

PRESBYTERY HIGHLIGHTS

The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area

September 11, 2018

“Thank you, Risa!”

At its September 11, 2018, stated meeting, the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area honored Risa Anderson for her 11 years of service as our presbytery’s office administrator. Risa is retiring at the end of September. Her warmth, her dedication and her competence were lauded and celebrated, and the presbytery honored Risa with numerous rounds of applause and a standing ovation. Jennifer Schultz was introduced and welcomed as our new office administrator.



“Nurturing thoughtful expressions of God’s mission in the world”

That’s the theme for this year’s Presbytery gatherings. Presbytery moderator Rocky Rockenstein and executive presbyter Jeff Japinga, in a joint report that begins on page 22 of the [Presbytery packet](#), detailed a structure and organization of our meetings this year under the banner, “Nurturing thoughtful expressions of God’s mission in the world.” The goal is to intentionally link the worship and work of the presbytery, in its meetings, with its stated goal to support congregations and equip leaders; and to do so with these commitments:

- Each meeting will contain four intentional elements: worship; fellowship; stated/required business; and education/inspiration.
- Each meeting will have its own particular focus within the overall theme.
- Each meeting will lift up ways the presbytery is equipping leaders and supporting congregations.

The particular focus for the September stated meeting was “a call to a missional understanding of ministry.” In the portion of the meeting labeled as our “response to God’s call,” the presbytery welcomed the Rev. Jessica Tate, on the left in the photo, director of NEXT Church, and the Rev. Shavon Starling-Lewis, co-chair, NEXT Church Strategy Team. The Revs. Tate and Starling-Louis, in laying out the challenges and opportunities for the church of today — the title of their presentation — challenged the presbytery to shift its ministry lens from simple preservation toward the recognition of and partnership with the creativity and leadership in our communities, while living out these ministries with an attitude of abundance.



Our response to God’s call was also highlighted in the announcement from the Mission and Witness Committee that the Presbytery’s portion of the 2018 Peace & Global Witness Offering will focus on issues of early childhood hunger. The proceeds from that offering will be divided between the Hallie Q. Brown Early Learning Center in St. Paul, and “acts4kids ~ Food 4 Kids” in Olmstead County (Rochester), which provides supplemental food to school children. That denomination-sponsored offering is traditionally held in churches on the first Sunday of October. Please be generous.

Mission and Witness also brought the 2018 PTCA Mission Team to the meeting to share their experiences and work on their mission trip to Louisiana last spring (which was really still winter, since they



returned home from Louisiana on the weekend of the big April blizzard). The Presbytery expressed its thanks to the Team.

Here are other specifics on how the presbytery, through its work, sought to support its congregations and equip its leaders.

Equipping Leaders:

- The presbytery examined and received Madeline Hart-Andersen as a candidate under care. Madeline spoke about her strong sense of call to the ministry, her experiences as an intern at the Office of the General Assembly last year, and the ways her faith grew and was challenged during her college and seminary education. Madeline will graduate from Austin Theological Seminary in 2019.



Supporting Congregations:

- 2018 Congregational Development Fund Grant recipients were announced by the Committee for Congregational Vitality. Grants totaling nearly more than \$82,000 were awarded to eight PTCA congregations, to support innovative initiatives in communities throughout our presbytery. Congratulations to First Presbyterian Church, Red Wing; Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church, Apple Valley; Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin; Buffalo Presbyterian Church, Buffalo; Plymouth Presbyterian Church, Plymouth; First Presbyterian Church, Stillwater; Edgumbe Presbyterian Church, St. Paul; and Community Presbyterian Church, Plainview. We look forward to learning how these grants spark new ministries, and new life, in these congregations.
- The presbytery approved the sale of the Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church property to a private party, and the sale of a portion of the Shepherd of the Hill Church property to Habitat for Humanity for the

development into four units of affordable housing, which is a mission focus for the congregation.

- The presbytery received a draft of the proposed Parental Leave Policy, which is available for comment. It can be found on page 39 of the [presbytery packet](#). All are encouraged to review the proposed policy and submit your comments to Executive Presbyter Jeff Japinga by October 1, 2018.
- The presbytery approved the total 2019 per capita amount of \$35.70. The presbytery's portion is \$21.35, a DECREASE of two cents from 2018; the synod's portion is \$5.40, unchanged from 2018; and the General Assembly portion is \$8.95, an increase of \$1.22 from 2018. Said PTCA treasurer Stephen Robertson, "The Presbytery Leadership Team and the Budget Task Force believe that, in consideration of the increased per capita necessary to sustain programs and ministries approved at the General Assembly this past summer, the Presbytery should hold even our portion of per capita. This is one of the ways to fulfill our goal of supporting our congregations."

In other business, the PTCA delegation to the 223rd General Assembly reported. See pages 26-28 of the [presbytery packet](#). And the presbytery welcomed the Rev. Tyler Holm, mission co-worker in Malawi; presbyters enjoyed dinner conversation with Tyler about his work and ministry.

Vice Moderator Anna Kendig will be our worship planner and leader this year under the theme, Cultivating Ministry. Three presbyters shared stories about new life, new ministries and new approaches have been cultivated in their congregations.

Thanks to our host congregation, Buffalo Presbyterian Church, for their gracious hospitality. And thanks to a large group of members and commissioners who made the trip to Buffalo for the meeting.

The [complete meeting packet can be found here](#).