



**WE ARE THE PRESBYTERY
OF WESTERN COLORADO**

Pressing News

Holiday 2012

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A GRATEFUL GENERAL PRESBYTER Jim Cory

What a wonderful send off Cappy and I received from the Presbytery of Western Colorado at their September 21-22nd meeting at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Grand Junction. Your farewell gift of a Waterford Crystal Tray and antique chalice made in 1850 is a beautiful Lord's Supper set that is now displayed on our living room bookcase. In addition you made a financial donation to me of \$1092.00. This financial gift will be used for a special trip that Cappy and I will take some time in 2013.

Although I am retiring from the General Presbyter position, Cappy and I will continue to live in Montrose and look forward in retirement to continued friendships with the wonderful group of pastors and members of the Presbytery of Western Colorado. A number of people have asked what I plan to do after retirement December 31, 2012? I have joined the 500 Mile Walking Club which offers one or two hikes a week in the surrounding area. If I go on all the hikes offered, I will have hiked 500 miles in one year. Cappy will continue teaching piano to about thirty piano students.

**PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN COLORADO
2013 Budget**

Our budget is divided into two categories--**Ecclesiastical** (the funds we use to make decisions about our mission—funded by **per capita**) and **Mission** (the way we do our mission—funded by our **mission giving**). Line item budgets are available upon request.

ECCLESIASTICAL FUND

Income	
Per Capita Funding	73,591.00
Other Funding from Investment Income	00
Total Income	<u>73,591.00</u>
Expense	
Administration	7,600.00
Committees/Commissions	5,550.00
Ecclesiastical Staff (Clerk, Treasurer)	31,335.00
Insurance, Taxes	4,575.00
Per Capital Passed On	
Synod Per Capita	11,416.00
General Assembly Per Capita	<u>3,115.00</u>
Total Expenses	<u>73,591.00</u>

MISSION FUND

Income	
Total Congregational Mission Giving	39,673.00
Synod Block Grant	35,200.00
United Church of the San Juan's	<u>1,000.00</u>
Total Revenue	<u>75,873.00</u>
Expense	
Mission Programs	10,700.00
Evangelism & Church Development	00.00
Mission Staff (Cluster Leaders, Secretary)	56,173.00
Local Mission Grants	00.00
Other Mission	<u>9,000.00</u>
Total Expenses	<u>75,873.00</u>
TOTAL PRESBYTERY BUDGET FOR 2013	<u>149,464.00</u>

Please prayerfully join in partnership with other congregations in the Presbytery of Western Colorado to fulfill our mission and ministry.

Reminder

All Mission Giving Money must be turned into the Presbytery Office by January 6th in order for us to be able to turn it around and submit to the General Assembly by January 14th. This is only if you wish to have these gifts counted at the General Assembly level for the 2012 year. This includes all special funding like Theological Education Fund and Christmas/Joy offering. General Assembly closes their financial books by the 15th of January so please know that anything received in the Presbytery office after January 6th will not be submitted to General Assembly for the 2012 giving year.

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

Coeditors: Herb Miller, Lyle E. Schaller, Cynthia Woolever - www.TheParishPaper.com

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How to Maintain Church Health in a Declining Population County

World War II's financial transfusion healed the Great Depression of the 1930s. But World War II also ended rural America's Norman Rockwell era.

When 15 million people took off military uniforms in 1945, many of them put on wedding rings and began revising America's population distribution. Halos of suburbs filled with young families and small children began ringing U.S. cities. Simultaneously, during the next three decades, more than 75 percent of America's agricultural population began "moving to town."

School districts in the newborn suburbs grew rapidly. Small businesses grew. Churches grew. Thousands of new congregations scrambled to build Sunday school space for history's largest crop of children, soon called the baby boomers.

The financial income of those thousands of suburban congregations also grew. Multiple staffs became more common. And those multiple staffs grew larger as some suburban congregations—born at exactly the right time and place—moved toward mega-church status.

Meanwhile, the rural and small-town churches in population-vacated counties changed radically. The median age of their members rose as their attendance declined. They grew older and smaller.

Today's Picture of Small-Town and Open-Country Churches

1. Countless Sunday school classrooms for children now stand empty—silent, musty tombstones of a noisier time.
2. Diminished financial resources make the heating/air-conditioning bills increasingly difficult to pay.
3. Shrinking offerings amputate many of the community-service and missions ministries.
4. Many elementary Sunday school classes are consolidated—grouping together eight grades into three classes that had once been eight individual classes. Joining junior and senior high youth groups leads to mostly negative results, according to the kids.

5. Elementary Sunday school teachers are harder to recruit. "I've already done my part—when *my* kids were young!" people say.

6. Many of the committee chairpersons hold office for several consecutive years. They defend this practice by saying, "Nobody else will take it."

7. Creative programing has decreased. "We've always done it this way" becomes the sound of inflexible concrete.

8. The church treasurer has served for twenty consecutive years. The governing board increasingly bows to his wishes regarding "how we should spend the church's money."

9. The median age of governing board members is in the stratosphere; the youngest one is now age 65. New ways of thinking regarding challenges are less and less respected.

10. Saving money has become the church's highest goal, leaving mission and ministry opportunities blowing in the wind. Restroom signs say, "Please turn out the lights," while governing board meetings discuss at length how to better achieve this goal. Important ministry issues are seldom discussed.



"ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS,
YOU'VE CHAIRED THE COMMITTEE TO REINVIGORATE
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM FOR 37 YEARS."

11. As the staff size shrinks the former professionals are replaced by volunteers who lack experience and training.

12. A long-term church secretary now makes many decisions that were previously handled by the pastor and the program staff.

Counteracting This Fading-Effectiveness Pattern

1. Find a genuine human need in the community and develop ways to address that need. Example: One small-town congregation filled a large, unused classroom with exercise equipment and opened it for use by citizens of the community.

2. Work with other community churches to meet human needs. Examples: (a) Organize an annual fund-raising event that addresses a particular human hurt. (b) In one small town, several churches work together to provide volunteer staff for a used clothing store in an empty building on Main Street. Members of all the churches contribute the used clothing, which the store sells at extremely low prices.

3. Keep the church governing board small—five to seven people—and restrict board-member tenure to three consecutive years. This prevents a short list of people from running everything and reduces the tendency of a few individuals to exert more and more control over the church's future.

4. Don't allow committee chairpersons to hold office for more than two consecutive years. Staying too long in a chairperson role (a) feeds the desire for power and control in some personalities, and (b) reduces the committee's creative thinking ability regarding activities that best serve people in the congregation and the community. Develop a rule by which the vice-chairperson of each committee serves for two years and becomes the chairperson of that committee for the subsequent two years.

5. To address the building's janitorial needs, develop a rotating team system in which a different family unit handles the vacuuming, dusting, and cleaning each week.

6. Schedule an annual breakfast on a Saturday for volunteers, followed by an all-church cleaning day. Tip: In order to increase attendance, assign specific aspects of the building to specific committees, organizations, and adult classes. Avoid saying, "everyone should come and help out." That type of invitation reduces the number of people who show up and builds resentment among those dedicated people who begin to feel like, "We do all the work around here!"

7. What if your congregation is a childless church in which no regularly attending families have children in

elementary or high school? Develop an education task force of two or three regular attendees who stand ready to teach an impromptu class or classes in case worship visitors with children unexpectedly appear.

8. If your congregation has only one or two high school students and only a handful of elementary students, don't ask the high school students to serve as teachers or nursery attendants. Teenagers are in a time of life when Bible study with kids their age facilitates character development. Don't steal that opportunity from them!

9. Long-term members who love their congregation may have willed endowment monies to ensure that their church continues its ministry with future generations. You may be tempted to use some of that permanent endowment to balance the annual operating budget each year. Don't do it! Diverting that money to the operating budgets strangles the golden goose and discourages generous financial stewardship among members. Use the endowment accounts only as directed in the endowment.

10. Create a separate endowment board or committee. Do not make the church's regular governing board responsible for both its endowment monies and its operating budgets. Otherwise, bad judgment often drowns the appropriate use of endowment funds.

11. Limit the terms of church treasurers to three consecutive years. The church's treasurer should present written reports at each meeting. Without this kind of official oversight it is easy to slip into a situation where the treasurer neglects to bring the report and financial meetings become more like conversations among friends.

12. Always require an annual audit of the church's finances. Inappropriate use of church funds can happen if the governing board fails in its due diligence responsibilities. Contact the appropriate denominational office for a set of instructions regarding how to conduct an annual audit.

The Bottom Line

Declining county population leads to declining membership in its religious congregations—which lead to rising median age levels in those counties and congregations. That rising median age of a church's members often leads to bad habits, ill health, and the congregation's eventual death. To build better congregational health, begin by building better habits.

A Round of Prayer In the Presbytery of Western Colorado

For 2013-2014

2011 marks the eleventh year we've been doing this: it's a simple, biblical, faithful idea that has great power. Many of our congregations have been joining in prayer each week, praying for other congregations, ministries, and people in the Presbytery of Western Colorado. It has been a source of great blessing.

You are invited to join in this "Round of Prayer." It includes each of our congregations and fellowships, pastors (both retired and active), Candidates and Inquirers, and Presbytery and Synod staff. Pray for spouses, too: their names are in parentheses.

There are too many entries to do in one year, but that's okay! You are encouraged to send cards, make phone calls, or send e-mail greetings to those for whom you pray. If you need more information please call Presbytery Office at 970-240-8455 or toll free at 877-927-7372.

Sunday, January 6, 2013: Roger Knapp (Linda), Honorably Retired, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Sunday, January 13: Jim Patton (Charlene), Honorably Retired, Cortez

Sunday, January 20: : Montezuma Valley Presbyterian Church, Cortez, Pastors Kim and Steve Nofel

Sunday, January 27: Roy Altman (Kathy) Honorably Retired, Silt

Sunday, February 3: Larry Zirschky (Sharon), Minister at Large, Columbia, South Carolina

Sunday, February 10: Covenant Presbyterian Church, Grand Junction, Pastor Chuck Jerome (Sue)

Sunday, February 17: William Mangrum (Valerie), Minister at Large, Durango

Sunday, February 24: Sandy Cox (Bill), widow of deceased minister, Santa Barbara California

Sunday, March 3: Monument Presbyterian Church, Grand Junction, Pastor Jeff Harmeling (Mary)

Sunday, March 10: Bill Forbes (Gloria), Honorably Retired, Whitewater

Sunday, March 17: William Postler (Jan), Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Western Colorado

Sunday, March 24: Presbyterian Church of Delta, Designated Pastor Alisa Secrest (Larry)

Sunday, March 31: EASTER: Celebrate our Lord's Resurrection! Christ is Risen Indeed!

Sunday, April 7: Edgell Pyles (Marti Pickett), Honorably Retired, Carbondale

Sunday, April 14: Ute Mountain Presbyterian Ministry, Bud Rousset, United Methodist Pastor

Sunday, April 21: J. Cyrus Smith, Honorably Retired, Grand Junction

Sunday, April 28: Betty Kendrick (Max), Widow of deceased minister, Cedaredge

Sunday, May 5: First Presbyterian Church, Grand Junction, Pastor Tom Hansen (Shelly), Associate Pastor Travis Fletcher (Jill)

Sunday, May 12: Sandy Newman (Clark Lagow), Honorably Retired, Durango

Sunday, May 19: PENTECOST: Rejoice in the Power of the Holy Spirit!

Sunday, May 26: Allison Community Presbyterian Church, CLP Alan TeBrink (Brenda)

Sunday, June 2: Candidates: Sally Henry (Kim), Sharon Jensen, Andy Konigsmark (Dorothy), Jennifer McKenzie, Patricia Stetson (John Waring), Alan TeBrink (Brenda), Sarah Tunall

Sunday, June 9: Beth Gilleece (Jim), Administrative Assistant, Presbytery of Western Colorado

Sunday, June 16: Christ Presbyterian Church, Telluride, Pastor Pat Bailey (Debbie)

Sunday, June 23: Chuck Robison (Karen), Honorably Retired, Austin, Texas

Sunday, June 30: Mary Mayhew (Glenn), widow of deceased minister, Montrose

Sunday, July 7: First Presbyterian Church of Durango, Pastor Beau Smith (Kristen)

Sunday, July 14: Gary Hixson (Kathleen), missionary in Spain and other countries

Sunday, July 21: Marilyn Ruth (Al), widow of deceased minister, Colorado Springs

Sunday, July 28: United Church of the San Juans, Ridgway, Interim Part Time Pastor Harry Strong (Anna)

Sunday, August 4: Jim Cory (Cappy), Honorably Retired, Montrose

Sunday, August 11: Mary Jean Smatla (Thomas), widow of deceased minister, Grand Junction

Sunday, August 18: Lake City Community Presbyterian Church, Pastor Rick Underwood (Faye)

Sunday, August 25: George Miller, Honorably Retired, Montrose

Sunday, September 1: Dorothy Loyer (Robert), widow of deceased minister, Eckert

Sunday, September 8: Florida Mesa Presbyterian Church, Pastor Dan Straw (Kathy)

Sunday, September 15: Jim Petersen (Janet), Honorably Retired, Ridgway

Sunday, September 22: Synod of the Rocky Mountains David Ezekiel, Interim Synod Exec., Lynn A. Smit, Stated Clerk; Liz Saperstein Synod Treasurer, Bobbie Hoffman Administrative Assistant

Sunday, September 29: Eckert Presbyterian Church, Pastor Jo DeVinny (David)

Sunday, October 6: Mary Hammond Atkinson (Clark) minister at large, Grand Junction

Sunday, October 13: Fran Ferguson (Bob), widow of deceased minister, Knoxville, TN

Sunday, October 20: First Presbyterian Church, Montrose, Pastor Alan Gibson (Teri)

Sunday, October 27: Bill Young (Pat), Honorably Retired, Grand Junction

Sunday, November 3: X Lazy F Ranch, Jared Clark Manager

Sunday, November 10: Rico Community Presbyterian Church, Suzy Meyer, Supply CLP

Sunday, November 17: Barbara Parker (Harold), widow of deceased minister, Florida

Sunday, November 24: Julianne Fraley-Gilchrist (Jon), Minister at Large, Alberta, Canada

Sunday, December 1: First Presbyterian Church, Glenwood Springs, Pastor Charis Caldwell (Mike Buechin),

Sunday, December 8: Bridgett Evenson (Larry) Presbytery Treasurer, Gary Hendrix (Dorothy) Presbytery Accountant

Sunday, December 15: Pine River Calvary Presbyterian Church, Bayfield; Pastor Brian Caselles (Sherry)

Sunday, December 22: **CHRISTMAS! Celebrate the Lord's Birth!**

Sunday, December 29: Inquirers: Garrett Mostowski (Paige)

Sunday, January 5, 2014 Stephen Smith (Samantha), Honorably Retired Tulsa, OK

Now, start at the top, make appropriate adjustments, and keep praying!

...& They
Shall Name
Him
Emmanuel



THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

Coeditors: Herb Miller, Lyle E. Schaller, Cynthia Woolever - www.TheParishPaper.com

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How to Use Our Five Senses to Experience the Wonder of Advent

Advent is a season of the senses. Scents of pine, bayberry, and Christmas cookies ready to taste fill the air. Everywhere you go, carols waft to your ears. The feel of wrapping paper and sticky tape touch our fingers. We “ooh” at the sight of outdoor lighting displays or behold the beauty of a simply decorated tree. This is also true in our church buildings and services—though many times we don’t recognize the senses for the spiritually teachable moments that they hold. Advent can be a time to help worshipers be present to life and to God in new ways. We all desire authentic spiritual experiences with God, but the trouble is that most of our teaching comes by way of sermons, books, Bible studies, and other spiritual resources. These all instruct our *thinking* but often miss our *souls*, the prime place of divine encounter.

Using the Whole Brain to Experience God

Advent gives us an opportunity to engage both sides of our brain, with all five senses and our bodies, to more fully experience God. When we’re fully present—body, mind, and soul—we learn how to cultivate an experiential faith that is attentive to a self-disclosing God.

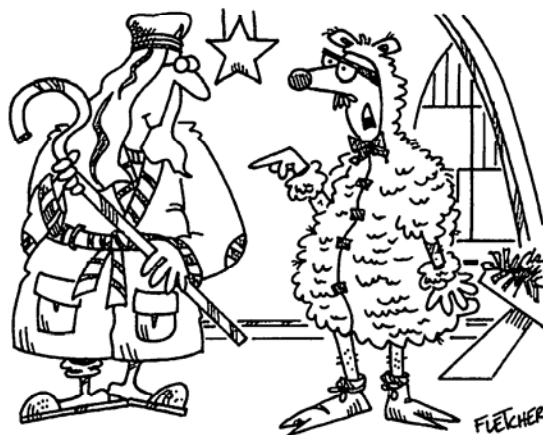
The role of the left brain. Words are the primary form of communication that we use to nurture our spiritual lives. Words are the language of the left brain, which is the logical and concrete center of our thinking that uses words to understand and interpret experiences. However, the left brain cannot experience God or anything else. The right brain does the *experiencing*. The left brain then takes *meaning* from the experiences processed by our right brain. Planning Advent worship experiences that involve the whole brain helps make faith more than an intellectual exercise for your congregants.

The role of the right brain. This creative and intuitive center of our brain communicates through images, not words. Images are anything that you en-

vision through one or more of your senses. For instance, when you *smell* the scent of pine and think “Hanging of the Greens,” you have just utilized your right brain through your sense of smell. When you listen to “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing” and it brings to mind the image of heavenly choirs, you have *heard* the sound and processed it using the right side of your brain.

Because the right brain does our experiencing, sensory spiritual practices that involve the right brain open us to a heightened perception and experience of God. Such exercises position our heart for divine encounter. However, we need both sides of our brain in order to live and grow as a person of faith. In fact, neither side can do its job well without the other.

The role of all five senses. Since our lives are led mostly through the act of thinking, we often become divorced from our souls and bodies. Using our senses helps us to live in the present. This is important because the present is the only place that we can fully experience God. Advent is a wonderful time to



FOR THE LAST TIME, HAROLD...
ENGAGING MY PHYSICAL SENSES IN WORSHIP
DURING ADVENT DOES NOT INCLUDE
BEING POKED BY A SHEPHERD'S STAFF!

practice using our senses so that we can experience God in the reality of the present moment.

Scripture is filled with dozens of references to the physical senses. Many are familiar, such as Psalm 34:8: “O *taste* and *see* that the Lord is good” (KJV). And there is Matthew 5:8, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall *see* God” (KJV). These passages provide reminders about the importance of the often-forgotten art of linking senses to spirituality.

It is not difficult for us to recognize the pure, God-given sensory experiences of seeing a dramatic waterfall or smelling the delicate scent of a newborn child for the gifts that they are. Yet, we rarely think about our sensory experiences as windows into the life of the Spirit that can lead us to opportunities of experiencing God in fresh ways.

The body. Some faith traditions model how to involve the body in worship and prayer as a way to express one’s heart. And undeniably, when we involve our bodies in kinesthetic response, we reinforce what we are feeling, thinking, and doing. The actions involved in kneeling for prayer, lighting the Advent candle, singing carols, or walking to the altar for Christmas Eve communion strengthen our internal attitudes through outward expression.

Too often, however, we live mostly in our thoughts—making lists and checking them twice—and spend too little time listening to what our bodies are saying. Yet Christians throughout history have known that our bodies have much to teach us. During Advent, worshipers utilize not only their senses, but also their *bodies* to form a closer relationship with God.

Enhancing Worship through the Senses

Below are just a few ways that you can use sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touch to help your congregation go deeper into their lives with God.

- Give every worshiper a piece of swaddling cloth. During the service, read the passage containing Luke 2:7 and encourage them to feel, smell, and listen to the cloth as they fold and unfold it.
- If you offer communion during Advent, before inviting congregants to participate ask them to prepare their bodies as well as their souls for the experience. Encourage them to take time to no-

tice the tastes, textures, and scents involved in the experience of receiving communion.

- Set up a crèche at the entrance to your sanctuary. Place sticky-pads and pencils there. Invite congregants to pause there before entering for worship and imagine themselves in that scene. What do they smell? Taste? Feel? See? Hear? Have them take a sticky-note, write a word or two about it, and stick it on the wall around the crèche.

Beyond these options, take some time to think of the ways that your church traditionally celebrates Advent: lighting an Advent candle, hanging an Advent wreath, performing a Christmas cantata, presenting a Christmas play, or having a candlelight worship service. Which of them could you use to involve the physical senses and help link the right and left brain? Are there fresh ways to utilize your congregation’s Advent celebration to engage your members’ senses, bodies, and (entire) brains?

The Bottom Line

When we combine our whole brains and bodies in attention and love, we move to a new level of noticing. We get a deep, clear look at God everywhere around us. Encourage your congregation to slow their breathing, quiet their minds, and calm their hearts during this busy season. Then invite them to take a fresh look with attention *and* love.

Ask them to involve themselves in self-reflection as they consider:

- What do I see?
- What do I smell?
- What do I hear?
- What do I taste?
- What do I feel?
- When did I catch a glimpse, whiff, touch, taste, or sound of the Divine?

By inviting them to engage their senses in ways like this, you will help awaken them to the wonder of God all around them—a joyous, sensuous, spiritual awakening at Advent!

This article was adapted from *Awaken Your Senses: Exercises for Exploring the Wonder of God* (IVP, 2012) by J. Brent Bill and Beth A. Booram.

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Let us pursue
what
makes for
peace. Romans 14:19

An Invitation to Peace Discernment

Join the Conversation Taking Place across the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

AUGUST 2012–APRIL 2013

Imagine your congregation as a place where God's people gather to actively "discern peace." Next, imagine hundreds of congregations doing the same thing. Finally, imagine all of these voices together helping to shape the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s vision of peacemaking for years to come.

In response to eight presbytery overtures, the 219th General Assembly (2010) initiated a churchwide discernment process to examine new directions for peacemaking and to encourage every Presbyterian to be challenged by the nonviolent witness of Jesus Christ.

Discernment is a powerful spiritual practice capable of opening us to the will and wisdom of God and leading us into deep conversations with one another about the state of the world, the costs of war, the needs of our country, and the calling of Christ's church.

Here are some of the questions congregations are invited to consider:

- After 10 years of war, with movements for democratic change growing in the Arab world and with the human and economic costs of war becoming increasingly clear, is it time to find a new way forward for our church's peace witness?
- How can the PC(USA) hasten the day when war is no longer considered an acceptable or inevitable means for resolving conflicts, and what are the best means for providing protection and security?
- How can Presbyterians help transform complicated structures of injustice and oppression and address the threat of environmental degradation?
- How do we respond to the example of Jesus and the nonviolent church of the first three centuries after seventeen centuries of trying to restrain violence through "just war" categories? Is there a third way between fight and flight?
- Is the PC(USA) now being called to become a "peace church," not simply opposing particular wars but affirming nonviolence as a basic orientation toward conflict — in our daily lives, in our communities, and in our world?

Please join the PC(USA) Peace Discernment Process, individually or through your congregation or presbytery. Visit www.pcusa.org/peace-discernment/ for downloadable resources to guide your discernment and for an online response form to report your findings.

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Return Service Requested

**May the Joy and Wonder of the Season Fill you with Peace.
Merry Christmas from the Presbytery of Western Colorado**

Jim Cory

Bill Postler

Brigitte Evenson

Beth Gilleece

