

# Retreat for Clergy:

In May 2011, a group of clergy from our Presbytery gathered at the Hermitage in Three Rivers to join in reflection and fellowship. Dr. Doug Ottati offered insight and lead conversation about a theology of grace. It was an organic gathering, in that a few clergy brainstormed ideas for time, place, leader, and topic. Then we pursued details, combined some continuing education funds ... and voila!

The vision for this gathering included the following points:

Pooling resources to bring someone in locally would be far more affordable than other conferences, especially for clergy /congregations with more limited means.

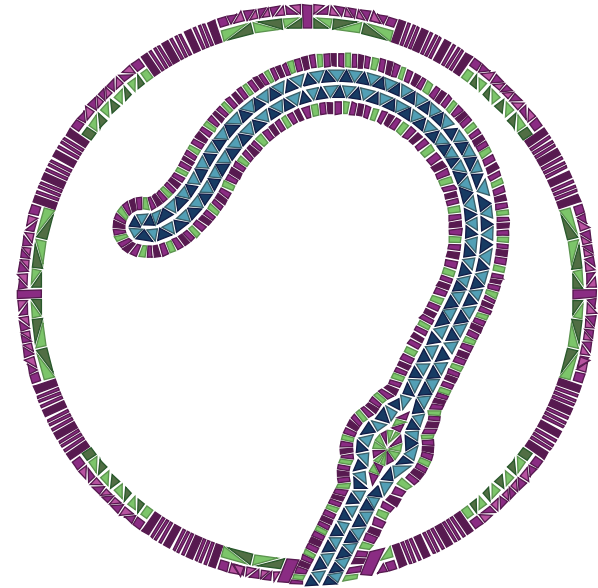
We could gather with friends in a more relaxed, less business-like environment for a few days, outside of the normal routines. It would require less travel time out of our otherwise busy schedules, and thereby perhaps be more accessible.

From Sunday dinner through Wednesday lunch, we shared eight structured periods for reflection, as well as enjoying free time, good food, a little worship, and a lot of casual conversation. For 14 participants the total cost was around \$360 per person. We felt it was a great success. Our vision was fulfilled. And we encourage similar efforts as our Presbytery seeks to support spiritual formation of clergy. If you have any questions about ideas or logistics, please feel free to contact Seth Weeldreyer.

Congregational  
Connection

fourth quarter 2011

"But grow in the grace and  
knowledge of our Lord and Savior  
Jesus Christ..." (2 Peter 3:18)



## SHEPHERDING MINISTRY TEAM



PRESBYTERY OF LAKE MICHIGAN

- Educator Fellowship
- Encouragement Project
- Health Ministries
- Older Adult Ministries
- PALMS
- Pilgrimage
- Presbyterian Women
- Spiritual Directors
- Spousters

[www.lakemichiganpresbytery.org/smt](http://www.lakemichiganpresbytery.org/smt)



PRESBYTERY OF LAKE MICHIGAN

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Presbytery of Lake Michigan is a Christian community of congregations and clergy seeking as disciples of the Lord, Jesus Christ, to partner in mission and support one another in ministry

[office@lakemichiganpresbytery.org](mailto:office@lakemichiganpresbytery.org)

The Shepherding Ministry Team's purpose is to nurture new initiatives and existing connections for the wholeness of body, mind, and spirit among laity and church professionals.

We are on the lookout for small groups in the Presbytery who may need support getting started. The Shepherding Team befriends such groups during start up and helps them grow so their ministry can bless our congregations.

In addition to meeting our mission statement, we look for groups that support the Presbytery goals, which came from lay and clergy retreat participants in 2009. The three events described in this insert, are all quite different, but support the same goal: "Develop spiritual formation resources that engage pastors, professional staff, and lay leaders, including support for sabbaticals."

## Faith Formation and Personal Transformation for Laity:

Several spiritual directors from within the Presbytery have responded to the longings identified by clergy and laity, for a more experiential and intimate relationship with God. "Drawing Near to the Heart of God", a retreat with this desire as its focus, begins Friday evening, November 4, and continues through the afternoon of Saturday, November 5. The Transformations Center in Kalamazoo provides excellent facilities and Judy Hahn, spiritual director and clinical social worker, will provide sensitive and stimulating leadership.

Participants will explore the question, "How do I make spiritual formation a part of who I am and not just something I do?" They will have the opportunity to explore various forms of prayer and other spiritual practices, including spiritual direction. The Shepherding Ministry Team hopes to repeat this retreat experience in 2012. If you are interested in knowing more about either the retreat or how you might become involved in planning such experiences please contact any of us, we welcome your interest:

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## Retreat for Christian Educators

Open to anyone involved in educational ministry, the Educator Fellowship supports Church Educators and others in this important ministry. The group gathers three times a year at various places around the Presbytery. Often there is a guest speaker and time to share ideas and resources. Resources from the Presbytery Resource Center are available to check out. A planning team of four educators organize and coordinate the events. Educators are encouraged to attend regional and national APCE ( Association of Presbyterian Church Educators) events together.

In spring 2011, with the support of the Shepherding Ministry Team, the Educator Fellowship gathered for an overnight retreat focusing on Sabbath time. A beautiful setting, time together, and spiritually centered activities provided a truly refreshing Sabbath for everyone who attended.

Plans for the coming year include a gathering October 13 at the Hastings Church to learn about "Leading Bible Study from Scratch" with Rachel Schwab, and a gathering at the Spring Lake Church April 17 on "Godly Play," a worship program for children, also led by Rachel Schwab. A unique opportunity this year is the national APCE annual event in Grand Rapids February 1- 4, 2012, focusing on "God's Surprising Wonders."

Information and registration are available at [www.apcenet.org](http://www.apcenet.org). On Friday, February 3 there will be a "Lake Michigan Presbytery Day at APCE." We will gather together for lunch and those who are only able to come for one day are encouraged to come on Friday and take up to four different workshops.

Members of the Shepherding Ministry Team are Pam Anderson, Mary Van Anandel, John Best (General Presbyter), Kurt Freund, Jane Givens, Karen Haak (Convener) and Chris Prokos and Larry Slager (Leadership Team liaisons).

Please contact any of us for more information or to discuss a possible ministry for which you have a passion. (It doesn't have to be a retreat.)