

Stated Clerk's Report  
Presbytery of the Northern Plains  
April 22, 2023

It's not often that someone is asked to step into the role of Stated Clerk following the unexpected death of the former Clerk. Michael Lochow served this Presbytery faithfully for many years, and his loss will be deeply felt, not only here but among the community of Stated Clerks in the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

Since I have some experience as a Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of Prospect Hill (Northwest Iowa and Northeastern Nebraska) I was asked to fill in until you have a chance to make more permanent arrangements. I will be working remotely because of the distance, and while I rejoice in the technology that makes this possible, I also realize its limitations, and I will do my best to stay in touch with you as much as possible.

Since beginning as your Stated Clerk on December 1, 2022, I have reached out to all the churches in the Presbytery to encourage you to submit your annual statistical reports. Most of the clerks of session or others were able to do this online, and I was able to help a few people who had trouble entering the statistics. The results are found in the Annual Statistical Report, which is included separately.

I was made aware, late in the process, that the churches expected to receive a letter (rather than an email) with the information, so some of you missed the email and the requisite directions. I apologize for this and will handle things by mail for the 2023 reports, or make sure that the next Stated Clerk has this information.

In addition to annual statistical reports from the congregations and the Presbytery, I have attended meetings of the Leadership Pod and advised Presbytery leaders on constitutional and procedural issues. I helped organize an information session via Zoom on the Amendments to the Constitution that will be voted on in today's meeting. And I have been able to answer questions from local congregational leaders about procedure and practice, something I relish, since the main point of the office of Stated Clerk is to facilitate the ministries of the churches in the Presbytery.

With that in mind, please feel free to contact me by phone or email. My virtual door is always open.

Rev. Richard Francis  
Stated Clerk