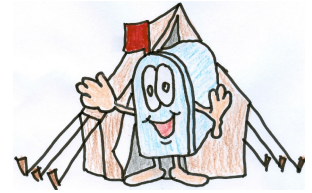




# Tent Talk

Newsletter of the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers  
[www.pcusatentmakers.org](http://www.pcusatentmakers.org)



Tentmaking: A Ministry of Choice – A Choice for Ministry

Autumn – 2011

## THE FLAP ON TENTMAKING: PART-TIME PASTORS — FULL-TIME CHURCHES

Register today for the 2011 National Tentmaker Conference co-sponsored by APT (The Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers) and NASSAM (The National Association for Self-Supporting Active Ministry, Tentmaking Clergy of the Episcopal Church) which will be held November 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> at Stony Point Center, 17 Crickettown Road, Stony Point, NY 10980.



Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about the real flap on tentmaking, facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Robert R. LaRoche, a UCC tentmaker, author, educator, and high school guidance counselor.

See more details in the conference brochure, available on our websight!

## CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Seminary Students and first time attendees to APT's National Conference may apply for assistance for both registration and travel costs. Scholarships have been made available through a benefit concert that was held in Sante Fe during our 2008 conference and by a generous grant from the General Assembly of PC(U.S.A.) in 2009. For more information and an application contact the registrar, Fred Bunning at 1035 20<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Loveland, Colorado 80537, 970-667-4853, [fcvlbunning@msn.com](mailto:fcvlbunning@msn.com)

## MEET BOB LAROCHELLE

Bob is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and has served as pastor of his small church in Connecticut for over ten years. He is a former Roman Catholic ordained Permanent Deacon and has served in professional leadership positions in the Catholic Church on the parish and diocesan levels. He is a full time High School Counselor and has worked in education for thirty five years. He is also a former varsity high school baseball coach. He holds degrees in Religious Studies, Religious Education, and Counseling. He also holds a Doctor of Ministry in Preaching from Chicago Theological Seminary.

His publications include articles in *Congregations*, *The Living Pulpit*, *Still Speaking*, *Sharing the Practice*, and the *Day One* web site. He is the author of *Part Time Pastor, Full Time Church* (Pilgrim Press 2010) and the forthcoming book *Crossing the Street* (Energion, May 2012). His next book explores relationships between Protestant and Catholic Christians.

Bob has been married to Patricia Coppinger LaRoche for thirty ones years and they are the parents of three children.



## A Word From our Conference Presenter

I am really excited to be participating in your annual Conference for Tentmaking Ministry at Stony Point, NY, this November. I believe deeply and passionately both that wonderful leadership can occur in churches led by part time, bi-vocational pastors and that, even when churches are led by part time leaders, they can thrive and flourish as spirited, energetic communities of Christian faith!

In shaping my presentations to you, I am seeking to address issues both theological and practical. I am looking at examining what it means to be a 'full time church' when one has a part time pastor. I will explore the negativity often associated with transitioning to part time pastoral leadership. Yet, most importantly, I will try to help us look at this reality as providing great opportunity for both pastor and congregation. I am a strong believer in the possibilities inherent in this special relationship.

I will seek to address a multiple array of pragmatic questions: What are the implications for the search and call process? How does a tentmaking pastor and her/his church establish priorities? What are the potential pitfalls in this relationship? How can technological tools enhance tentmaking ministry? I will lead us in exploring these questions and eagerly await the dialogue we have as you formulate your questions and as you share your experiences. In short, I know this will be a great weekend. I am blessed to be sharing it with you!

If you have read my book, *Part Time Pastor, Full Time Church* (Pilgrim Press, 2010), I would love to hear your feedback. I will also make available some copies for purchase if you are interested.

I hope to see you this November in beautiful New York State!

God's Peace,

Bob LaRochelle



## The Universal Tentmaker

[excerpts from Presbyterian News Service article by Bethany Furkin]  
see article at: <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2011/8/16/universal-tentmaker/>

Although the concept of tentmaking — serving as a minister while earning a living in another field — is often only applied to church leaders, all Christians should be tentmakers, said the Rev. Dan Kimball, speaking at the Engage Conference for new church development leaders in Florida on August 10, 2011.



Dan Kimball

Kimball, a pastor at Vintage Faith Church in Santa Cruz, Calif., said that we often think of missionaries in the context of overseas service. But by studying the demographics of their own community before planting a church, Vintage Faith was able to better understand the mission field in their own backyard.

Instead of copying a model of how we think church should be, church planters could try to think about how a missionary would plant a church that reflects the values and people of a community. This doesn't mean throwing out the gospel, but just as a missionary would learn about and adjust to a country's culture, church planters should consider the culture around them, Kimball said.

When it began, Vintage Faith met in a nightclub, just as other church plants might meet at a coffee shop or a pub. Such changes require planters to think about how “church” is defined biblically. In the Bible, church is not about the place, but about a group of Jesus’ followers on a mission together, Kimball said.

Kimball encouraged conference attendees to rethink church, evangelism, leadership, and buildings. “We can’t go to church because we are the church.” “It’s important to remember that we’re not in God’s house — we are God’s house.”

Rethinking evangelism means moving from seeing evangelism as a program to seeing our identities as missionaries. This identity should affect how churches make decisions and determine successes. The church should function like a missionary training and support center, with pastors rethinking their sermons to motivate missionaries.

Kimball asked the pastors in the group if they spend more time guarding and creating committees, processes, and hierarchies than they do training people to use their God-given gifts for mission.

## EDITORIAL COMMENTS

For several years as I’ve worked at our APT booth at General Assembly, when people have asked, “**What is a tentmaker?**” I’ve replied, that’s what you are. Indeed, the concept of “**Universal Tentmaker**” has been prominently displayed on a placard at our booth.

### **You too may be a tentmaker —**

If you embody your commitment to Christ in your work

If you derive all or part of your living from a source other than the church

Dan Kimball’s comment on evangelism not being a program but rather seeing ourselves as missionaries reminded me of an article a few decades back in the *Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study*. It told about what was happening in Africa in the Sudan Area, a Presbyterian mission field since the 1920’s. Over fifty new churches had sprung up around Nasir among the Nuer tribe, even though they only had one pastor and no missionaries. The reason for the rapid growth is the ‘evangelists.’ One person who is led to Christ is taught to read and is given a Nuer New Testament. As that individual sits around in the village reading (a rare sight), others ask questions, and the reader responds. Soon you have a Bible study, and not much later the one who was taught to read has become an evangelist, and a new church has started. This story has repeated itself many times.

So, it would seem a tentmaking evangelist could be anyone who has learned to read. If evangelists seem to be rare, perhaps it’s because reading the Bible is a rare sight. The place to begin is in reading our Bibles. Then we need to be willing to share with others what God is communicating to us. And before you know it more and more people will come to know and follow Jesus. And Jesus will be more than the historical character we hear about in Sunday School. Jesus will be an intimate part of our everyday encounter with God’s word and our fellow humans.

Fred Bunning

## KEEP YOUR DUES CURRENT

To be a member of APT, fill out and send in the form below along with your dues of \$50. Dues may also be remitted along with your registration for the Fall conference, so register today and double your pleasure.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Presbytery (other denomination) \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Position \_\_\_\_\_ Tent Position \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to APT and send to Fred Bunning, 1035 20<sup>th</sup> St SW, Loveland, CO 80537

### APT Purposes

- To be advocates for alternative models of ministry throughout the church
- To define and affirm tentmaking as a valid expression of Christian ministry
- To nurture and support tentmakers as continuing active members in good standing of presbyteries
- To foster relationships with similar organizations in other denominations and other parts of the world
- To provide opportunities for worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, discussion of issues of concern to tentmakers, and for meetings of the association

### APT Activities

- Annual national ecumenical conference
- *Tent Talk* (Newsletter) for APT members and denominational leaders
- Providing interpretive resources for congregations, councils, and other interested groups
- Facilitating communication among tentmakers through various forms of networking
- Providing supportive service and training for councils

***Tent Talk***, APT Newsletter

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