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Homesteader - January 13, 2015

PRESBYTERY IS PEOPLE

Mason Todd, Associate Pastor Eastridge Presbyterian Church, Lincoln NE

Hey Y'all! Besides just being a warm greeting of endearment, I feel that this friendly Southern greeting says a lot about our God and our relationship with God through the Trinity. So, since I'm a southerner and God delights in being in relationship with us, I extend to you greetings in my "native tongue" and introduce my family and myself.

I grew up as a member of St. John's Episcopal Church in Columbia, South Carolina where I was active in Sunday School, youth group and as an acolyte. In high school I began attending both Shandon Presbyterian Church and YoungLife where I began to experience the relational nature of Christ.

As a student at the University of South Carolina I began exploring calls to ministry through being a YoungLife leader in local high schools. This is where God taught me that faith is fun and play is Godly.

In 2004 I graduated from USC, and in 2005 I married my high school sweetheart. We enrolled in Union Presbyterian Seminary at Charlotte, and we both began working at a new church development which became New Kirk Presbyterian. I served as the Director of Youth Ministries on a volunteer and then full-time basis for a total of 7 years.

After completing seminary with a Master of Divinity and a Master of Arts in Christian Education in 2011, I accepted my first ordained call as the solo pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Mayfield, Kentucky. During this ministry

IT'S ANNUAL STATISTICS TIME



"It's that time of year when sessions groan a bit. It's statistics season.

One of the most frequently asked questions regarding the Session Annual Statistical Report (SASR) is "Why?" The short answer,

the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Order requires churches to submit statistics annually to the presbytery (Book of Order, G-3.0302e) and the General Assembly mandates presbyteries to collect specific data about their churches.

But perhaps the longer response would be better than the "because I said so." After all, it is easier to do something if you know how it's going to be used and who needs the information. Compliance isn't the issue, understanding is. . ."

Kris Valerius from the Office of General Assembly, provides a very helpful explanation in this month's [Regarding Ruling Elders](#).

A gentle reminder to clerks of session that the reporting deadline this year is February 15.

the church saw: membership increase for the first time in 16 years to result in a 20% increase, the youth ministry return and volunteer leadership recruited, the budget trimmed and debt paid to make the church more financially stable, a contemporary worship service created, regular visitors, community-wide VBS with other local churches, and a near-total renovation of the buildings.

During my time in ministry I have served the Greater PC(USA) church's connectionality through various committees and events in various presbyteries. In Trinity Presbytery I served on the Youth Council and as the co-registrar for the delegation to Presbyterian Youth Triennium in 2010. In Western Kentucky Presbytery I served on the Leadership Development Committee and Youth Retreat Committee, as well as the Presbyterian Campus Ministry Board to Murray State University. I have also served our Church in either music or keynote/planning leadership on retreats.

In February 2013 I lead a workshop at the Annual Event for the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators in Orlando, FL. I have written Christian education resources for Union Presbyterian Seminary online, and I have also served as a Small Group Leader for Montreat Youth and College conferences.

You can often find me with a guitar, Frisbee, golf club or soccer ball in hand (or at foot) and I love to travel (when I can). I married Katie Barrett Todd in 2005, also a candidate for Ministry as a Teaching Elder, and together we have two children; Luke (2 1/2) and Lilly (18 months).

A warm welcome to Mason and his family to Homestead Presbytery!



SYNOD'S WORK HIGHLIGHTED IN HOWARD COLUMN

Craig Howard It's not often synods - even the Synod of Lakes and Prairies - receive unsolicited favorable comments, but it happened last week. Craig Howard, executive director of strategic partnerships in the Presbytery of Milwaukee, writing in Fresh Impressions, the presbytery newsletter, noted: "Then the Presbyterians will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you profiled and prevented it, or deported and helped stop it? And when was it that we saw you harassed and built community, or locked out of school and opened the door? And when was it that we saw you sick and gave you medicine or needing a drivers permit and helped you get one through a translator?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, when you supported your Synod, you blessed the least of these who are members of my family, you also helped me.' The work of the Synod is often a mystery to the average Presbyterian. We are very fortunate to have a functional and healthy middle governing body that provides education through Synod School and strong social justice support throughout the seven states in its region." Howard's complete column can be found at ["The Synod."](#)



Blessing Opportunity 2 Corinthians 9:7-8



GIVE... Your financial gifts will provide prevention education, medical supplies, sanitation kits and implements for food security to the people directly and indirectly affected by the outbreak. Designate gifts to [DR000190-Ebola response.](#)

Individuals can give through their local Presbyterian congregation, online, or by mailing a check to:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
P.O. Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Keep Thinking...

The Gospel takes away our right forever, to discriminate between the deserving and the undeserving poor. - Dorothy Day

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