



## PEACE RIVER PRESBYTERY



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

1. It is likely that Amendment 10-A will pass a majority of Presbyteries (87) this week as additional presbyteries vote. Previously, Clint Cottrell, the Stated Clerk, and I sent out a letter explaining what this may mean as well as what it does not mean. You may access that [letter](#) on the Presbytery's web site.

Related to that, I remind you that what you may read in any new media coverage of this subject may not be exactly right. This change, if it is adopted, does not mean ordination is a right for all. It will be up to a governing body to determine the suitability of individual candidates applying biblical and confessional standards as that body interprets and understands them.

The Presbyterian Outlook has a series of articles on line 10-A that you may find helpful.

- [Fidelity-Chastity policy two votes away from extinction](#)
  - [Fellowship leaders: Committed to remaining in PC\(USA\)](#)
  - [The 10-A Conundrum -- Analysis by Leslie Scanlon](#)
2. Since the responsibility for examining a candidate for ordained ministry rests with the session (for elders and deacons) or presbytery (for ministers of the Word and Sacrament), the Stated Clerk and I have had inquiries as to how sessions may proceed with applying biblical and confessional standards in any examination process. If you have specific questions, please contact either of us, but in general, if a session desires to make a statement regarding their understanding of biblical standards related to ordination, the session may do so. In a recent conversation with the Director of Operations for the Office of the Stated Clerk of General Assembly regarding the question of how such a statement may be used, I was told that a session could vote to ask that future nominating committees and sessions be **“guided”** by that statement in the ordination process.
  3. Even if 10-A has passed a majority of Presbyteries by the time Peace River votes, both the Council and the Records and Overtures Committee believe it is important we as a Presbytery have our conversation on this Amendment and its implications. Also, we are highly encouraged to vote and our vote is important in our denominational conversation about this issue. At the May Presbytery meeting, the Records and Overtures Committee has asked 4 individuals to speak prior to our time of open discussion, discernment and debate. They have been asked to speak 5-6 minutes on one of the following:
    - Why I believe 10-A is a good idea from a polity perspective.
    - Why I believe 10-A is not a good idea from a polity perspective.
    - Why I support 10-A as guided by scripture (or from a scriptural perspective).
    - Why I do not support 10-A as guided by scripture (or from a scriptural perspective).

*A reminder of what 10-A says: Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Christ in all aspects of life (G-1.0000). The governing body responsible for*

ordination and/or installation (G-14.0240; 14.0450) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.

4. On a separate note, in April, 2010 I was invited to participate in The Leadership Development Institute that this week is bringing together 21 people from the Lutheran, Episcopal, UCC and Presbyterian Churches who work in leadership roles in their respective middle governing bodies. I am taking a week of study leave this week to attend. I know the 5 colleagues from the PCUSA who will be there, but I am looking forward to being with others who do similar work in sister denominations. The stated aim of the conference is *to discover what each of us can do to reshape our middle judicatory leadership role so that the Church (i.e. Peace River) can more effectively respond to God's activity in the world.* The preparatory work over the last 6 months has got me thinking deeply, and I am looking forward to new learnings and insights, and wondering how Peace River, as the Body of Christ together, can more fully respond and align ourselves to God's activity in the world.
5. So even in this time of some uncertainty and change, one thing I know is that God is at work and is still calling us and sending us to join in God's mission to the world. There are challenges, but I am grateful that we have been called together and sent out to serve at such a time as this.

Thanks be to God.

*Graham*

Graham Hart

[graham@peacriverpresbytery.org](mailto:graham@peacriverpresbytery.org)

P.S. As always, I invite your comments and observations, and I will continue the series on change in future weeks.

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... Click logo to go to The Presbytery web site:



... The PCUSA Mission Yearbook:



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*Please add these concerns to your personal prayer list.*

**Please pray for:**

The family and friends of Michael Counen, former Personnel Chair for Peace River Presbytery, who went home to the Lord last week

**Please continue to pray for:**

Rev. Fred Schulz, HR

Rev. Lou Thompson (HR) who is recovering from back surgery

Cy Ling, member of the Evangelism and Church Development Committee, for his upcoming surgery

Rev. Bob Rea

Pastors and Educators in transition

Those affected by natural disasters in the United States

Nations in crisis

**Please also keep in your prayers:**

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry

Misión Peniel

Cedarkirk Camp and Conference Center

**CONGREGATION OF THE WEEK:**

May 1	Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, Sarasota Karl Kling, Pastor <a href="mailto:karlklingdmin@aol.com">karlklingdmin@aol.com</a>
May 8	Church of the Palms, Sarasota Steve McConnell, Pastor <a href="mailto:smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org">smcconnell@churchofthepalms.org</a> Bruce Hedgepeth, Associate Pastor <a href="mailto:bhedgepeth@churchofthepalms.org">bhedgepeth@churchofthepalms.org</a> Tim Reynolds, Associate Pastor <a href="mailto:treynolds@churchofthepalms.org">treynolds@churchofthepalms.org</a>
May 15	First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota Clay Thomas, Associate Pastor <a href="mailto:associatepastor@firstpressarasota.org">associatepastor@firstpressarasota.org</a>
May 22	Northminster Presbyterian Church, Sarasota Chris Carlson, Pastor <a href="mailto:pastorchris@npcsarasota.org">pastorchris@npcsarasota.org</a>
May 29	Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, Sarasota Bruce Wismer, Co-Pastor <a href="mailto:pastors@pineshorespres.org">pastors@pineshorespres.org</a> Karen Wismer, Co-Pastor <a href="mailto:Karen@pineshorespres.org">Karen@pineshorespres.org</a>

# World Mission e-News

Presbyterians at work around the world

## **Mission Headlines**

[Japan](#) mission partners express thanks  
PC(USA) mission partners and institutions in Japan have expressed thanks for your prayers following the devastating earthquake and tsunami. “[Your] encouragement makes us realize in Christ we are not alone,” wrote the Korean Christian Church in Japan.

[Read more](#) →



PDA sends money to help Japan  
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has received \$477,000 for Japan relief. The first \$100,000 from One Great Hour of Sharing funds is supporting families in 100 evacuation centers in Japan. The initial response focused on providing food and water to 460,000 individuals in evacuation sites in the northeastern Japan. [Learn more](#) →

Yodogawa aids partner hospital

In 1955, one of Presbyterian Women’s predecessor organizations, Women of the Church, awarded a \$206,677 Birthday Offering grant to Japan Presbyterian Mission. The grant helped build [Yodogawa Christian Hospital](#) in Osaka. [Read more about the development of this hospital.](#) [pdf]

Although the hospital was not directly affected by the March 11 earthquake/tsunami, it immediately dispatched a Disaster Medical Assistance Team to go to its partner hospital, Takeda General Hospital, in Fukushima. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has sent \$5,000 to support this response work.



Learn about troubled Sudan in spring issue of *Mission Crossroads* magazine

A key concern on the road to peace and stability in [Sudan](#) is the border area of Abyei, where ominous troop movements have created tension. Two populations warily coexist in this area: the Ngok Dinka farmers, want independence from the North; and the Arab Misseriya cattle herders, who graze herds in Abyei and fear losing access to the land if it secedes. Abyei was supposed to hold a separate referendum at the same time as the South, but attempts to create a referendum commission were deadlocked and the vote has not taken place.

[Read about other issues facing Sudan.](#)

"This is a crucial time for the country of Sudan," says Debbie Braaksma, PC(USA) area coordinator for Africa, in the spring 2011 issue of World Mission's Mission Crossroads magazine. She calls attention to Presbyterians in the north, a very small minority, who are concerned that their rights to worship and witness be respected, and also to the strain thousands of Sudanese returning to the south are creating on "an already broken and inadequate infrastructure." [Download the issue](#). For free print copies, call (800) 524-2612.

[Pray for Sudan](#).

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To read the April 29, 2011 update from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance regarding the spring storms in the United States, [click here](#).

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## Register for 2011 Big Tent - 'Growing Christ's Church Deep and Wide'

June 30-July 2, 2011

Indianapolis, Indiana (confirmed)

[Register today](#) →

Join thousands of Presbyterians for your choice of nine national conferences under one roof, including the [Presbyterian Communicators Network National Conference](#):

Learn best practices for communicating and sharing the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and your individual congregation through websites, blogs, newsletters, bulletin inserts, videos, podcasts and other media. [Learn about all nine partner conferences](#)→

[Apply for a Presbyterians Communicators Network Conference scholarship](#)→

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## Get equipped to grow Christ's church

Evangelism and Church Growth conferences are coming to St. Pete Beach, Florida in August. Register now for [Uncontained](#) or [Engage](#).

The articles below may interest you. I have found some of them in my reading, and

**others have been passed on to me. Just click on the underlined phrases**

[Rob Bell is not a litmus test](#)

Christianity Today: What one thinks about 'Love Wins' is no test of orthodoxy.

[Should we sympathize with 'the repugnant other?'](#)

Vancouver Sun: In an increasingly multicultural world, many are trying to answer the question: "How do we tolerate or love people whose values we find repugnant?"

[Biblical names abound in popular baby names list](#)

USA Today: Jacob and Isabella kept their spots as the most popular baby names in 2010 while Elvis has left the crib.

[This time, it's for real, believers say: Doomsday coming this month.](#)

Washington Post: A caravan of five RVs rolls into DC with the unexpected and potentially rotten news that the world will end on May 21.

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**PRESBYTERY CALENDAR** (for more details, go to [www.peaceriverpresbytery.org](http://www.peaceriverpresbytery.org))

**MAY, 2011**

10<sup>th</sup>

Committee on Ministry  
PCCM Board Meeting at Cedarkirk

11<sup>th</sup>

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

12<sup>th</sup>

Board of Trustees  
Presbyterian Women  
Nominations - Conference Call

14<sup>th</sup>

Clerks' Training Retreat at Covenant, Fort Myers

15<sup>th</sup>

Installation service for Rev. Dr. Christopher Carlson at Northminster, Sarasota

17<sup>th</sup>

Evangelism and Church Development

19<sup>th</sup>

Theology and Worship

21<sup>st</sup>

Clerks' Training Retreat at Church of the Palms, Sarasota

26<sup>th</sup>

Stated Meeting at Vanderbilt, Naples

30<sup>th</sup>

Office closed for Memorial Day