

***THURSDAY  
MAILING***



**NATIONAL CAPITAL**

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P R E S B Y T E R Y

**Missional • Pastoral • Prophetic**

***June 23, 2011***

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**NATIONAL CAPITAL**  
**PRESBYTERY**  
Missional · Pastoral · Prophetic

## Announcements

### June 28 Presbytery Meeting

The June 28 Presbytery Meeting bulletin is now available to download. Please print and bring the bulletin with you to the meeting on Tuesday, June 28, at Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, Bethesda, MD. The meeting is scheduled to run from **4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

*Some reminders and important meeting information:*

\* Registration for the meeting is being handled through an online process. EACH commissioner must register online. Once you register online, you will receive a confirming e-mail which you must bring to the meeting to drop off in the registration box. The confirming registration slip will be the means by which we account for your actual attendance at the meeting. Guests to the meeting (i.e. those other than voting commissioners) should continue to sign in on the guest roster at the registration table. Resident clergy, if you are unable to attend and wish to be excused from the meeting, please notify Janet Biermann [jbeirmann@thepresbytery.org](mailto:jbeirmann@thepresbytery.org).

\* Meals will not be provided for this meeting. Please plan accordingly if you will need to bring something to tide you over. Since the meeting will be held in the Sanctuary, some tables will be available in the Lounge at BHPC for those who wish to bring something to eat outside of the meeting time.

\* For those wishing to make any amendments to proposed actions, you need to provide the Stated Clerk with a written copy of your amendment/motion. Please bring it to the Moderator's table to ensure that the wording is properly recorded.

\* At the conclusion of the meeting, we will be collecting meeting evaluations (last page of the bulletin). We encourage the feedback to assist those planning future presbytery meetings.

We realize this meeting will mark some changes to the meeting process and staff will be available to assist and make this transition as smooth as possible for everyone. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

### Wondering about the availability of the new Book of Order?

Barring unforeseen circumstances, copies of the Book of Order 2011-2013 (including the newly adopted Form of Government) should be delivered to our warehouse during the first half of July.

Orders can be placed now via <http://store.pcusa.org> or (800) 524-2612 and asking for item #OGA-11-001. Orders placed now will be the first to be fulfilled once the books are in stock.

The price is \$10 for 1-9 copies, with a 10% discount for 10-24 copies, 15% discount for 25-49 copies, and a 20% discount for 50+ copies.

Copies of the nFOG amendment booklets issued to the presbyteries last fall are still available at the NCP office for those who wish to have the information in the interim before the new Books of Order are available. However, please be aware that the original nFOG has been amended by the presbyteries' approval of 15 amendments including eliminating "fidelity and chastity". You are welcome to as many copies as are available. *Copies must be picked up from the Presbytery offices.*



June 15, 2011

To Churches of National Capital Presbytery...

The recommendations recently brought to Presbytery from the Meadowkirk and Debt Reduction Task Force have raised intense emotions from individuals and churches throughout National Capital Presbytery. This is understandable. The resources, energy and prayers committed to Meadowkirk over the past five years form an intricate part of our devotion to mission and our response to God's gift of grace to us.

The Meadowkirk Board of Directors is tasked with overseeing Meadowkirk's day-to-day operations. We have known for some time that dramatic transitions were being discussed for Meadowkirk's future, creating both a burden and new challenges for Meadowkirk. In our discussions, both internal and external, several principles have emerged, assuming an affirmation of the sell recommendation:

- 1) Meadowkirk will need to remain vibrant and active more than ever. The practical aspect of this is that a functioning, active Meadowkirk has a more effective appeal for any potential new owner. The theological aspect is that to do anything less is tantamount to putting our light under a basket or burying that single talent for safekeeping.
- 2) Meadowkirk will continue to function as an asset of NCP for some time into the future. While this cannot be stated with absolute certainty, our discussions with professionals and church officers in parallel positions all strike a familiar chord – that transactions involving similar properties and similar values take time, often as long as two or three years.
- 3) The camp and retreat ministry/focus of NCP will need to be rethought, but it should not be abandoned. Meadowkirk, as both a place and a concept, should be in our thoughts, our prayers and our ongoing discussions about ways for continuing our ability to allow groups and individuals of all ages to “be still and know that I am God”. Though hard to gauge all outcomes, there is an awareness that one option may be that Meadowkirk's future owners may very well continue its current function as a place of retreat and renewal, and in turn, be a resource for NCP churches.

There are details that need to be worked out on all the discussion points cited above, and the Meadowkirk Board and NCP officials will be sharing those details as they become available. In the meantime, we urge church officers and leaders, community and nonprofit groups, and individuals to consider the following:

- Meadowkirk will be open for some time into the future. We ask that you continue to look to Meadowkirk when considering adult and youth retreats, church picnics, reunions and individual outings. We not only will be here but we are continuing to improve and expand programs, and provide greater affordability.
  - Summer camp is around the corner. For many of us camp provided one of those spiritual building blocks so crucial in the development of our relationship with God. The elements that marked the Glenkirk camp experience are still an important part of what happens at Meadowkirk. We encourage you to send your children to Meadowkirk and/or help provide scholarship support for children who might not otherwise be able to participate.
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- Consider recommending Meadowkirk to your employer, social group or similar entity as an excellent place to hold meetings, conduct conferences, etc.
- Keep Meadowkirk and the NCP's camp and conference efforts in your prayers. There is much ahead that will challenge and inspire us, and it is our connection to our faith which will guide us.

We will be communicating with you regularly in the future. Please feel free to share your thoughts and ideas to [meadowkirkboard@gmail.com](mailto:meadowkirkboard@gmail.com).

In Christ,

Warren Clayton

Chair

On behalf of the Meadowkirk Board of Directors

Cris Crissman, Christine Fox, Steve Greenlaw, Rachel Mercer and Ron Page

**Please click on any of the events below to find out more information or to register.**

## **2011**

### **September**

12-18

[Personal Spiritual Deepening Leadership Training Conference](#)

### **October**

1

Sacred Listening Circles Overview

1

On Being a Spiritual Guide

2

On Being a Retreat Leader

12

Sacred Listening Circles begin (first of 9 monthly sessions)

19

School of Prayer begins (first of 5 weekly sessions)

16-20

Shalem Society Gathering

### **November**

12

Julian and Rumi Quiet Day

13-16 Group Spiritual Direction Workshop

### **December**

1

Spiritual Guidance Program - First Application Deadline

3

Advent Quiet Day

## **2012**

### **January**

10

[Leading Contemplative Prayer Groups & Retreats Program - First Application](#)

Deadline&nbsp;:

10

Spiritual Guidance Program - Second Application Deadline

28-29

Yoga & Drumming Retreat

**February**

16

School of Prayerful Action begins (first of 6 weekly sessions)

**March**

15

Clergy Spiritual Life & Leadership Program - First Application Deadline

**April**

13-14

Gerald May Seminar

**May**

**June**



## PLAN AHEAD--Reformation Sunday (October 30, 2011)

Reformation Sunday comes this year on October 30. To celebrate the occasion the Reformed Institute recommends a focus on the **King James translation** of the Bible, which was first published 400 years ago, in May of 1611. This celebrated translation, which is one of the most influential texts ever published in the English language, was the product of a political struggle that was at the heart of the Protestant Reformation in England and Scotland. It was the product in particular of a struggle between the Puritans and their opponents in the Church of England for control of that church, and part of the motive for creating it was to counter the influence of the so-called Geneva Bible.

We always recommend treating Reformation Sunday as an opportunity to educate Presbyterians about their heritage, and we think a focus on the King James translation would be a particularly good way of doing this in the year of the 400th anniversary of that work. How might that be done? Here are some suggestions:

- Invite a member of the Institute's Company of Teachers to tell the story of the creation of the KJ translation in the adult education hour.

- Invite a member of your congregation (or some other appropriate person) who is qualified to discuss the KJ translation as a piece of literature make one or presentations on that topic.

- Invite a member of the Company of Teachers (or some other appropriate person) to make a presentation discussing the history of Biblical translations in English.

- Do a book study of Alister McGrath's *In the Beginning--the Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (Anchor 2001)

- Preach a sermon on the meaning and importance of Biblical literacy (using Stephen Prothero's *Religious Literacy* as well as the materials developed for the Institute's "education roundtables" as background)



**LOOKING FOR A BOOK TO READ THIS SUMMER?  
The selections are not exactly beach reading,  
but this year the Reformed Institute recommends...**

Allen, R. Michael. *Reformed Theology* (T & T Clark International, 2010)

This book is part of a "Doing Theology" series which is designed to introduce the major Christian traditions and their various different approaches to theological reflection. Allen, who teaches systematic theology at Knox Theological Seminary in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, is quite conservative, and he is generally critical of the mainline churches, including the PCUSA. But he knows the Reformed tradition well, and on the whole does a good job of explaining the history as well as the key elements of that tradition. He also writes well, which means the book is refreshingly accessible. It is not very long, either (only 179 pages).

Noll, Mark. *The New Shape of World Christianity--How American Experience Reflects Global Faith* (InterVarsity Press--Academic, 2009)

As the title suggests, this is a book about the transformation Christianity has undergone as a world religion as a result of the dramatic growth it has experienced in Asia and East Africa in recent decades. It builds on the work Noll has done as a church historian over several decades now, and it reflects his long-standing belief that American Christianity represents a significant departure from the forms of Christian belief and practices which European immigrants brought to these shores. He believes that something similar can now be said about African and Asian Christianity, in no small part because of parallels to the American experience in what has been happening of late in those parts of the world. The book is relatively brief and gracefully written. It is must reading for anyone who wants to know what is happening to the Christian religion in our time outside of the United States.

Payton, James R., Jr. *Getting the Reformation Wrong--Correcting Some Misunderstandings* (InterVarsity Press--Academic, 2010)

Payton is a historian who has served in the pastorate in both Presbyterian and Christian Reformed churches. He now serves on the faculty of Redeemer University College in Canada, and he knows the current scholarly literature on both the Reformation and the Renaissance well. The "misunderstandings" he seeks to correct in this work are beliefs that are common among both clergy and laity in Protestant churches. Organizing an exposition of what happened in the Reformation this way proves to be a very useful expository device. While the book says little that will be new to anyone who is acquainted with the writings of the better-known scholarly books on the subject, it is eminently readable and should serve as a good introduction for those who are new to the topic.

Small, Joseph D. & Rosenthal, Gilbert S., ed. *Let Us Reason Together--Christians and Jews in Conversation* (Witherspoon Press, PCUSA, 2010)

In the past decade relations between the PCUSA and American Judaism (represented by the National Council of Synagogues) have been troubled. In part this is because of criticism of policies of the government of Israel in pronouncements made by the PCUSA General Assembly; in part it is also a result of the creation in 2003 of a Presbyterian congregation in the suburbs of Philadelphia designed specifically to serve Christians of Jewish background and to encourage Jews to convert to Christianity. The tensions arising from these developments led to the creation in 2005 of a colloquy for Jewish and Presbyterian leaders designed to examine the issues at stake. This volume, edited jointly by two of the organizers, presents a series of papers that have been prepared for the meetings of this group, and they provide an excellent introduction to the current state of Presbyterian and Jewish thinking on such matters as: the "promised" land; evangelism and proselytization; and Christian and Jewish "identity." The book could well serve as a basis for an informative (and provocative) adult education class.

Smith, James K.A. *Letters to a Young Calvinist--An Invitation to the Reformed Tradition* (BrazosPress 2010)

This book really is almost beach reading. As the title suggests, it is cast as a series of letters from one young man (who happens to teach philosophy these days at Calvin College) to a friend with whom he shares an interest in theology. He is a convert to the Reformed version of Christianity from the Pentecostalism of his youth, and in these short statements (any one of them would make a modest-sized email message) he answers questions posed by his (hypothetical?) friend. Not only do the letters cover some of the basics of Reformed history and theology, but they also make an interesting case for a "softer" version of Reformed Christianity than the one the author associates with the Calvinism of the Westminster Standards. That alone makes the book worth reading, and the fact that the author writes in a mildly "hip" style makes it entertaining as well.



## **Pool Party at Meadowkirk!!**

Thank YOU, Manassas Presbyterian Church!!  
We had a great time hosting your Youth Group Swim Party.

## **NCP Churches, Let's SWIM!!**

Call or visit Meadowkirk for a Swim Party/Picnic package---  
come and stay a night and we'll have Stargazing!!

[www.meadowkirk.org](http://www.meadowkirk.org)

