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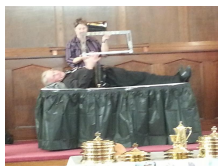
## Homesteader - December 16, 2014



### December 2014 PrimeTime Highlights

**WELCOME.** The long trip for many to Clarkson last month was rewarded by warm and welcoming hospitality. One of the benefits of itinerating our presbytery assemblies is that we get to see how church is done in communities very different from our experience.

**WORSHIP.** Many thanks to both Pastor Penny Schulz (Auburn/Dunbar) and our Moderator, Pastor Jim McNeal (Mission Creek/Wymore), who teamed for a unique and engaging sermon. While Jim preached orally, Penny illustrated the sermon with magic!



**WORKSHOPS.** With the exception of Rev. Karen Moritz (missionary in Czech Republic) the workshop leaders were from our southeastern churches.

**CZECH REPUBLIC.** Rev. Moritz, nearing the end of her two month iteration, came to her home presbytery to share the work she is doing on behalf of all Presbyterians in the Czech Republic with the Evangelical Church

**DEAN ROSS.** Presbytery established a process for bringing Dean into the Presbytery as a full member. Dean is an ordained minister of the Assemblies of God. He has been pastor of our church in Walthill, and a 'temporary member' of Homestead for ten years. He has requested to leave the AG denomination. We are blessed to have such a qualified pastor seek to unite with us.

**RE-ELECTED.** Both Stated Clerk Ray Meester and Treasurer Cheryl Rennick were re-elected for another 3-year term. Congratulations and thank you both for your service.

**SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PREVENTION.** Upon recommendation of our Committee on Ministry, Homestead, for the first time, required each pastor to have sexual misconduct prevention training on a periodic basis.

**INSURANCE BID.** In January, the Business and Finance Committee will request premium quotes from three insurance companies. Congregations that submit their questionnaire before submission will not be contacted by any of the companies. Others may be contacted by one or more. The goal of the Business and Finance Committee is to determine the best price for our insurance needs under the Master Policy. NOTE: All congregations are able to be covered by the Master Policy. No congregation is required to change.

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Dinner Conversation with General Assembly Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons. Lincoln Eastridge PC. January 9. \$50. Fundraiser for PresbyBuild (Habitat House).

of the Czech Brethern. The Evangelical Church is actually Presbyterian! One of the first Reformers was the Czech leader Jan Hus almost 100 years before Calvin and Knox. With the end of communism, the Czech church is experiencing renewed strength. Karen also talked about her life in the Czech Republic, the different languages, and the beautiful country.



**MAGIC TO ILLUSTRATE THE SCRIPTURES.** Pastor Schulz gave tips that we all can adopt to help illustrate a Scripture lesson or sermon point, as well as for children's talks.



**INVITING THE COMMUNITY.** Pastor Greg Bolt shared tips and insights from his ministry in Nebraska City. All congregations want to be a visible presence in the life of the community. Greg is leading his congregation successfully. He pointed out things to avoid as well as things to do.



**LECTIO DIVINA.** Pastor Steve Piper (Palmyra) explained this ancient method of Biblical study with the aid of the Holy Spirit. The workshop learned by doing.



**GA COMMISSIONERS REPORT.** This year was the best commissioners' report I have ever heard! Rev. Jen Strickland (Westminster); Rev. Greg Bolt (Nebr. City); Elder Cheryl Rennick (Westminster); Elder Pam Carrier (Lincoln First) each described the issues in their committee as well as the significant issues for them that came before the GA. They also talked about the people they met from other regions and how they informed their sense of care and unity for the church. Our commissioners gave us all a deeper understanding of the issues and process.

- Elder/Deacon Training. January 10. Lincoln Good Shepherd PC. Gradye Parsons will be a keynoter and trainer.
- PRIMETIME. February 21. Lincoln Heritage. Vote on Book of Order at this meeting.
- Growth Summit. April 13-14. Lincoln Westminster PC. Third Annual!



## CHRISTMAS JOY

The Rev. Peter C. S. Sime  
Vice President, Assistance, CREDO & Funds Development

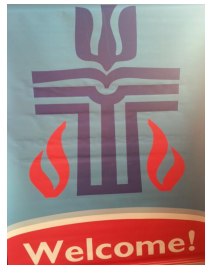
Presbyterian congregations have long expressed their Christian love for others, especially for those who serve the Church, through the Christmas Joy Offering (CJO). As you know, this Offering is received for the equal benefit of the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, which distributes financial assistance to eligible church workers and their families, and racial ethnic schools and colleges of the PC(USA).

The fact is, all of us, including PC(USA) pastors and other church workers, sometimes face extraordinary personal challenges with accompanying financial burdens. Rarely are these challenges expected, and they can wipe out a lifetime of savings just when our colleagues are most vulnerable. For these PC(USA) church workers, the help provided by the Assistance Program, made possible by the CJO, is a blessing. Some grant recipients have likened it to God's "grace in action" and "the peace of Christ."

While receipts from the Offering have declined, there has not been a corresponding drop in church workers' need for financial assistance. Rather, the need continues to rise. That's why your faithful support of the Christmas Joy Offering is critical to the Assistance Program's being able to carry out its ministry.

Please take a moment to view the Board's brief Christmas Joy video, [Faith Guides, Faith Gives](#), to [see the difference](#) the Assistance Program makes in the lives of PC(USA) church workers and their families.

As always, you can [give to the Assistance Program directly online](#) at any time of year, but



your gift is especially meaningful now, when the need for funding is at its height. Wishing you every blessing this Advent and Christmas.

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## Blessing Opportunity *2 Corinthians 9:7-8*



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## Keep Thinking...

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David....By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke 1:68-69, 78-79

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Homestead Presbytery | 8300 East Pointe Road | Lincoln | NE | 68506