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## Good News from Great Rivers

1 message

**Presbytery of Great Rivers** <office@greatriverspby.org>

Mon, Jul 25, 2016 at 7:02 AM

Reply-To: office@greatriverspby.org

To: naterush51@gmail.com



## GOOD NEWS

from the

### Presbytery of Great Rivers

We are called to share Christ's love by partnering in service,  
uniting in worship, and risking in ministry.

July 25, 2016

### Celebrating Connections

Rev. Dr. Alan Finnan  
[afinnan@greatriverspby.org](mailto:afinnan@greatriverspby.org)



### Our Faith and Our Giving

I'd like to examine with you the vital relationship between Our Faith and Our Giving. To save room in this article and get the whole picture of what I'm trying to say, **stop reading this for a minute**, go get your bible, and read Mark 12:38-44.

**Welcome back**...we can't read the gospels without realizing that Jesus sees so much more than we do! So much of his time with the disciples was spent training them to look through his eyes. The lesson for today comes from a poor widow who understands the message of the gospel better than the disciples did. Too many times the disciples saw the same things that Jesus saw,

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### Mark Your Calendar!

## JULY

but didn't see them the same way.

***Four things many temple goers thought and asked about the widow***

1. Doesn't she realize how foolish she looks?
2. What good will that little bit do?
3. What does she expect to get from this?
4. Why didn't she just stay home?

***Now let's look at four of the faithful widow's reasons to give***

1. God is so good, why not give?
2. All I have really belongs to God, why not give?
3. God will provide, why not give?
4. I can't give what I don't have, but I can give what I do, why not give what I can?

Through Mark's gospel, we're privileged to eavesdrop as Jesus comments to his disciples on the faith of a widow and the echoing whisper of two small coins. If I listen beyond the text, I hear Jesus saying, "This woman understands! She gets it! How about you?"

I hope and pray we all get it! Giving is not about the size of the gift, it's about the willingness and attitude of the one who gives it. The gift we give speaks about the faith we live. It conveys our willingness to step out and risk in ministry. The widow's gift challenges us to be disciples who view the world through his eyes. Peace...Alan

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## **2017 Benefits Plan: An introduction to 2017 Workshop**

Rev. Dr. Edward J. Thompson, Church Consultant

What stays the same? What changes? How to navigate the new landscape and determine cost. Further, an opportunity to recap the rich provision of benefits to make sure you are taking full advantage of what is provided. Opportunity for Q&A.

Come join the workshop and discussion at First Presbyteriana Church in Galesburg on **Tuesday, September 13 @ 9:00 AM!** All are welcome especially those charged with responsibility of determining benefits to employees, church treasurers and administrators , Pastors.



### **COM Meeting**

Tuesday, July 26  
Peoria-First Federated  
10 am - 2 pm

## AUGUST

### **Visioning Team Meeting**

Tuesday, August 2  
9 am - 2 pm  
Peoria-United

### **Administration Team Meeting**

Tuesday, August 9  
10 am - 2 pm  
Peoria-United

### **Nominating Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, August 16  
9 am - 12 pm  
Presbytery Office

### **Assembly Meeting**

Saturday, August 20  
[Click here for details](#)

### **COM Meeting**

Tuesday, August 23  
10 am - 2 pm  
Peoria-First Federated LTC

### **Dr Amy-Jill Levine Workshop**

Friday, August 26  
9:30 am - 12:30 pm  
Peoria-First Federated

## SEPTEMBER

### **Office Closed**

Monday, September 5  
Labor Day

### **BOP Training Event**

Tuesday, September 13  
Galesburg-First  
9 am

### **CPM Meeting**

Thursday, September 22  
Peoria-First Federated LTC  
9:30 am - 3 pm

### **COM Meeting**

Tuesday, September 27  
Peoria-First Federated LTC  
10 am - 2 pm

[Click here](#) to view our online calendar!



## [Dr. Amy-Jill Levine](#)

### [Springfield-Westminster to host Dr. Amy-Jill Levine](#)

Westminster is honored to host Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University, on **Thursday, August 25, at 7:00 p.m.** in Parish Hall. The Presbytery of Great Rivers is partnering with the Jewish Federation to bring Dr. Levine to Springfield.

Dr. Levine is a graduate of Smith College with a Ph.D. from Duke University. She is an expert in the Bible, Jewish and early Christian culture, and the study of Jesus in the light of his Jewish roots. Levine is an award-winning teacher who combines historical-critical rigor, literary-critical sensitivity, and a frequent dash of humor with a commitment to eliminating anti-Jewish, sexist, and homophobic theologies.

### [Peoria-First Federated - Dr Amy-Jill Levine Workshop](#)

Dr. Amy-Jill Levine will lead a workshop entitled "*Understanding Jesus Requires an Understanding of Judaism.*" Join together at the **First Federated Church's Life Together Center**, 3625 N Sheridan Road in Peoria, Illinois on **Friday, August 26 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** The Friday morning workshop looks at various first-century Jewish views of Torah, Messiah, Temple, gender, and more, to help us better understand both Jesus and Judaism.

Sponsored by the Presbytery of Great Rivers and the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of the Jewish Federation of Springfield, IL, the interfaith event is open to clergy, religious educators, Bible study leaders, Sunday School teachers, and anyone who preaches, teaches, and studies the Gospels. **Please register by calling 217-787-7223**, Extension 18; provide your name, telephone number and indicate the registration is for the Peoria Amy-Jill Levine workshop on Friday, August 26th.

Dr. Levine's most recent book is *Short Stories by Jesus: the Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* (Harper One). She has recorded "Introduction to the Old Testament," "Great Figures of the Old Testament," and "Great Figures of the New Testament" for the Teaching Company. In 2011, Professor Levine became Affiliated Professor at the Woolf Institute: Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations at Cambridge, UK. A self-described "Yankee Jewish feminist who teaches in a predominantly Christian divinity school in the buckle of the Bible Belt," Professor Levine combines historical-critical rigor, literary-critical sensitivity, and a frequent dash of humor with a commitment to eliminating anti-Jewish, sexist, and homophobic theologies.

Amy-Jill Levine is University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies, and Professor of Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School and College of Arts and Sciences. Holding the B.A. from Smith College, the M.A. and Ph.D. from Duke University, and numerous honorary doctorates, Professor Levine has been awarded grants from the Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the American Council of Learned Societies. She has held office in the Society of Biblical Literature, the Catholic Biblical Association, and the Association for Jewish Studies. Her other books include *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus*, the edited collection, *The Historical Jesus in Context*, and the thirteen-volume edited series, *Feminist Companions to the New Testament and Early Christian Writings*. With Marc Brettler, she edited the *Jewish Annotated New Testament*. She has written, with Douglas Knight, *The Meaning of the Bible: What The Jewish Scriptures and the Christian Old Testament Can Teach us*; with Warren Carter, she wrote *The New Testament: Methods and Meanings*.

## Board of Pensions



**LAST CHANCE! The registration deadline for Well-Being Retreat 2016 has been extended one week, to Friday, July 22.**

Well-Being Retreat 2016 (August 15, 16 and 17 at the beautiful Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina) offers a unique opportunity for you and your spouse to enhance personal and financial skills that can improve your life and sustain your service to the Church. But don't wait. Space is limited and time is running out!

Please visit [Well-Being Retreat 2016](#) today for more information, including links to the full program agenda, workshop descriptions, guest speaker bios, travel and lodging information, and a promotional video.

Click [here](#) and register online for Well-Being Retreat 2016. There is no registration fee; however, there is a \$20 per person Montreat Conference Center meal fee. The Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Foundation are subsidizing meal service costs for the event.

Please contact us at [education@pensions.org](mailto:education@pensions.org) if you have any questions.

We hope to see you there!

## Presbyterians Today Needs You!

Hello synod leaders!

**Do you have a good story to tell?** Presbyterians Today magazine is looking for a few inspiring congregational stories to share with our readers. If you have a church in your synod with a great program or ministry idea, please let us know about it. We need a few good, local stories to feature in the next couple of months.

Thanks!

Peace,

Rev. Sue Washburn  
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## Next Church Regional Conference

The Presbytery of Great Rivers is hosting a Next Church Regional Conference featuring **Nadia Bolz-Weber** on October 14th and 15th at United Presbyterian Church in Peoria. The conference will focus on what it means to build and cultivate community within and outside the church building. The weekend will include worship, workshops, two addresses by Nadia, and round table discussions after each of the addresses. This conference will be beneficial for all members and leaders of churches. For

more information or to register, visit:

<http://unitedpc.org/next-church/>



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