



Blessings

January 2, 2019

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The New Year is already ushering in changes. As a new slate of people is installed or hired in the Presbytery, I've been thinking about the blessings we've received from people with unique talents. It reminds me we are a priesthood of all believers – a group given all gifts necessary for the building up of the Church.

In 2019, we say goodbye with our gratitude to two treasurers: Jessie Read (Presbytery Treasurer) and Detlef Pavlovich (Presbytery of Milwaukee Foundation Treasurer and former Presbytery Treasurer). Both have served the Church with their gifts of accounting and finance skills. In Detlef's case, he first began his volunteer service as Treasurer in 1998. For more than 20 years, he helped us wisely steward our assets so the Presbytery's ministries could grow. Despite a commute from Florida, we often saw his smiling face in the Presbytery Office, most recently just before Christmas when he gave the staff boxes of sweet *baclava* and hugs.

Jessie joined us at a crazy time during the transition from using the Synod for our accounting services. She helped us adapt a new accounting system so that we could handle all the finances ourselves. Her ease and patience gave us confidence that all would be well. We are excited for her as she embarks on her grand travel adventure, but we will miss her dearly.

Gladly, Gail Boerema and David Holle have stepped up to serve as the Presbytery Treasurer and Presbytery of Milwaukee Foundation Treasurer, respectively. Again, God has blessed us with people who have unique skills for serving the Church.

Over the last couple months, the Presbytery transitioned from a physical computer server to a cloud-based server, upgraded our security and internet speed, and improved our telephone system. Julian, a technician with our consultant DigiCorp, worked with us closely to solve vintage problems and improve our operations. Julian is a Christian with a unique set of computer skills as well, and he has blessed the Presbytery staff with his thoughtfulness, advocacy, and good humor.

We welcome Kate Hopta as our new Communications Coordinator next week. Her work with universities and camps in the area of social media and website design has been a passion for her and is just what we need. It's unlikely she could have anticipated, years before, that she would use these gifts for the Presbytery of Milwaukee. The Spirit works like that.

Instead of making 2019 resolutions, maybe we can all reflect on what we already do well and how God might be asking us to use those gifts in new ways. "I'm just a ..." is no excuse for the priesthood of all believers. From leadership development scholarships to A New Way task force looking at novel ministries, your passions and gifts might be just what is needed. Please let me know if you'd like to talk together about how you might take a risk for the sake of the gospel this coming year.