

THE VALLEY BRIDGE



February 10, 2015

FEBRUARY 15: TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Fellowship of Prayer: First Presbyterian Church of Litchfield

Commissioned Lay Pastor: Gordon Pennertz

Ruling Elders: Wade Viehauser, Judy Holmes, Sue Berg, Shirley Brooks, Arlys Dedrickson, Emily Osmundson

Deacons: Savannah Joldersma, Amy Viehauser, Harriet Koelln, Julie Pennertz, Stephanie Rech, David Pennertz

Clerk of Session: Bev Driver

Music Director:

Jayne Ackman

Secretary: Julie Pennertz

PW Coordinator: Ann Abramson

Prayers: For our members in Hospice, for our outreach efforts into the community, for members with job issues, for wisdom for our leadership seeking answers to tough questions.



IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 2-3: The Word from Rick

Page 3: New Presbyterian Curriculum

Page 4: Scenes from the Road; Reminder from Next Pres Team

Page 5: Around the Presbytery; Board of Pensions Medical Dues Assistance Funds Available

Page 6: Per Capita; Events on the Horizon; Thanks from Pastors in Occidente Presbytery

Page 7: Presbytery Meeting Highlights

Page 8-9: Meet Our Young Adult Volunteer

Page 10: Calendar; Gospel Reading

Presbytery of MN Valleys
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Willmar MN 56201
320-235-7910

minnesotavalleys.org

Monday-Friday: 8:00-4:30
We're on Facebook, too!

THE WORD FROM RICK: “UNFINISHED BUSINESS”



Technology is awesome . . . when it works!

I had planned to conclude my remarks at Saturday’s presbytery meeting by sharing a blessing that had been written by Sister Ruth Fox, O.S.B. I took the blessing out of a magazine that I had picked up during last week’s visit to the Collegeville Institute for Theological and Cultural Research. I felt that this would provide the finishing touch for my comments.

So, not wanting to haul the magazine with me, I decided to make a photocopy of the blessing and slip it into the binder which contained the rest of my report. That seemed a simple enough task, except that the blessing was printed in black and red ink on brownish background. Dutifully, I adjusted the copier in order to lighten up the background and make the print easier to read, forgetting that it would lighten up the red print on the page as well. Forgetting the rules about proofreading and double-checking things to ensure that all was well, I grabbed the photocopy and put it in my folder.

It wasn’t until Saturday afternoon, when I was preparing to finish my remarks that I discovered that 22 key words were missing, printed in invisible ink. I tried to ad lib the missing parts, but quickly discovered that it would be a futile effort. So, now a few days after the presbytery meeting, I offer you the rest of my report!

A Non-Traditional Blessing, by Ruth Fox, O.S.B.

May God bless you with discontent with easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you will live from deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, abuse, and exploitation of people, so that you will work for justice, equality, and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and wars, so that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and change their pain to joy.

May God bless you with the foolishness to think you can make a difference in this world, so that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done.

If you have the courage to accept these blessings, then God will also bless you with

Happiness – because you will know that you have made life better for others.

Inner Peace – because you will have worked to secure an outer peace for others.

Laughter – because your heart will be light.

Faithful Friends – because they will recognize your worth as a person.

These blessings are yours – not for the asking, but for the giving – from one who wants to be your companion, or God, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

THE WORD FROM RICK, CONTINUED

NOTE: Sister Ruth Fox, O.S.B. is an alumna of Saint John's University School of Theology, and composed this for a graduate breakfast at Dickinson State College (now University) in 1984.

This, now, concludes my report!

Grace and Peace,

Rick

NEW PRESBYTERIAN CURRICULUM



Congregations are being invited to sample the new PC(U.S.A.) denominational children's curriculum, *Growing in Grace & Gratitude*, set to launch this fall.

Free samplers—complete with accompanying color resources, a story, and a page for children to use at

home with their families—are [available to order](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/growinggracegratitude). Each sampler includes one session for each age group: Multiage (Ages 5–10), Ages 3–5, Ages 5–7, and Ages 8–10. Sample sessions may also be downloaded at: <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/growinggracegratitude>

Growing in Grace & Gratitude is rooted in the foundation of Presbyterian identity where God's grace and our gratitude are the heartbeat of our faith, life, and worship; extends an invitation to discipleship that inspires children to learn and practice hospitality, generosity, and love; and reaches beyond Sunday morning, encouraging children to live their lives as an expression of God's grace.

Sessions of *Growing in Grace & Gratitude* are grounded in Bible stories that reveal God's grace. Through fun activities, prayer, and singing, children and their leaders will celebrate the meaning of this grace in their lives as they encounter a living God.

You can learn more about *Growing in Grace & Gratitude* by participating in one of the twenty regional workshops scheduled for the coming months. Come experience a curriculum that helps transform the lives of children and those who love them, shaped by grace and gratitude. For more information, contact curriculum@pcusa.org.



Pastor Anne Veldhuisen (right) responds to the constitutional questions offered by Moderator Candace Adams

SCENES FROM THE ROAD: ANNE VELDHUISEN'S INSTALLATION AT CHRIST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN-MARSHALL FEBRUARY 8, 2015

On Sunday afternoon, the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys installed the Rev. Anne Veldhuisen as Pastor of Christ United Presbyterian Church in Marshall. The Rev. Richard Buller of Valley Community Church in the Minneapolis area preached the sermon, while Ruling Elder Gloria Sabin charged the new pastor and Rev. Scott Prouty charged the congregation.

Anne comes to our presbytery from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. She began her work at Christ Church in Marshall in mid-January, concluding an active search that the PNC began early last summer.

Anne's husband, Kevin, serves as the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of South Dakota and is also a Church Transformation Consultant for that presbytery. Anne and Kevin have a young son, Martin. We encourage you all to welcome Anne and her family to our presbytery.



← *Ruling Elder Gloria Sabin, chair of the Marshall PNC, offers a charge to the new pastor.*

REMINDER FROM THE NEXT PRES TEAM

The Next Pres Team reminds all committee and task force church persons that their group's responses to the NPT need to be submitted to Stan Menning - smenning0@gmail.com - no later than February 25.

AROUND THE PRESBYTERY

On Wednesday, February 18, **First Presbyterian Church of Winnebago** will observe the beginning of Lent with Spud Hug and Ash Wednesday Service. Members of the **First Presbyterian Church of Blue Earth** have been invited to join them for the evening (and Blue Earth invited Winnebago to join them for Maundy Thursday). The Spud Hug meal (spuds, toppings, salad, dessert) begins at 6:00, and the service begins around 6:45.

Another group of churches sharing leadership and locations for Wednesday evening Lenten services are **Westminster Presbyterian Church of Worthington**, Bethel Presbyterian Church of Reading, **First Presbyterian Church of Brewster**, **First Presbyterian Church of Wilmont**, **First Presbyterian Church of Round Lake**, and Church of the Brethren of Reading.

This month's newsletter from **Hope Presbyterian Church of Spicer** highlights pictures of new folks to the congregation along with some information about each, such as what they enjoy doing and what brought them to Hope Church.

First Presbyterian Church of Windom and other community churches and organizations have joined together to pack food for weekend breakfasts and lunches for hungry kids. They pack the fourth week each month of the school year. The job takes about 45 minutes, and the food is purchased with donations.

This month, there's a "Guess the Smile" page in the newsletter from **Ebenezer Presbyterian Church of Renville**. Fifteen pictures of folks cropped to show just the nose, smile and chin. Answers were elsewhere in the newsletter.

On Saturday, March 21, **First Presbyterian Church of Willmar** youth are hosting the Senior Prom 2015 fundraiser. The evening includes appetizers, dinner and dancing. It is quite the affair; some folks really dress up, and the food is wonderful.

BOARD OF PENSION MEDICAL DUES ASSISTANCE FUNDS AVAILABLE

At their October meeting, Presbytery approved offering grants to churches with financial difficulty paying the 1.5% medical dues increase from Board of Pension for their teaching elder with dependents in 2015. Synod of Lakes & Prairies has provided the Presbytery with \$6666 for this program and Committee on Ministry could provide additional dollars.

A two-page grant application is available on the Presbytery website under Committee on Ministry forms. Approval from Session is required. While there is no deadline on submitting applications, the first round of applications will be reviewed by the Policy Subcommittee on February 23rd.

For more information, please contact Gloria Vande Brake at 218-820-4197 or gloriavande@hotmail.com.

2015 PER CAPITA

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| General Assembly | \$ 7.07 |
| Synod of Lakes & Prairies | \$ 5.20 |
| Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys | <u>\$21.16</u> |
| Total | \$33.43 |

Recommended 2015 Mission Pledge Percentages:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| General Assembly | 18% |
| Synod of Lakes & Prairies | 13% |
| Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys | 69% |

EVENTS ON THE HORIZON

Here is a calendar of significant leadership development conferences and events for your calendar! Keep your calendars up to date, so that you don't miss out!

March 9-11 [Stewardship Kaleidoscope](#), Kansas City

March 16-18 "[Next Church](#)" Annual Gathering, Chicago

June 18-21 [Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women](#), Minneapolis

July 26-31..... [Synod School](#) at Buena Vista University, Storm Lake (brochure and registration information coming this month!)

A LETTER FROM THE OCCIDENTE PRESBYTERY OF GUATEMALA'S COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

Dear Brethren of Minnesota Valleys Presbytery:

We are sending a fraternal greeting to you in the name of our Lord. Also, we pray that our God continues to richly bless you.

With this letter, all of the pastors of Occidente Presbytery wish to express our deepest gratitude for your financial donations that have been used to further our knowledge and pastoral services. They have strengthened our ministry, and we value your contribution which is of great importance for each of the pastors that make up this Presbytery. In this way we are able to serve and be useful in the Kingdom of God in our different communities in our region. All of us are signing our names as proof of our gratefulness. For these reasons we request that your valuable help continue next year as it is a great blessing to us.

While God allows us to greet you personally, receive our admiration and respect. We will continue praying for your respective ministries. Thank you once again for your offerings.

(followed by many signatures)

FEBRUARY 7 PRESBYTERY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

By Karen Lange

What a full day we had at the First Presbyterian Church of Redwood Falls! We began with a beautiful worship service that included communion. Our service of worship and hymns came from the Glory to God hymnal. Moderator Rev. Candace Adams spoke on the theme, “Let Us Love One Another.” Though we may be diverse in many ways, we are one in Christ, united.

We recognized the retirement of Rev. Rollin Haynes. Commissioned Ruling Elder David Erickson read a touching history and tribute.

The necrology report was presented during the offering, which raised \$486 for One Great Hour of Sharing.

Kathy Terpstra and Scott Prouty were commissioned to service at the General Assembly.

We discussed in small groups, debated in meeting and voted on the amendments to the Book of Confessions and the Book of Order. By consent agenda, we PASSED 14-B: Special Committee to Review the Preparation for Ministry Process and Standard Ordination Exams; 14-C: Child Protection Policy—on amending G-3.0106; and 14-E: Interreligious Stance—on amending G-5.01012. We voted on the following amendments separately.

14-D: Minimum Composition of a Presbytery—on amending G-3.0301 ... PASSED.

14-I: Confession of Belhar—amending the *Book of Confessions* ... PASSED.

14-A: Renunciation of Jurisdiction—on amending G-2.0509 ... FAILED.

14-F: Marriage—on amending W-4.9000 ... FAILED.

We commissioned Linda Becken to the First Presbyterian Church of Mountain Lake after she shared “What Jesus Means to Me,” read her statement of faith and answering examination questions from the body.

Our Young Adult Volunteer that we are supporting is Kenya Phillips—there’s more about her on the next couple of pages.

Virginia Molitor, office staff, announced her retirement as of March 31, 2016.

We approved the Administrative Commission to install the Rev. Anne Veldhuisen to the Christ United Presbyterian Church of Marshall.

Thanks for the great hospitality by the First Presbyterian Church of Redwood Falls!

Pictures at: <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151632514668095.1073741829.26155208094&type=1>



MEET OUR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEER (YAV)!

Last fall, the Congregational Resource and Development Committee, which serves as our Mission Support Committee, designated funds from one of its dedicated mission funds to support our denomination's Young Adult Volunteer ministry for the program year, 2014-2015. This is the second year that CR&D has made an investment on behalf of our presbytery in this exciting ministry of our denomination.

It costs the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) an average of \$22,000 to send a YAV for a year of service. Of that total cost, the PC (USA) covers more than three quarters, while the YAVs commit to raising a minimum \$3,000 (National) and \$4,000 (International) to contribute to the cost of their service. For the second consecutive year, CR&D has chosen to make an investment on behalf of our presbytery in this exciting ministry of our denomination.

Not currently having a "YAV" from our own presbytery, we asked the Young Adult Volunteer office if Minnesota Valleys could "adopt" a "YAV." A little over a week ago, our "adoption" was completed, and we are excited to introduce our YAV to you.

A portion of our gift to the Young Adult Volunteer ministry is support the volunteer ministry of Kenya Phillips. Kenya, a 2014 graduate of Tiffin University in Tiffin, Ohio, is serving at D.O.O.R. Atlanta, one of six sites in a faith-based network that provides opportunities for service, learning and leadership development within the urban context.



Kenya Phillips

Kenya is from Atlanta, GA and has a degree in Forensic Psychology, which is the intersection between criminal justice and psychology. Kenya says that she loves chocolate and spends way too much money on it!!! She also says that the same goes for hot wings and fries....)

MEET OUR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEER (YAV)! CONTINUED

In a January 30 e-mail, Kenya writes . . .

Hello,

It is so wonderful to connect with you all! Below is a link to my bio, which includes a photo. This page also includes a link to my blog, which is updated on a monthly basis. I appreciate your willingness to connect with a person on the other side of the country! Please let me know of any way that I can fruitfully contribute to this partnership.

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/yav/kenya-phillips/>

While we are connecting to Kenya almost half-way through her year of service, we hope and pray that your congregation will make up for lost time and connect with Kenya. We encourage you to:

- Check out Kenya's blog – We are already a few months behind, so you need to catch up! <http://kenyatheyav.tumblr.com/> On Kenya's blog site, there are ways for you to learn more about her and the ministry of which she is a part.
- Include Kenya on the Prayer Lists in your church bulletins and newsletters.
- Share information from Kenya's blog in your newsletters.
- Pray for her and her ministry as a regular part of your weekly Prayers of the People. As we receive prayer requests from Kenya, we will offer them to you.

We hope to share more about Young Adult Volunteers at the May presbytery meeting, and when her year of service is completed, we want to try to bring Kenya to Minnesota so that she can personally share her experience of Young Adult Volunteers with our congregations and perhaps, recruit a few future YAVs to share in this awesome ministry experience.

CALENDAR

Wednesday, February 11: Rick out of the office

Thursday, February 19: 9:00 Budget & Finance conference call; 10:00 Personnel Committee meets at the presbytery office

Tuesday, February 17–Wednesday, February 25: Karen on vacation



MARK 9:2-9

The Transfiguration

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who



were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!' Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

The Coming of Elijah

As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.