

**“Healthy classes and congregations through revitalization and multiplication”**

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**M<sup>3</sup>: Moving from Maintenance to Mission**

The consistories and other key congregation leaders of the churches within the Synod of Mid-America are invited to attend **M<sup>3</sup>: Moving from Maintenance to Mission**. This event, co-sponsored by the Regional Synod and the Classis of Illiana, will be held **Friday-Saturday, April 4-5, 2008 at Calvary Community Church, 16341 South Park Ave., South Holland, IL 60473**. A Friday evening fellowship meal will be followed by resource sessions with the evening ending by 9:00 PM (CST). The Saturday sessions will be in the morning only ending by noon.



**M<sup>3</sup>: Moving from Maintenance to Mission** will be an equipping and motivating event of value for pastors, consistories, and all church leaders. Dr. Paul Borden will be the presenter for these sessions. There will be a time to discuss what was heard as well as to ask questions. Included will be inspirational worship and prayer time. It is anticipated that leaders will leave being challenged to more than just doing “church” in the local setting.

Two years ago Paul Borden gave a similar presentation in the Synod of Great Lakes which was received very well. Paul is the Executive Minister for the American Baptist Churches of the West. He is a nationally known church consultant who helped initiate the “teaching church” movement, in which congregations learn from other congregations about excellence in ministry. Leith Anderson, the author of *Dying for a Change* writes this of Paul Borden: “The American Baptist Churches of the West have demonstrated that a plateaued and declining region of mainline congregations can become a model of healthy and growing congregations. They have overcome the usual excuses... They have followed a powerful formula of Biblical strategies, courageous leadership, and much hard work.” He has written two books: “Hit the Bullseye” and “Direct Hit”. Those who have heard him speak have found his remarks, at the very least, to be thought provoking. You can read monthly articles written by Dr. Borden at this location: [http://www.growinghealthychurches.org/art/cat\\_index\\_1.shtml](http://www.growinghealthychurches.org/art/cat_index_1.shtml)



Pastors and consistories are asked to begin now to plan to attend this event. Talk about this opportunity in your meetings and add the dates to calendars. Consider bringing other key influencers from your congregation that may not be a part of your current consistory.

Things yet to come:

- Session information: More information will be coming about the specific sessions.
- Cost: It is anticipated that the cost for this event will be very reasonable (maybe around \$10 per person). Compare this cost to similar event that will be open to the general public: [http://www.growinghealthychurches.org/art/art\\_406.shtml](http://www.growinghealthychurches.org/art/art_406.shtml)
- Sign up: There will be a sign up for the event. Information about how to sign up will be coming. For now, keep the dates open.
- Lodging: For those who might need it, information will be coming about area hotels.

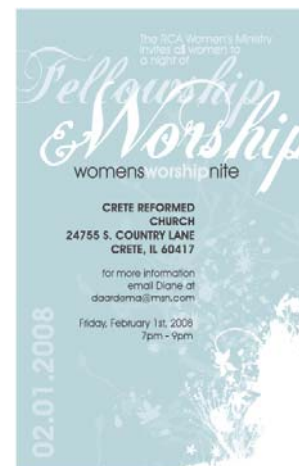
**M<sup>3</sup>: Moving from Maintenance to Mission** will be held in conjunction with the annual session of the Synod of Mid-America. Delegates will assemble for the business meeting Friday afternoon. It was decided to expand the annual session to more than just business of the Synod and more than just the delegates of the synod can be included. If the event is found to be useful for the Synod, it is the intention to rotate the event among the various classes of the Synod.

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### **Women's Night of Fellowship and Worship**

All women from the Synod of Mid-America are invited to attend a **Women's Night of Fellowship and Worship on Friday, February 1, 2008** from 7:00 pm-9:00 pm (CST) at Crete Reformed Church in Crete, Illinois. This evening will be a time of fellowship, getting to know one another from across our Synod, but primarily, it will be a time to come together to worship and bring glory to Our Lord and King. What a wonderful way to start the new year. Please join us.

Click the picture to link to the flyer for additional information that you may download, print and hand-out. Alternately you can use the following link:  
<http://midamericasynod.org/pdf2/womensworshipnite.pdf>



Those receiving this newsletter are encouraged to pass on this information to appropriate persons within your congregation. Perhaps the first paragraph can be used as a bulletin or church newsletter announcement. For more information contact Diane Aardema ([daardema@msn.com](mailto:daardema@msn.com) or 708-935-4504).

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### **2008 Standard Mileage Rate**

Just a reminder that the new business mileage reimbursement rate as set by the IRS began January 1, 2008; it is **50.5 cents** per mile. This is the standard mileage rate that the Minister Salary Guidelines (as approved by each classis) requires a church to use to reimburse a pastor use of his or her personal vehicle for church business. Last year's rate was 48.5 cents per mile. More information can be found at <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=176030,00.html>

### **Suggestions Needed for Salary Committee Members**

The Synod of Mid-America has a Minister's Minimum Salary Committee whose task is to recommend to the synod, and subsequently to the classes, minimum salaries and guidelines for the ministers serving congregations of the Regional Synod. The committee is made up of laypersons with representation from each of the classes of the Synod. There are currently vacancies on this committee from the Chicago, Florida, and Wisconsin classes that need to be filled. Readers of this newsletter are asked to nominate persons who may be a fit for this committee. The committee normally meets by conference call so travel is not required. It is in the best interest of all to have good representation by those who have a heart for the church and its ministers. Communicate your suggestions with contact information to Randy Kooy ([rkooy@rca.org](mailto:rkooy@rca.org)).

### **Congregation Website Listings**

The Synod of Mid-America website has links to the various websites of the congregations of the Regional Synod. ([http://midamericasynod.org/index\\_files/classes.htm](http://midamericasynod.org/index_files/classes.htm)) Congregations are requested to notify the Synod when links to internet addresses change. Also notify the synod if your church has a website that is not listed. Contact Randy Kooy ([rkooy@rca.org](mailto:rkooy@rca.org)) to make changes.

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### **Celebration Stories of Revitalization and Multiplication**

This section of the newsletter is where we share stories of celebration. There is no story this issue...

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We share stories with one another so that God's name is praised, first of all. These stories, though, have the added value of encouraging those who do God's work. Please send your stories of God's activity in the revitalization of people or of a whole ministry and stories of the multiplication of ministries to Randy Kooy at [rkooy@rca.org](mailto:rkooy@rca.org).

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**From Wayne Van Regenmorter, Synod Visionary Leader ([wvanregenmorter@rca.org](mailto:wvanregenmorter@rca.org)):**

***The Seven First Words of the Christian...***

I caught myself saying it. I thought I was immune to it, but I wasn't. I caught myself saying what is often called the "seven last words of the church". We were meeting together for lunch discussing the plans for a revitalization strategy; that's when I said it. I said, "We've never done it that way before." Lord, forgive me! As we begin a new year I'd like to consider not the seven **last** words of the church but the seven **first** words of the Christian. What are they? ***I can do all things through Christ.*** When God's followers believe that, it changes lives. It transforms congregations. It is one of the keys to revitalization.

Let me give you a little math test. If three frogs are sitting on a log, and one decides to jump off, how many are left? Three. Just because one decides to jump doesn't mean he does it. And just because we believe in God, just because we decide to follow, just because we desire congregations to be revitalizing, doesn't mean we take the risk and leap of faith to do it and live it. To take that leap requires stepping out of our safety zones into the Holy Spirit zone. The safety is not in the chair. The danger is not in the dare. It's precisely the opposite. There's danger in playing it safe. There is life, freedom, and wholeness in taking the risk of the leap of faith. How do we find energy and the ability to lead in revitalizing a congregation? Through Christ who strengthens us!

We stand on the threshold of a new year. Are we willing to take one step toward continually revitalizing the congregation we serve? The world is a better place because people believed God so much that they took a step they weren't sure they could take. The world's a better place because Noah didn't say, "I don't do boats," because Moses didn't say, "I don't do Pharaohs." The world's a better place because Ruth didn't say, "I don't do mother-in-laws," Paul didn't say, "I don't do letters," and Jesus didn't say, "I don't do crosses."

May we find life in living the seven first words of the Christian. There is no fear, no frustration, no barrier, no anxiety that God cannot address through Christ. We can do all things through Him.

Wayne Van Regenmorter

**Schedule:**

January 7: Illinois Executive Comm/Second Reformed Church/Fulton, IL

8: Office

9: Revitalization meeting/Community Church/Canton, IA

10: Meeting/Chicago, IL

11: Coaching/Office

12: Off

13: Sunday worship

14: Meeting/Indiana

15: Network meeting/Baileyville, IL

16: Staff meeting/Camp Manitoqua

17: Annual session planning meeting/Homewood, IL

18: Office

19: Off

20: Sunday worship

**Wayne's contact information:**

10088 Prairie Knoll Ct.

St. John, IN 46373

Cell phone: 941-302-1281

Home office phone: 219-365-9649

E-mail: [wvanregenmorter@rca.org](mailto:wvanregenmorter@rca.org)

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**From Randy Kooy, Synod Coordinator-Administrator-Stated Clerk-Treasurer  
([rkooy@rca.org](mailto:rkooy@rca.org)):**

**Schedule:**

January 7 – DeMotte office

8 – Manitoqua office

- 9 – DeMotte office
- 10 – Orlando- Apostolic Leader Task Force mtg; SIM conference call meeting
- 11 – DeMotte office
- 14 – DeMotte office
- 15 – DeMotte office
- 16 – Manitoqua office; Staff mtg
- 17 – M3 event- planning meeting- Homewood
- 18-19 – Berne, IN – mtg w/ potential congregation transfers

The Manitoqua office phone number can more consistently reach me wherever I am as it is usually forwarded to my current location.

**Randy's contact information:**

Manitoqua office: 815-464-9181

DeMotte office: 219-987-6562

Cell phone: 219-730-4873

Email: [rkooy@rca.org](mailto:rkooy@rca.org)

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