



WE ARE THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN COLORADO

Pressing News

March—April 2013

Inside this issue:

Continue: Manaugh loves the
Presbyterian Church **2**

The Parish Paper: What
Leadership style Works in Our
Church? **3**

Continue: What Leadership Style
Works in Our Church **4**

The Parish Paper : Oral
Communication: How to
Strengthen our Effectiveness **5**

Continue: Oral Communication:
How to Strengthen Our
Effectiveness **6**

Communication Tools
APA invite
Order Calendars **7**

Sally Henry Invitation
Nicaragua Fair Trades **8**

Manaugh Loves the Presbyterian Church

"In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me!" Thank you all J Matthew 25:40

Manaugh Loves the Presbyterian Church

It took place at the spring stated meeting of presbytery hosted by our Cortez Presbyterian Church. You might not remember it, but I remember very well. At nearly mid-afternoon on the first day of the meeting each of our three clusters broke out into small groups. The northern cluster took advantage of our beautiful four-corners weather and met on the benches on the east side of our church building. They were there at 3:00 when Manaugh Elementary School, right across the street south of our church, let out for the day. To speak of dismissal time graphically, the school puked out students by the dozen and parents, also by the dozen picked up their precious cargo.

When the presbytery reconvened, our church was challenged, "What an opportunity you have. What do you do for that school?" I listed some of the ministries we have done over the years, such as our deacons' "Soles for Souls" program of providing gym shoes for children who needed them.

For our congregation I answered question after question about our relationship with Manaugh Elementary. It could only have been a few minutes, but it seemed like a very long question and answer period. I was definitely feeling defensive.

I listed ministries and talked about our relationship with Manaugh over the years, I felt pretty good about our connection with the school.

At the same time we move on. Wee Kirk conference, a whole summer of ministry, new challenges in the neighborhood, and General Assembly took my attention away from the presbytery meeting. But, obviously, I haven't forgotten that exchange.

In late summer, one of our many "natural deacons" Deb Kennedy told us that Manaugh was getting its third principal in five years, her good friend, Donita Dehart. Deb also told us, "She wouldn't mind our church adopting the school."

That's all we needed to hear.

Our Deacon moderator, Pat Robbins, and I visited with Donita. Two things were painfully obvious. There was almost no parent interest or participation in school activities. Donita told us the first parent meeting had exactly two people show up, and they were related. Second, the teachers and staff needed to know they are cherished.

So we set to it.

We invited anyone from the school to join our prayer breakfast each Wednesday morning at 6:30 a.m. at the church. Donita and her secretary, Trina

are now regulars.

For both the fall and spring parent / teacher conferences, our deacons and volunteers from the church have provided meals for the staff - more about this ministry below.

At Christmas we opened our doors and invited them to use our fellowship hall for their Holiday Party. Our deacons made each person a small gift of a personal sized candle, with a rubber wrist band around it with a Christian saying, and a small piece of paper inserted into the top of the candle which read, "You are the light of the world" – Matthew 5:14

The next day, when I came to church, written on the white board we normally have our Sunday school memory verse and songs was written: "*In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me!*" Thank you all J
Matthew 25:40

After the New Year, our Wednesday morning prayer breakfast group began another ministry. Each Wednesday we stand on the street corner between the school and church and hand out free coffee, hot chocolate and orange juice to parents dropping off their kids. It is wonderful and wild! We usually pass out about 70 cups, mostly coffee. Each cup has a sleeve that reads, "Wishing you a cup full of blessings today and everyday – Montezuma Valley Presbyterian Church."

Some mornings have absolutely been frigid, after a half hour, we can barely feel our fingers, but our hearts are warmed by the ministry. This week, Donita and the staff wrote on their sandwich board and placed it in front of the school and then the church: *Manauh Loves the Presbyterian Church.*

Next week we plan to borrow the sign and turn things around: *Presbyterian Church Loves Manauh.*

I just knew we made an impact one snowy cold morning when I was out shoveling snow, and I saw Donita trying to get my attention from across the street. I pulled off my hat, stopped my CD player, removed my ear buds, and yelled, "What?" She yelled over, "I said, 'You missed a spot.'" She laughed and laughed. I knew she was comfortable and our church and her school were buddies.

We have also worked at becoming part of the school's emergency plan. We have given Donita a key to the church and invited them to just come in anytime they ever need to have an emergency evacuation. They now know the church is a safe place and a welcoming place.

Let's get back to the meals we provided for parent / teacher conferences. Let me share with you, part of my sermon the week after the spring conferences:

{{How do we balance Jesus two seeming opposite teachings? "Go into your room in secret" and "Let your light shine."}}

I believe the answer is that we are supposed to minister in Jesus name to help the recipients of the ministry. AND to be examples of the service for God's glory. Here is the illustration that our church lived out this week.

As you know we have adopted the teachers and staff of Manauh School this year. Our goal is that in showing them the real-life love of Christ, we will buck them up, help with morale, and by improving things for the staff we help the kids and our community – all because of the love of Christ.

On Thursday at noon, we took over about 18 tons (no exaggeration) for the staff's lunch and dinner during parent – teacher conferences. Then on Friday morning, we took over about 16 tons more of breakfast foods.

As the group of us were bringing the food into the building, one elder went ahead of us playing a trumpet - dum, da, da, dum! We yelled out, "Presbyterians here with food! Presbyterians here with food! Aren't we great! Aren't we just special! Look what we are doing for you poor – poor underpaid public servants! Dum, da, da, dum! The staff fell at our feet and there was much adulation and praise.

Of course, it didn't happen that way. The reality was so much different and so surprising. As we came in with arms full, person after person came to us and thanked us. One gal said, "You have such a great church. You're people are special." I felt kinda funny saying it, but I did say, "You're right, we have a special group." Not trumpeting, but Matthew 5:16, "***Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.***"

I overheard one teacher telling another a story. "I told a friend over at Kemper (an elementary school about a mile away) about the Presbyterian Church taking such good care of us. She asked, 'Could they adopt us to?' I told, them, no! Get their own church!" God is getting glory through town, not by your pastors' flowing robes and complicated prayers, but through ministry.

You know how much I have been thinking about the word *BLESSING* since the New Year. One male staff member said to me, unsolicited, "You are a blessing to us." By you, he didn't mean your pastor, I was incognito – I had on jeans, t-shirt and ball cap (I looked no more like a pastor than Yogi Berra does). He meant our congregation is showing the Love of Christ in real ways.

One staff member told Deacon Pat how good it was to have people eating together, and how much their morale has been boosted by our simple actions. Pat simply said, "This is what it's all about."

We trumpet not ourselves. We trumpet the Glory of our Father in Heaven.

"And they know we are Christian, by our love, by our love. Yes, they'll know we are Christian by our love."}}

In conclusion, I don't know if we have gained anything measurable as a church. We haven't had any new members because of our "adopting Manauh." Maybe it has boosted *our* morale some. Maybe we feel a little better about ourselves. Maybe we are just a little sinfully proud of these activities - most of all though, we trumpet the Glory of our Father in Heaven. That truly is what it's all about..

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

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

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What Leadership Style Works in Our Church?

Dave wanted to be a good pastor, and the right pastor for the church. But daily he felt like a square peg being pounded into a round hole. Unfortunately, different factions in the congregation held different views on his leadership. Some church members wanted Dave to bring an exciting new ministry vision and direction, others wanted to feel more emotionally engaged in church life, and another group of members wanted a comforting shepherd who focused on taking care of their spiritual needs. Dave, and all groups within the church, operated on unshared assumptions about pastoral leadership.

Leadership methods abound in the business and secular nonprofit world, but do these understandings enhance our insight into leadership in local church ministry? Leadership in the congregation is more complex because it must be the right style of leadership not only for the church itself, but also for the surrounding community in which the church is located. Still, whether we are considering secular or pastoral leadership, most leadership theories share the view that leadership is distinct from management. One definition clarifies the distinction with this image: "Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall."

Pastoral Approaches to Leadership

Leadership means that someone directs, inspires, or motivates others. Generally the person is out front, leading the way with big-picture ideas, more possibilities, or practical solutions. A recent national study asked pastors to assess the extent to which they used three common leadership approaches. A random sample of worshipers in each congregation answered the same questions about their pastor's leadership style. The results show that pastors often rely on more than one of these overlapping approaches or strategies.

Transformational leadership. Pastors with this leadership approach define and determine a common

ministry vision. The pastor creates a sense of loyalty and excitement among members by connecting them to that vision. As a result, church members feel some ownership in this vision and work to achieve the church's goals. Transformational pastors offer intriguing new possibilities and help worshipers think about problems in new ways.

The national survey revealed that *worshipers* see their pastor exhibiting *more* transformational leadership traits than the leaders do themselves.

Servant leadership. Pastors employing a servant leadership approach tend to focus more on the needs of individuals—worshipers, lay leaders, and church staff—rather than on a common vision of the church as a whole. This type of leader believes that helping others meet *their* goals promotes the church's overall ministry effectiveness. The servant leader involves worshipers in all congregational decision making.

The national study found that the majority of pastors describe themselves as altruistic, servant leaders. But again, *worshipers* describe their pastor as *more* often showing servant leader qualities than do pastors themselves.



CHOICE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE,
AND MATCHING ACCESSORIES,
WERE DAILY CHALLENGES
FOR REV DIMAGGIO

Motivational leadership. Pastors taking this approach say that their role is to create an environment that motivates, encourages, and prepares members to take action. Worshipers experience this style of inspiring and equipping leadership as collaborative.

Fewer worshipers say that their pastor's style has motivational attributes than do pastors themselves.

Only one in ten pastors draw on all three approaches. Rather, most pastors' responses reveal that they lead with a primary approach; some also put a secondary approach in play.

When Pastor and Members Agree on the Match

Some members in the national study admitted that they couldn't identify their pastor's leadership style. Further, fewer than four in ten worshipers agree with their pastor's own assessment of his or her leadership style. Does it make a difference if members and the pastor describe the pastor's leadership approach in a similar way? When pastors and worshipers share a common understanding about the leadership style for the congregation, several positive research results emerge.

1. *Worshipers have a more positive outlook about the future than members do in other congregations.* The majority of members look forward, with enthusiasm, to the church's ongoing ministries. They believe that the best years of the congregation lie in the future. Their positive outlook about what the future holds means that they more readily embrace change.
2. *Worshipers share their faith with others.* Worshipers more readily talk with others—outside the church—about their faith. As they talk with others about how faith shapes their lives, they also invite others to attend their church's worship services.
3. *The congregation grows in worship attendance.* A good leadership fit signals that many other aspects of the church are flourishing. New attendees are attracted to strong and healthy congregations.

How Is Leadership Style Linked to Conflict?

Church discussions and decisions sometimes lead to conflict. Three quarters of the pastors in the study report that their congregation experienced *minor* conflict recently. What was the reported conflict about? Pastors mentioned their leadership style (31%) and church finances (27%) most often.

More serious conflict can be found in churches where lay leaders say that they take the primary initiative in making decisions and planning programs.

One in three lay-directed churches reported *major* conflict that resulted in members or the pastor leaving. In a pastoral leadership vacuum, various members may attempt to take the church in assorted directions, resulting in conflict that the pastor cannot resolve.

In churches that are *free from major conflict*, one or more of the three pastoral leadership approaches—transformational, servant, and motivational—are identified by members. True leadership minimizes conflict because it creates a shared direction for the congregation.

The Bottom Line

The Right Questions for Pastors. Take an hour to reflect and make notes on your leadership approach. Consider how your current approach might differ from the strategies you've used in the past.

Next, ask three to five people who know you well to describe your pastoral leadership style. Listen, take notes, and ask for clarification or examples when needed. Later, compare your self-description with what you learned from others' observations. Does their description match yours? What can you learn from any discrepancies in the descriptions?

The Right Questions for Lay Leaders. Ask a small group of lay leaders and long-time members to discuss their insights about church leadership by responding to these queries: Do we want our pastor to motivate, organize, and equip *us* for ministry, or do we want a pastor who takes the lead in all the ministries for us? Can our pastor have a new vision for the congregation or will some members interpret that new initiative as an inappropriate agenda? Do we publicly support the pastor and other leaders during difficult times of substantial change?

As you think about the church's current needs and your pastor's gifts, do you see a good match? From your perspective, what are the key pieces for understanding the puzzle of a good match?

1. Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Free Press, 1989), 101.
2. Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce, *Leadership That Fits Your Church* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2012), 101–12. Download a free guide with group exercises (<http://www.uscongregations.org/pdf/Leadership-That-Fits-Your-Church-Leader-Guide.pdf>).

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

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Oral Communication: How to Strengthen Our Effectiveness

A congregation's clergy and members will find that the best way to improve communication is by perfecting their responsive listening skills. Briefly defined, this conversational method enables us to listen to and understand another person—even though we may disagree with some of his or her opinions or behaviors. Sometimes referred to as *caring* or *active listening*, responsive listening creates a conversational environment in which people with whom you converse often move toward positive changes in their feelings, attitudes, or behaviors. A few people are born with this responsive listening ability, but most of us need tips on how to do it.

What Responsive Listening is NOT

A pattern often seen in poor listeners: finishing sentences for people when they pause too long, doing all the talking, stepping on sentences by starting to talk before people have finished expressing their thoughts, not maintaining eye contact while others are talking, and giving more feedback than necessary by going too far beyond a simple “uh huh.” When our conversational patterns include any of those five traits, people enjoy talking with us about as much as they enjoy hearing chalk screech on a blackboard. Still, there are also actions that *appear* to represent responsive listening and a caring relationship, but they are simply disguises:

Runaway sympathy. Becoming emotionally entangled with someone's feelings can produce negative results. Runaway sympathy is dangerous for you because it may cause you to miss key issues that would normally have been obvious; it is dangerous for the person to whom you listen because she or he fails to increase the kind of self-understanding that leads to positive changes.

Taking responsibility for others. The temptation to drift from *caring* to *taking responsibility* is present in every kind of caring relationship. Yet none of us

can successfully take responsibility for another person's behavior, thinking, and feelings. If we begin feeling responsible for someone, then we begin feeling guilty because we have not accomplished what we had hoped for them, and then we start feeling either depressed (because we are too sympathetic) or angry (because we are too low in sympathy).

What Responsive Listeners Do

The most effective responsive listeners operate from two basic principles: (1) responsive listeners allow the other person to hear his or her own information clearly enough to find insights and self-direction; (2) responsive listeners understand what people are saying without a response that gives either approval or disapproval.

Several positives usually result when we practice the art of responsive listening with someone: we feel greater self-worth from the experience; we feel more positive toward the person to whom we listen; the person to whom we listen feels closer to us; the person to whom we listen gains wholeness



PARAPHRASING WAS NEVER
ONE OF PASTOR TED'S STRENGTHS

because self-expression has clarified confused feelings and produced a more certain sense of self-direction; and, by getting it off his or her chest, the person to whom we listen can gain more positive feelings and take more constructive actions.

Responsive Listening Techniques

You feel like . . .” As one of the more basic techniques, this phrase is a great way to begin practicing your responsive listening skills. For example, after someone has finished unfolding a long criticism of another person, begin your response with “You feel like . . .,” and then finish your sentence by rephrasing the *feelings* that seem to lie behind their words. Using that response, you can talk about a hot issue without taking sides. Plus, the person feels that you are listening sympathetically to what they say. Those three words —*you feel like*—signal people that you have carefully listened to what they have said. Because of that, they want to say more. As they say more and you continue to listen responsively, their inhibitions and fear of “saying too much” declines.

Paraphrasing. Using this technique, you state back to the person the meaning of what she or he just said. Good paraphrasing sentences begin with words such as:

- “You are saying that you feel . . .”
- “I hear you saying that you feel . . .”
- “You feel that because . . .”
- “You seem to be feeling . . .”
- “You are saying that . . .”
- “Are you saying that . . .?”
- “It seems to me that you are saying . . .”

When you respond in one of these ways, the other person quickly tells you whether your understanding is on track or has accidentally derailed. Paraphrasing also tells the other person that you care enough to pay close attention; it is like becoming a human mirror. You reflect back the facts and feelings that the person told you without making a judgment about whether those facts and feelings are rational or irrational, right or wrong. Like a mirror, your words do not change anything; they merely reflect the reality before them. A mirror does not argue or add new information; it lets people see themselves more objectively. Test this with friends and people you meet for the first time. They will think of you as a sparkling conversationalist.

Repeat their words. When a person seems finished talking, repeat the last three words of his or her last sentence. Almost always, that prompts the person to add additional details to what he or she had been saying.

Perception checking. With this tool we ensure that, as the listener, we understand the facts, feelings, information, and viewpoints that the other person is conveying. Here are some examples of using perception checking in conversation:

- “You feel like _____ (*express his or her feeling*) because _____ (*repeat the content*).”
- “You feel hurt. Is that right?”
- “It sounds as though you’re very angry about that. Would you agree?”
- “It sounds as if you’re frustrated. Am I reading that correctly?”
- “Correct me if I’m wrong, but it sounds like . . .”
- “I’m not sure whether I’m with you; do you mean . . .”
- “I’m not certain I understand; you’re saying that . . . “

Creative questioning. Good listeners use this tool to flush out missing information by giving the other person permission to share in greater detail. A genuinely creative question cannot be answered with a simple yes or no or a one-word fact. “How old are you?” is *not* a creative question. “How did you feel about that?” is a creative question that elicits not just facts but also feelings. Creative questions should avoid being phrased as judgments; for example: Why do you feel that way? Judgment questions will induce withdrawal into silence instead of additional information.

Three Questions

Responsive listening is a skill that must be honed over time. It takes patience (and learning from a few mistakes) to get better. It’s best to learn in low-risk situations by practicing on friends and family when the conversation is not so serious. Then you can work on your skills when the situation is more difficult. To begin, ask yourself these three barometer questions: How high is the quality of my listening skill? Do I feel motivated to increase that quality? How often do I (or will I) intentionally practice?

Presbytery Communication Tools

It has been two and a half months since Jim Cory retired as the General Presbyter and the presbytery committees and clusters have been working through the New Structure of how the Presbytery of Western Colorado performs its business and Provides Pastoral Care. This is exciting and wonderful, at the same time there have been a few bumps along this journey and we all are still learning and experimenting on how this New Structure will work.

The presbytery has put into effect a few tools and positions to continue communication across the presbytery.

Clusters:

Presbytery has separated into three clusters, with two leaders for each cluster. The Cluster leaders are to help provided Pastoral care and full fill duties that our General Presbyter did. By the time of this Newsletter each of the Clusters will have met instead of the Winter Presbytery Meeting.

Website: www.wcopresbytery.org

The Presbytery Website has been redesigned and become much more user friendly. There is basic Presbytery information, along with pages for and about each of the congregations in the Presbytery. It is encouraged for everyone to visit their congregation's page and review it. More information is needed on each of the pages along with more pictures depicting your congregation and the life events that happen there. Please send any events or pictures to beth@wcopresbytery.org and they will be placed on your page.

Blog:

Also on the website is a blog page. What is a Blog? A blog is a discussion or informational article published on the World Wide Web, consisting of discrete entries typically displayed in reverse chronological order. Specifically our blog can be authored by anyone in the presbytery on a multitude of topics. The topics can range from devotions, notices of church or presbytery events, prayers, ideas to discuss, and notices from Synod or General Assembly. Write up the article send it to beth@wcopresbytery.org. These items will be proofread, and checked for content (if Theological this reviewing is done by a couple of pastors) and then it is published on the website. Once on the site others have the opportunity to read and make comments or discuss the entry.

Forum:

The most recent addition to the communication structure of the Presbytery and keeping everyone together is the forum. The Forum or message board is discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. These differ from chat rooms in that the discussions can and will be archived. Forums allow for communication to flow easily from one end of the Presbytery to the other. The Forums can allow each of the committees to communicate with one another in a private way. If someone misses out on the start, middle, or end of a discussion they are able to go back and review the posts. One other benefit is there is no need to maintain the thread of conversation in individual email accounts. There are forums set up for committees, churches and presbytery wide. If a new forum needs to be set up just request that Beth set one up. The forums also have the ability to notify personal emails that something new has been posted so that constant monitoring of the forum boards is not necessary.

To sign up for the forums: Beth (Communications Administrator) needs to have your full name, email address, which congregation you are a member (or attend) and if you are on any committees in the presbytery. She will then sign you up and passes on the password to each of you. Please send this information to her via email at beth@wcopresbytery.org. This is for everyone who attends our churches and is strongly encouraged for those that are members or are actively serving presbytery.

Beth Gilleece the Administrative Assistant and the Communications Administrator is ready to help anyone learn more about these tools. She can teach either individually or in group settings. Please call 970-240-8455 or email beth@wcopresbytery.org to set a date.

The Administrative Personnel Association
Rocky Mountain Region

Annual Conference will be held in Ouray, Colorado

September 19-22, 2013

Plan to send your administrative personnel
Watch for More information soon

Time to Order Presbyterian Planning
Calendars

Please place your orders with Beth in
the presbytery office by April 25th.
970-240-8455

Presbytery of Western Colorado
101 N. Uncompahgre Ave. #9
Montrose, CO 81401-3763

970-240-8455
fax 240-1318

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Return Service Requested

*You are Cordially invited to
The Ordination Service
For
Sally Henry
To be a Teaching Elder*

*At First Presbyterian Church
Grand Junction, CO*

4:00 P.M.

Sunday April 7, 2013

A Dinner will follow the service

Nicaragua Fair Trades

My husband, Chuck, and I have just returned from a trip to Nicaragua to learn more about fair trade products. It was sponsored by the Presbyterian Hunger Program and Equal Exchange and included ten Presbyterians from around the country and two representatives from Equal Exchange. It was an awesome trip and heartwarming to hear first hand how the help local farmers and others are receiving from One Great Hour of Sharing and other programs are helping them improve their lives. We would be glad to share our experiences in a Sunday School class or another group if churches in the Presbytery would be interested. We spent nine years in the 70s with Presbyterian mission work in Korea and Ethiopia, and it was good to get an even larger picture of all the Church is doing.

Blessings,

Chuck and Ann Haspels
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