

JUNE 6, 2009

The synod can be found online at www.lakesandprairies.org.

News around the synod

1. Presbyteries announce staff changes

2. PC(USA)'s SDOP awards more than \$300,000 in grants

News around the PC(USA)

3. Racial ethnic group to celebrate cultures, worship styles

4. God Complex Radio features Reyes-Chow, Merritt

5. Office of General Assembly announces staff changes

6. Finding pastors: supply, demand

7. Spring issue of Hungry Hearts is now online

1. PRESBYTERIES ANNOUNCE STAFF CHANGES



The Rev. Ken Meunier (photo at left) "returned home" to [John Knox Presbytery](#) as the associate executive presbyter in October 1999, and, after a stint as the transitional associate executive presbyter, he officially became executive presbyter after a unanimous vote by the presbytery earlier this month.

Meunier grew up in Galesville, Wis., and was under care of John Knox Presbytery when the presbytery began its history 24 years ago.

He received his Master of Divinity from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. Since his ordination in 1981, he has served as associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Shakopee, Minn., and Memorial Presbyterian Church in Phoenix, Ariz., before becoming pastor of the yoked Spencer Memorial Presbyterian and Hope Presbyterian churches in Lemmon and Keldron, S.D.

Meunier earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and taught high school business in Lomira and Stevens Point, Wis. Between those two teaching assignments, he served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, and managed a Minnesota Fabrics Store in Downers Grove, Ill. He answered his call to ministry following a brief stint as a dairy farmer.



In the [Presbytery of Northern Plains](#), the Rev. Steve Minnema (photo at left) began his call as interim executive presbyter June 1, coming to the presbytery from Covenant Presbyterian Church in Madison, Wis., where he has served for the past nine years.

Minnema holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, and received his Master of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School. He earned his Doctor of Ministry from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary.

He began his ministry in 1975 as a pastor of two yoked churches in southeastern Minnesota, and then went to Wisconsin where he served as a redevelopment pastor for a church in Waunakee. In 1983 he accepted a call to Community Presbyterian Church of Wheeling, Ill., and then in the 1990s, Minnema served as pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Mankato, Minn.

During his years in Mankato, Minnema represented his presbytery at the Minnesota Council of Churches and was a founding member of the statewide Active Citizenship Initiative.

And a few more

[8. Presbyterians Today cites best of the Web rings](#)

[9. 'Favorites' in too many places](#)

[10. Synod's Facebook group membership increases](#)



In [Homestead Presbytery](#), the Rev. Richard Wyatt (photo at left) will begin his call as executive presbyter June 29. The Rev. Lowell Knauss completes his call as interim executive presbyter in Homestead June 28.

Wyatt received his bachelor's degree from Carroll University, Waukesha, Wis., and went on to attend Louisville (Ky.) Presbyterian Theological Seminary and Brandeis School of Law in Louisville, earning both a Master of Divinity and a Juris Doctorate.

He served as an assistant attorney general for Kentucky and in various positions with the city of Louisville while also serving in the pastorate for 12 years in a small congregation in downtown Louisville.

He has also held two leadership positions in two Presbyterian educational institutions, filling the presidency at Presbyterian Pan American School in south Texas, and serving as vice president of Barber Scotia College in North Carolina. During the past 15 years he has served as the executive of the Synod of Rocky Mountains and most recently as general presbyter of the Northern New England Presbytery. ([Return to top](#))

2. PC(USA)'S SDOP AWARDS MORE THAN \$300,000 IN GRANTS: The Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People has approved grants totaling \$337,760 to 16 self-help projects in the United States, including two within the boundaries of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. The money comes from the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. The Nile Christian Hope Association, Mankato, Minn., received \$20,000 to support training programs for primarily Sudanese immigrants in English as a second language courses, working with the person's native language and then English. Good Harvest, Worthington, Minn., received \$19,750 to support farmers working to produce food for local consumption. They are moving from individual subsistence traditional crops to a commercial horticultural enterprise with a great deal of support from Worthington Westminster Presbyterian Church. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09447.htm. ([Return to top](#))



3. RACIAL ETHNIC GROUP TO CELEBRATE CULTURES, WORSHIP STYLES: "We're here!" says the Rev. Hector Rodriguez, General Assembly Council associate for Hispanic congregational enhancement. The Presbyterian Church

(U.S.A.)'s Racial Ethnic Convocation, planned as part of the first-ever 'Big Tent' event, will celebrate the many voices, customs and styles of worship as the denomination strives to reach a goal of 20 percent racial ethnic membership by 2010. The 'Big Tent' runs June 11-14 in Atlanta, Ga. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/2009/09436.htm. ([Return to top](#))

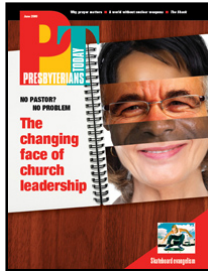


4. GOD COMPLEX RADIO FEATURES REYES-CHOW, MERRITT: A discussion within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is taking place through online radio. It's at www.godcomplexradio.com and it takes place Mondays at 11 a.m. CDT, but older programs are still available at the Web site. The Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow, moderator of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is pastor of a church that recently

completed the new church development process in San Francisco. Reyes-Chow is also a blogger at www.reyes-chow.com. The Rev. Carol Howard Merritt is a pastor in the District of Columbia, a blogger at www.tribalchurch.org, and the author of Tribal Church: Ministering to the Missing Generation. Their coast-to-coast conversations cover faith,

culture, politics and life. The God Complex site notes, "Through their diverse congregational experiences, Bruce and Carol share a deep common yearning to find bridges between tradition and innovation." ([Return to top](#))

5. OFFICE OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY ANNOUNCES STAFF CHANGES: The Office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has announced a reduction in its staff. The announcement was made by Gradye Parsons, stated clerk of the General Assembly, in an all-staff meeting on June 5. Overall, three staff members accepted voluntary separation packages, another three positions were eliminated, and two new positions were created, to be filled in 2010. The complete story can be found at www.pcusa.org/pcnews/pressreleases/oga09003. ([Return to top](#))



6. FINDING PASTORS: SUPPLY, DEMAND: It's been a popular spring to write about filling the pulpit of Presbyterian churches. The cover story of the June issue of Presbyterians Today magazine, written by John A. Bolt, deals with what it calls the "changing face of church leadership." Bolt wrote, "We just can't find a minister. What are we to do? It's a common complaint from congregations in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)." The cover article can be found at www.pcusa.org/today/cover.htm. In the May 11 issue of The Presbyterian Outlook an article addressed discrepancy between available ministers and church needs. Responding to the article, Deborah Hollifield wrote, "As a female minister in her first call to a rural congregation (the nearest large city is 2.5 hours away), where I am their first female pastor, I feel qualified to comment. With regard to the 'first-call shortage,' I believe it would help to amend the PIF and CIF to include the additional category of 'First-call/Second Career.' Those 174 churches unwilling to consider a first-call candidate may actually be uncertain about calling a very young, inexperienced candidate." [Hollifield's complete letter](#) and the [original article](#) to which she refers can be found online. ([Return to top](#))



7. SPRING ISSUE OF HUNGRY HEARTS IS NOW ONLINE: The spring issue of Hungry Hearts magazine, published by the Office of Theology and Worship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is now available online and deals with a connection between spiritual growth and the concern and appreciation for God's creation. The magazine can be found online at www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/hungryhearts/index.htm. ([Return to top](#))

8. PRESBYTERIANS TODAY CITES BEST OF THE WEB RINGS: The May edition of Presbyterians Today magazine contained an article by Jody Harrington, an elder at Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church in Houston, Texas, that listed several of the best faith-based "Web rings." A Web ring has its own blog that serves as a portal to the blogs of ring members. Some of the best, she notes, are www.pcusablog.blogspot.com, www.revgalblogpals.blogspot.com and www.ccblogs.org, which is hosted by The Christian Century magazine. ([Return to top](#))

9. 'FAVORITES' IN TOO MANY PLACES?: Jonathan Dennis and Dana McMahan, Web content developers for the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), writing in the May edition of Presbyterians Today, noted that Internet users may lose track of their bookmarked Web site favorites when they move from one computer to another. They recommend delicious.com, a browser-based bookmarking tool that allows users to save their favorites to a "delicious" account that can be accessed from any Internet-connected computer. More information can be found at www.delicious.com/help/getstarted. ([Return to top](#))



10. SYNOD'S FACEBOOK GROUP MEMBERSHIP INCREASES: Membership in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies [Facebook](#) group has reached nearly 70, perhaps not many by some comparisons, but more than anticipated by the editor of Keeping in Touch. Members are, however, being "quiet." Readers of Keeping in Touch who are on Facebook are invited to become members of the synod's group. Those who aren't members of Facebook will need to join before becoming members of the group. Those who are members, or those joining Facebook, can search for "Synod of Lakes and Prairies" using the search bar in the upper right corner of the Facebook home page. Hint: It's the group with the logo. ([Return to top](#))