



January 2006

Winter Meeting of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies

56th Meeting January 15-16-17, 2006 Minneapolis, MN

Expect A Miracle



Eric Nielsen, Presbytery of Northern Waters, is the 2006 Moderator of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

Spread The Word: Share this summary report with your Presbytery members and partners!

Some committees at work during the Synod meeting:

- Ecclesiastical Relations
- Nominating (reports)
- Steering (reports)
- Finance
- Program Coordination Committee
- Committee on Representation (reports)
- Personnel

Other activities during the Synod meeting include: Worship, educational presentations, special committees, dialogue and discussion, meetings of the Subsidiary corporations that include Presbyterian Homes and Services, Inc; Presbyterian Village; and Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging.

January 06 Meeting Highlights

Presentation on Task Force for Peace, Unity and Purity: Scott Anderson, Wisconsin Council of Churches and Mark Achtemeier, Dubuque Theological Seminary, shared reflections from their participation on the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity and Purity of the Church. Scott and Mark represent vastly different viewpoints on key issues, yet their experience on the task force has profoundly affected their views and brought them together as colleagues and Presbyterians. Their personal journey inspired many attendees and brought hope that differences can be overcome through understanding and discernment.

Transformation: "How we work -- what we do". For the past year the Synod staff, commissioners and executives have been engaged in in-depth analysis and assessment of the workings of the Synod and considering new models and approaches to equipping the Saints – AKA the Presbyteries – for mission. The Program Coordination Committee presented a process, which was approved by the Synod body, to train a number of individuals in Appreciative Inquiry and prepare them to visit with the Presbyteries to listen to what is happening and discern how the Synod can assist them in their efforts to be more effective in their mission and ministry. Watch the Synod website and e:newsletter in the coming weeks for more information on Appreciative Inquiry and how it can benefit organizations as they seek ways to grow faithfully for a new day.

Pres House: The team from Pres House, (www.preshouse.org) the campus ministry program at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, presented a slide show on their plan to build a student housing project adjacent to the existing campus facility. The Synod voted to authorize Pres House to seek funding for this project.

PAHSA: The Synod convened the Annual Meeting of the Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging. Michael Moore, of United Presbyterian Homes, Washington, Iowa, presented annual reports of the Boards of Directors, followed by financial reports and election of boards. Due to revised by-laws and articles of incorporation, this was the first time the homes associations from around the Synod reported jointly.

General Assembly Council (GAC): Manley Olson, GAC representative of the Synod, reminded attendees that he can be a resource for Presbytery members who might need to make a contact within General Assembly. Manley spends significant time in Louisville and can often assist people seeking a resource or finding a contact. Manley can be reached at 651-644-2848 or by email at a_molson@unidual.com. Notes on the General Assembly council can be found at www.pcusa.org/gac.

Administrative Commission: The work of the administrative commission has been completed now that the new Synod office building has been acquired and the existing building has been sold. This group was dissolved.

Ecclesiastical Relations Committee: Discussed issues related to camps within the Synod, as well as post secondary educational ministries. Bart Brenner, Missouri River Valley, and Phil Barrett, Des Moines, attended this meeting to address the committee and posed questions related to the work of the Iowa Post Secondary Education Commission.

Presbyterian Women: Plans are underway for the Churchwide Gathering in Louisville in 2006. Our Synod Coordinating Team will host the Synod luncheon. The following year, 2007, will be our Synod Gathering on the campus of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. Watch the Synod website in February for the addition of the Presbyterian Women leadership directory.

Make Plans: Spring Synod Meeting, April 30-May 2, 2006. Fall Synod Meeting, October 1-3, 2006. Make your travel reservations early!

Did you know? Does your Presbytery need help with financial matters, leadership development, internet technology, ethnic ministry, developing a communication plan to advance the work of the church? The Synod of Lakes and Prairies staff can help you find ways to address concerns by finding external resources and working as a partner with you to advance your efforts. Explore www.LakesandPrairies.org to learn more or call our office at 651-357-1140 or 800-328-1880.



Youth Advisory Delegates participating in the January meeting: Ruth Rufford, Jenni Flint, Shantel Penn, Andrew Biehl, Chris Hopp. Read their comments in an upcoming "Keeping In Touch" electronic newsletter from the Synod.

Attendance: 30 commissioners, 5 Youth Advisory Delegates, 7 Synod Staff, 6 Presbytery Staff.