

## What Makes Us Special: Your Chance to Weigh In

May 30, 2018

Being new to Wisconsin, I'm still assessing your seasonal changes. You greeted me with winter and the promise it wouldn't always be frigid.

Now, I sense your urgency about spring. Everything has sped up: pothole repairs, planting, and patio dining. It's as if the starting line gun were fired, and the race has begun. How fully can we enjoy the outdoors before it gets cold again? I've never experienced such a frenetic pace in spring. Your embrace of the possibilities that warmer weather brings is one of the things I've come to appreciate about Wisconsin.

Another is potato salad. As I shopped over the weekend, my local deli counter offered an amazing selection of potato salads. There were the distinct favorites like German potato salad. What made me puzzle were the variations on mustardy salads: American potato salad, yellow potato salad, picnic potato salad. I couldn't see the difference through the glass case, but I trust that Wisconsinites have a more discriminating palette than I do. (I went with the picnic potato salad.)



I'm paying close attention to what makes the Milwaukee Presbytery and Southeast Wisconsin unique. I hope to identify what makes us special and use it to encourage people to seek ministry opportunities here. At the General Assembly in June, we will have the chance to tout ourselves, and I'm going to have my key selling points ready.

Last week, I had the chance to ask Rev. Nicole Melara – a newer member of the Presbytery – what makes us special. Her first reaction was spot on: “We’re underrated.” I thought about running with this as our motto because it has that humble Midwest ring to it. It’s like saying, “We’re not the best, but we’re not as bad as you might think.”

While I do think we’re underrated, I need to learn from you why. I’ve been with you for all of five months. Though I’ve come to appreciate your enthusiasm for spring and your potato salads, I’m not sure they’ll be the selling points we need.

**So, I’m asking you to weigh in by taking this two-question online survey.** What do you value about the Milwaukee Presbytery? What makes Southeast Wisconsin special? Click [HERE](#) to take survey.

If you’d rather share your answers with me over the telephone, please call me at the office. Email is just fine, too ([ryates@pbymilwaukee.org](mailto:ryates@pbymilwaukee.org)).

You have two weeks to respond before I leave for GA in St. Louis. Given how quickly everything is moving these days, I have no doubt you can knock it out in record time.