Benefits Connect](#).

---

## Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program Offering Safety and Technology Loan

While some churches have already made the necessary changes to allow for a new way of worship, some are still being challenged by inadequate technology or no technology at all to help them deliver their message electronically. To assist congregations in adding (or improving) this option to their congregation's worship experience and to prepare their churches for in-person worship once they are able, the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program is introducing the new Safety and Technology Loan. This newest special purpose loan carries a low, discounted loan rate with terms designed to assist churches facing temporary cash flow challenges linked to the pandemic. Some of the projects the Safety and Technology Loan is available to help finance are:

Audiovisual technology and training  
Air filtering systems

Air quality improvement systems  
Sanitation equipment & touchless bathroom systems

To learn more please contact [Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program](#) directly. Please remember this is a loan and not a grant.

---

## Both Presbyteries Waive the Requirement to Rotate Officers

The Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa and the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill have approved a one-year exemption of the requirement for congregational rotation of officers in 2020. Please see your respective presbytery's letter for additional information, including steps that need to be taken by those sessions wishing to participate in the waiver.

Please click [here](#) to see North Central Iowa's letter waiving the requirement to rotate officers.

Please click [here](#) to see Prospect Hill's letter waiving the requirement to rotate officers.

## Spiritual Wellness Journey

Do you feel like your connection with God is a mile wide and an inch deep? Have you struggled to discover meaningful ways to sustain your spiritual health? In this workshop, participants will gain a better understanding of spiritual wellness. They will assess their own spiritual wellness and identify their God-shaped connection style. They will also create an action plan to position themselves to develop a closer relationship with God and others.

WHEN: Friday, November 20, 2020 / 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (CT, with a lunch break)

WHERE: Virtual via Zoom (link will be sent in Welcome Email)

COST: \$75.00/participant

REGISTER HERE: <https://emc3coaching.com/spiritual-wellness-journey-workshop/>

Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation will scholarship a maximum of 12 participants for one-half of the registration cost (\$37.50). Please register and send your paid registration receipt to Joyce: [opsf@opsf-omaha.org](mailto:opsf@opsf-omaha.org)

---

## Boy Scouts of America Bankruptcy and How it Affects Churches

This information should be helpful to any congregation that has/had a Boy Scout troop or had a troop and a charter from the Boy Scouts of America (BSA).

PCUSA General Counsel Mike Kirk has provided [this Q&A](#) for congregations that have been involved with the Boy Scouts, in relation to their bankruptcy and allegations of sexual abuse. Mike notes:

The bankruptcy action was filed by the BSA. We expect that some sort of fund will be set up by the bankruptcy court for survivors, against which they can make claims, and for parties (ex. congregations) who may be sued by survivors who might have a claim against the BSA and that party because a BSA leader engaged in sexual abuse while the troop was “hosted” by the congregation.

Congregations need to know that:

1. The national offices cannot take action on behalf of the member churches since they are, according to the Book of Order, to form separate corporations for purposes such as owning property, employing staff, and purchasing insurance (G-4.0101). Therefore, attorneys hired by congregations will likely advise congregations who believe they should file with the bankruptcy court to do it on behalf of their church corporation.
2. Churches would be wise to contact their local attorney to discuss the information in the [Q&A](#). If the information leads them to believe they may need to file something in the bankruptcy action they should seriously consider hiring local counsel to help them with that process.
3. The insurance policy that would cover liability such as this is not carried by the National group but by the local Council, so this bankruptcy would likely not affect it.

The recommendation is that there is no need to do anything regarding this bankruptcy, but it might be a good idea to check your insurance policy just to be sure how/if you're covered.

---

## 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](mailto:tslemmons@dbq.edu) or 563-589-3578) or Kayla Schween ([kschween@dbq.edu](mailto:kschween@dbq.edu) or 563-589-3115).

---

## 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  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

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.

**Applications for the 2020-2021 academic year will be accepted**

**from August 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.** 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](mailto:harmonhusky@gmail.com). To support Shawn financially: [www.theantiochpartners.org/giving](http://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](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/iowafaithleaders/>