

**WE ARE THE PRESBYTERY
OF WESTERN COLORADO**

Pressing News

Summer 2013

Inside this issue:

More info on WNLT	2
Thank You	2
Presbytery in Brief	3
APA invite	3
Columbia Theological Seminary Classes	4
Summer Vacations	4
Parish Paper: The Great Recession	5
Parish Paper: The Great Recession Cont	6
Parish Paper: Clergy Groups	7
Parish Paper: Clergy Groups Cont.	8
News around the Presbytery	9
Synod Report	10
Synod Report : Cont.	11

Being Civil in Uncivil Times Western National Leadership Training

October 9-11, 2013

Presbyterian Church, Jackson, WY



The Rev. Dr. John M. Buchanan is the editor/publisher of the *Christian Century*. It is considered the flagship magazine of U.S. mainline Protestantism, reporting religious news, offering social commentary, and providing reviews of books, movies, and music. Committed to "thinking critically and living faithfully," the magazine explores what it

means to believe and live out the Christian faith in our time. In his column, Dr. Buchanan ponders life in the church and the challenges of leadership. He is also retired as pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago, IL. During his tenure, the congregation more than doubled in size, adding over 3,000 members. Prior to coming to Chicago in 1985, Buchanan pastored Presbyterian churches in Columbus, Ohio; Lafayette, Indiana; and Dyer, Indiana. He served as moderator of the 208th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and as a member of the General Assembly Council from 1996 through 1999. He is the author of three books: *A New Church for a New World*, *Being Church*, *Becoming Community*, and *Sermons for the City*. He holds an A.B. in government from Franklin and Marshall College and a M.Div. from the University of Chicago Divinity School/Chicago Theological Seminary. He has received numerous accolades for his leadership and honorary degrees from a number of colleges and seminaries. He is also one of the founding co-moderators of The Covenant Network of Presbyterians.

Dr. Richard J. Mouw is the retiring president of Fuller Theological Seminary, having served in that capacity since 1993. He joined the faculty in 1985 as professor of Christian philosophy and ethics, and later served as provost and senior vice president. Before coming to Fuller, he served for 17 years as professor of philosophy at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Mouw has a broad record of publication. He has



been an editor of the *Reformed Journal* and has served on many editorial boards. He is the author of 19 books, including *The God Who Commands*, *The Smell of Sawdust: What Evangelicals Can Learn from Their Fundamentalist Heritage*, *He Shines in All That's Fair: Culture and Common Grace*, *Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport: Making Connections in Today's World*, *Praying at Burger King*, an expanded and revised edition of *Uncommon Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivil World*, and most recently, *Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal Introduction*, *The Challenges of Cultural Discipleship*, and *Talking with Mormons: An Invitation to Evangelicals*. In 2007, Princeton Theological Seminary awarded Mouw the Abraham Kuyper Prize for Excellence in Reformed Theology and Public Life. He served for six years as co-chair of the official Reformed-Catholic Dialogue, and is a leader in interfaith theological conversations, particularly with Mormons and Jewish groups. His primary area of research is the area of Christian witness in the public arena, writing extensively on social ethics, philosophy of culture.

WNLT Information

Public discussion of issues has the potential to bring out the best in us. It can surface creative new ideas or develop effective problem-solving strategies. Unfortunately, just the opposite seems to be happening. Anger and frustration seems to be getting the best of us. Good conversation is taking a back seat to personal attacks and replayed sound bites. As people of faith, we are called to a higher standard of engagement and interaction, even those with whom we may disagree. We can choose respect and hope over animosity and bitterness. We can choose to listen and learn rather than attack and insult. We can choose to have civic discussions in civil tones. We will have the opportunity to be privileged to overhear the conversations of these two. They are friends, yet they have different viewpoints. They will help us to learn to show respect, listen, seek understanding, share your own views, and keep your head while discussing the challenging issues of our denomination life.

To register for this wonderful and exciting event please go to www.synodrm.org. You can either register there online or you can go to the pdf link download the form and fill out and mail your payment in. Registration deadlines are August 16 for early, September 13 for is the deadline for all registrations.

The Presbytery of Western Colorado Does have scholarship to be able to attend. Register for the event, send a copy of registration form (Print your registration confirmation if registering on line.) to Beth in the Presbytery office, letting her know you would like a scholarship. Only one scholarship per family. These scholarships are offered on a first come first served basis, and will be paid out after attendance at WNLT.

The Synod of the Rocky Mountains Also offers a Scholarship to ministers, elders and laity of smaller church's. Please follow Guidelines below.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Smaller membership churches often feel that they are less connected to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Synod of the Rocky Mountains is addressing that by offering scholarship to WNLT. The Synod has up to 44 scholarships of \$300 each available for those persons in rural and/or remote congregations attending WNLT. These are available to ministers, elders, and laity. The eligibility requirements are:

1. The individual must serve or belong to a rural and/or remote congregation.
2. The congregation has less than 200 members.
3. The church must be within the bounds of 1 of the 8 presbyteries of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains.
4. A rural and/or remote congregation is defined by the particular presbytery, and is normally defined as being located outside of a population center of 50,000 people or more.
5. Preference will be given to those persons who have never attended WNLT before.
6. Only one application per family will be accepted.
7. Applicants are not eligible if they are receiving a scholarship from their presbytery.
9. Requests for scholarships will be considered when received.
10. Recipients will be notified after September 13th.
11. Awards will be mailed at the end of October.

Dear Friends in Ministry,

My cup overflows with your kindness. May we all walk worthy of the high calling in Christ Jesus. My personal thanks to pastors Kim and Steve for living as examples for me, and for others - including Kim's dad. We claim Isaiah 55:11. Thank you, Heather [Lundquist]. Self-determination came sooner than I thought but I submit to God's Almighty Hand. Thank you all again. Hebrews 13:8.

Bud Rousset

Presbytery Meeting



Highlights

Presbytery in Brief

At our May 22 & 23 meeting at the Monument Presbyterian Church in Grand Junction:

✚ The Presbytery received Rebecca Branton (Delta) and Joshua Rodriguez as Inquirers, moved Sarah Tunall (FPC Grand Junction) to Candidate status, and approved an alternate Biblical exegesis examination for Andy Konigsmark (Telluride). It was reported that Patricia Stetson (FPC Montrose) has been “certified as ready to be ordained.”

✚ The Rev. David Ezekiel (Synod Exec.) reported that the Synod is in the process of listening to its presbyteries to determine how it can best serve them in the future. The Rev. Laura Stellmon (Presbytery Exec., Utah) then led the Presbytery in a conversation about its needs and the ways in which Synod can support us.

✚ The Rev. Kevin Keaton (Board of Pensions) said that the Board is presently looking at three possible options for future medical dues. The board will meet in late June to determine which option will be chosen for 2014 and 2015. Because of diminishing reserves and escalating costs, dues are certain to increase in 2014.

✚ During the evening worship service Mindy Harmeling (Jeff’s daughter) described her work in Afghanistan and provided a more hopeful picture of the Afghan people and their views of America and Americans.

✚ The Presbytery voted to concur with **all** of the amendments proposed by the General Assembly.

✚ The Presbytery gave the Committee on Ministry authority to call special Presbytery meetings (in conjunction with COM meetings) to examine candidates for ordination since there are now only two regular stated Presbytery meetings each year.

✚ After lengthy discussion the Presbytery voted to sever our long-time relationship with the mission in Towaoc, gift the building to the tribe, and release the worshipping community there to become a community church and take oversight of its own ministry. The Presbytery also voted to provide a severance package of \$2500 to the Rev. Bud Rousset (Methodist) who has served that ministry for many years.

✚ Trustees and Finance gave a final financial report for 2012. The Ecclesiastical Budget showed a surplus of \$232; the Mission Budget showed a deficit of \$18,797. T & F also indicated that they will propose a “combined budget” for 2015.

✚ As it concluded the Presbytery prayed for the Rev. Alisa Secrest, who is moving to Chicago, and for moderator Roger Koch and his wife (Cindy). Cindy has had a reoccurrence of melanoma.

The next Presbytery meeting will be Sept. 27 & 28 (Friday and Saturday), 2013, at the FPC in Durango.



2013 Rocky Mountain APA Regional Conference
Held in Beautiful Ouray Colorado
September 19—22

Classes offered are Book of Confessions, Legal Matters, Office Administration, Quick Books 1 and 2, Ministry of Reconciliation, Pastoral Care for Self and Others, and Church Guide to Copyright Law

We invite all church administrators, administrative assistants, financial administrators, worship leaders, office managers, and secretaries. We are offering day prices if there is only one or two classes that you would be interested in taking instead of the whole weekend.

For more information Call Aneta Martinez at 970-249-4732 or Beth Gilleece at 970-240-8455

Come join us for a time of learning and fellowship in Beautiful Ouray Colorado.

COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Center for Lifelong Learning

June 17, 2013

Nurturing children of God through all ages and stages of faith is one of the hallmarks of the Church. To support this mission and the various ministries engaged in this work, the Center for Lifelong Learning presents the following series of programs in 2013-14. They are designed for persons desiring to enhance their understanding and practice of Christian nurture and educational ministry. Please share this information widely among your congregations, leaders and communities as a whole.

"Parents: Christian Educators on the Frontlines," led by certified Christian Educator Dr. Anna Brown, leads off the series on September 13-14. This course is intentionally offered early in the program year to provide support for parents, church school and classroom teachers who desire more information – and practical tips – for serving as a primary Christian educator for children in their families of care. Early registration of \$125 per person is offered through July 12; after July 12 the program fee is \$145 per person, discounted to \$130 per person if 2+ from the same group attend.

On Nov. 7-10, Christen Erskine will lead "Discovering God's Prophecy: Scripture, Wonder, Response (Godly Play© for Adults). Erskine, a certified Godly Play© trainer, will offer a learning retreat during which learners may experience new ways to hear the story of the prophets, a chance to wonder how the prophets connect with contemporary life, and the opportunity to respond to God's Word by creating something new. This class will offer credit towards the Certificate in Spiritual Formation for any who complete the pre- and post-course assignments.

"Big Ideas for Youth Ministry" begins the year in a BIG way on January 22-24. Experience speed faithing, a GO BIG youth ministry party and keynote with Rodger Nishioka, noted youth and young adult ministry expert. The conference team will share tips to design a youth ministry based on 25 best practices – from how to recruit volunteers to preparing for international travel. A copy of the "Big Book of Best Practices" is included with registration. Early bird registration is available through October 1.

"Baptism and Beyond: Scaffolding a Life of Discipleship" will take place April 23-25, 2014. Leaders Anne Apple and Kathy Dawson will guide participants to consider how to create a scaffold for age-appropriate engagement with mission in the church and the world. Special attention will be given to the elementary school children six through twelve years of age, with consideration for how to encourage discipleship into youth and young adulthood. For more information, including registration discounts for two or more persons from the same congregation or group,

Persons interested in registering for these and other courses in Lifelong Learning are encouraged to register at least 8-12 weeks before the class begins, as pre-course preparation may be part of the course design. Courses may be canceled or postponed if sufficient numbers of participants are not enrolled 3-6 weeks prior to the start date of the event.

Bookmark our NEW website and browse the complete listing of courses: www.ctsnet.edu/lifelong-courses-and-events. To keep abreast of new additions, *subscribe to [Journeying Together](#) & follow us on [Twitter](#) (LLatCTSeminary) or like us on Facebook ([Lifelong Learning at Columbia Theological Seminary](#) and [Spiritual Formation at CTS](#)).*

The Center for Lifelong Learning, Columbia Theological Seminary
P.O. Box 520/701 S. Columbia Drive, Decatur, GA 30031
404.687.4577 or lifelonglearning@ctsnet.edu



Bill Postler will be out of the office July 23-25, 2013 and again July 30-August 1 2013.

Beth will be out of the office July 25-29, 2013 and again August 8-12, 2013.

Please leave messages on either Beth or Bill's Answering Machines if you need something as they will both be checking messages

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

Coeditors: Herb Miller and Cynthia Woolever - www.TheParishPaper.com

July 2013 - Volume 21, Number 7

Copyright © 2013 by Cynthia Woolever

The Great Recession: Its Effects on Congregations and What We Learned

Churches across America weathered the greatest economic upheaval since the Great Depression between 2008 and 2012. In the middle of that fiscal roller coaster ride, charitable gifts to religious organizations in 2011 totaled around \$96 billion. Although the donated dollars figure appears large, when adjusted for inflation, those dollars actually reflect a 2 percent drop from the previous year.

Recent results from the 2013 Congregational Economic Impact Study attempted to identify the factors that influenced church economic stability during this recent recession.¹ Among the causes that they discovered were declining church attendance, lower giving by members, and shifts in the average age and ethnicity of attendees.

Church location also turned out to be a central factor in the recession's financial impact. Congregations in communities that saw rapid increases in unemployment, large numbers of home foreclosures, and then massive outward migration felt the blow most directly.

The major source of congregational income is what individuals contribute through their offerings, pledges, donations, or dues. On average, congregations receive 91 percent of their funds from individuals' donations.² However, when members move away, they take their contributions with them. Rapid population decline that occurs due to widespread job loss and home foreclosures generates tsunami-level effects on a local church's finances.

Total dollars went up but failed to keep pace with inflation. About half of the congregations in the study reported an increase in the total dollar amounts contributed from 2010 to 2011. Where did those additional gifts come from? Those reporting an increase cite two sources: (1) about half said that individuals gave more money on average than in the past, and (2) more individuals gave than before (about 42 percent reported that new donors fueled the increase). Unfortunately, 22 percent of congregations were even worse off and saw a decrease in their total gifts.

Same story—2011 to 2012. The total dollars raised by all congregations continued to rise in the following

fiscal year of 2011 to 2012. However, slightly fewer churches reported an increase (about 38 percent saw increases vs. 50 percent in the previous year). One in three said that their total contributions remained about the same and one in four churches reported a decrease in funds raised. In sum, the majority of congregations either raised the same amount or experienced a decrease in funding. Given that inflation amounted to 8 percent between 2007 and 2011, most congregations were unable to fund their ministries as they once did.

How Did Congregations Respond?

The study sheds new light on the reaction of congregations and pastoral leaders to an unprecedented financial crisis. Leaders took a variety of positive steps. For example, one in three congregations offered a course, workshop, class, or seminar on personal finance or charitable giving. Congregations suffering the least pointed to good financial practices, strong management teams, and financial transparency with members.

Declining revenues meant that for many churches, a higher budget percentage went to staff salaries. About one-third of the congregations laid off



BEFORE DISTRIBUTING COPIES OF HIS QUARTERLY REPORT, THE CHURCH TREASURER PRESENTED A BRIEF VERBAL SUMMARY.

one or more staff members (full- or part-time) between 2008 and 2011.

How Did Pastors Respond?

Unfortunately, the results suggest that half of the participating pastors said they did not discuss or preach to church members or outside groups about the importance of giving during the recession. Less than half (45 percent) of the clergy were aware of what their churches receive and the details of who donated what. Clergy's lack of knowledge about donors had measurable consequences. The research linked lack of clergy awareness to lower overall contributions and less likelihood of a church endowment.

Lessons from the Financial Stress Test

What strategies did successful congregations use to weather the economic storm? The study points to several recession-proofing tactics.

Lesson #1. Ask for bigger gifts and find new givers. Increasing revenues derive from higher average gifts from the same pool of giving individuals or a larger pool of donors. Encourage generosity among current contributors *and* seek new partners for funding the church's ministries.

Lesson #2. Encourage the adoption of "best practices" for church finances. These include the appointment of a stewardship committee, an annual stewardship campaign, distribution of a printed treasurer's report at every governing board meeting, an annual audit, a treasurer's report made available to congregants at least quarterly, and the mailing of quarterly giving reports to all donors.

Lesson #3. Pastors play a critical role. Pastors promote generous giving when they teach and preach the biblical principles of financial stewardship, taking into account generational differences in worship attendance and religious giving. Understanding giving as a spiritual practice comes from teaching not from a big inheritance.

Lesson #4. Establish two endowments—one for facilities and one for missions. Some donors prefer to invest in bricks-and-mortar and get satisfaction from contributing to high-quality facilities. Other contributors are passionate about mission and love to see the income support many local, regional, and world mission causes. Once an endowment exists, no matter how small the starting balance, it will attract contributions from people who would not have given otherwise. An endowment enables older members to make a bequest that extends their commitments be-

yond their lifetime. As part of setting up these endowments, also be sure to regularly sponsor, either alone or with other congregations, a Wills and Estate Planning Seminar for church members and community residents.

Lesson #5. Offer or expand online giving options. Two out of three of the responding churches provided some type of electronic giving option for regular offerings or other contributions. Many congregations receive direct bank deposit transfers. Through a church website, contributors can designate gifts for special projects. Some churches find that even nonmembers who value the congregation's community ministries donate to specific causes. Consider utilizing electronic kiosks, mobile card readers, or smart phone apps for use during or after services. The best practices for electronic giving are described at www.churchleadership.com/funding.

Lesson #6. Diversify the congregation's income stream. Maximizing the facilities' value includes renting out space (including the parking lot) to non-profit groups for offices, programs, and activities. After-school and daycare programs can generate additional funds, even after covering costs. Many congregations report fundraising activities that involve large and small events (such as dinners, fairs, galas, and auctions) to support mission causes. Look for outside funding sources in the form of government programs, grants from private foundations, or corporations.

Giving is Never about the Money

For many people financial generosity is a reactive response—one that arises from our gratitude to God. Although we direct our gratitude toward God, people hear about God's love and goodness in the context of the church community. In the midst of trusting relationships with other members, worshipers can see how their gifts make a difference. Congregational leaders grow this generosity when they develop methods that help members express their gratitude.

1. Lake Institute on Faith & Giving, Indiana University School of Philanthropy, *The 2013 Congregational Economic Impact Study* (<http://philanthropy.iupui.edu/congregational-economic-impact-study>).

2. U. S. Congregational Life Survey, accessed online at: (www.USCongregations.org).

THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

Coeditors: Herb Miller and Cynthia Woolever - www.TheParishPaper.com

August 2013 - Volume 21, Number 8

Copyright © 2013 by Cynthia Woolever

Clergy Groups: Are They Worth the Investment?

A pastor new to parish ministry sought advice from another pastor about continuing education opportunities in their community. "It's hard to explain, but this pastor group I'm part of is just different from anything else I do," his friend began. "Yes, I attend one or two conferences or seminars a year and I go to the denomination's meetings. But each time that we meet I learn something from the other pastors that helps me in my ministry. I encourage you to find a group of pastors that will help you become a better pastor." Is this good advice? Will the pastor's participation in a peer group make a difference in the congregation's effectiveness?

New research concludes that the answer to both questions is a resounding yes. If clergy attend groups appropriate for their ministry and those groups use best practices, they are beneficial. However, not all pastor groups are created equal. The following information about peer groups offers tips on how to get the most out of the experience.

What is the purpose of clergy groups? Pastoral peer groups give clergy the opportunity to share ideas and resources, focus on biblical study and theological reflection, and develop friendships and support among their peers.

How many pastors participate? At least three out of four pastors report meeting regularly with other ministers in a small group for continuing education and support. Mainline Protestant pastors are somewhat more likely to participate in a clergy group than Catholic priests or conservative Protestant pastors.¹ Typically these groups meet monthly for about two hours. However, some meet for weekend retreats several times a year and others convene weekly. Further, many pastors simultaneously take part in more than one form of clergy peer learning, such as a weekly lectionary group.

Who forms clergy groups? Sometimes a set of friends or seminary classmates self-organize based on their common goals or experiences. But more often, institutions devoted to supporting pastoral ministry organize groups. For example, judicatories

or national denominational efforts to revitalize congregations include clergy education and support in the form of peer groups. A seminary, university, pastoral counseling center, or other clergy development organization may also start groups to foster excellence in ministry.²

Fundamentals of the Best Clergy Groups

Authors of a comprehensive review of clergy peer groups claim that any group experience is better than none. What draws a pastor into a particular group is different from what makes a pastor stay in the group. Certain peer learning experiences separate pastors who merely survive from those who thrive.³ What distinguishes the *best* clergy learning groups from others?

A group that fits the pastor. The best group experience fits the competency needs of the pastor for where they are in their ministry. A first-time pastor needs different information and support than the seasoned pastor.

- *Groups for early-career pastors.* Pastors in their first five years of local church ministry benefit from a group led by a skilled facilitator, especially



I WISH OUR CLERGY GROUP WAS A BIT MORE DIVERSE...FIVE OF US ARE PASTORS AT THE SAME CHURCH.

if this person also acts as a peer mentor. The group works well if it is not highly structured and gives new pastors spiritual energy, time for biblical and theological reflection, and a safe place to share perplexing problems that are bound to arise in the early years. The best groups also intentionally involve spouses and families in some of their activities.

- *Groups for midcareer pastors.* These pastors join a clergy group because they believe their ministry is going well and they feel a great sense of satisfaction with ministry. However, they know that something more is possible for their ministry and for their congregation's ministries. Because their seminary education can be decades in the past, these pastors search for ways to keep up-to-date with scholarship and strategies. The group can provide an intellectual challenge as well as practical ideas to improve ministry. Midcareer pastors benefit from groups that are more diverse—participants could be pastors from different denominations, racial or ethnic groups, culture or nationality, or even ministry setting (such as urban vs. rural).

- *Groups for clergywomen.* Female pastors join peer groups more frequently than their male colleagues do. Women can feel isolated as ministers because they are more likely to serve in small or rural congregations and to have long commutes. As a result, clergywomen seek out groups that are more likely to be all women or diverse denominationally. Female pastors favor the focus on spiritual practices and experiences that incorporate the arts that these groups provide.

- *A group that uses best practices.* The longitudinal review of clergy groups revealed that key elements were part of every successful peer group: an effective group facilitator, a formal group covenant or contract, regular attendance by all participants at group meetings, a climate of trust and accountability, innovative group worship and spiritual practice, and diverse members, especially pastors representing different denominations. Geographic proximity was not a factor for success but affinity in ministry was essential.⁴

The Rewards of Clergy Groups

Both pastors and congregations find that the investment of time and resources in peer groups pay big dividends.

For pastors: Clergy participating in groups say it renews their call and commitment to ministry. Research shows that these clergy are more engaged in their own development and self-care and they more

successfully balance their family and private life with the ongoing demands of ministry. Solo pastors and clergy serving in small churches especially benefit from a community of peers. For some pastors, group support keeps them from leaving ministry. One estimate places clergy departures from parish ministry at more than 1,700 a month, with half of all beginning pastors leaving before completing their fifth year.⁵

For congregations: Congregations led by pastors who participate in peer groups differ from those churches led by clergy who do not participate in some type of clergy group. Pastors in peer groups lead in highly participatory congregations—higher proportions of worshipers are involved and take on church leadership roles. Because peer group pastors are empowering leaders, new members and youth in these congregations also serve on church committees and boards more frequently. Their congregations emphasize community service and seek to mobilize members as change agents. Finally, peer group pastors tend to serve in numerically growing churches. The longer a pastor has participated in a group, the greater the impact on congregational effectiveness.

What is the Power of Pastoral Peer Learning?

The seasoned pastor's counsel about finding a clergy group reflects a wisdom that is now documented by the experiences of thousands of pastors and their congregations. Clergy peer groups sustain pastors in ministry and push them to grow as church leaders. Congregations gain when their leaders are able to spiritually renew and enhance their skills. When churches encourage their pastor to participate in a clergy group and budget funds for continuing education, the congregation realizes significant returns from their investment.

1. Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce, *Leadership That Fits Your Church* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2012), 57.

2. Penny Long Marler, et al., *So Much Better: How Thousands of Pastors Help Each Other Thrive*; The Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Peer Learning Project (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2013).

3. See the appendix of *So Much Better* for a listing of Peer Group Resources, 179-86.

4. *So Much Better*, 10.

5. Pastoral Care Inc. (www.pastoralcareinc.com).

News Items

From the Clerk

- * All of the proposed amendments to the constitution have been officially passed by presbytery votes (most overwhelmingly) **with the exception of Amendment 12-B** on Gifts and Qualifications for Candidacy. Language which would have required 'repentance and the diligent use of the means of grace' was rejected by a majority of presbyteries.
- * The World Communion of Reformed Churches is in the process of receiving ECO (the new Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians, which consists of former PCUSA churches) as a member denomination. (June 11, 2013)
- *

Happenings at Lake City Community Presbyterian Church for Rest of Summer:

- * **July 19th Theological Movie Night – *Field of Dreams* starring Kevin Costner** – you've seen the movie before, now see it through a theological lens. Upcoming Theological Movies : *What Dreams May Come* with Robin Williams *Finian's Rainbow* with Fred Astaire and Petula Clark. More Movies To Come !
- * **July 24 – An Evening Down Home With The Prodigal Sons or “I've Got Friends In Low Places”**
- * **July 31 - The Blackwood Brothers Legacy – Live From Nashville** – The Blackwood Brothers have been singing and making Southern Gospel music for 78 years. This is your chance to see a Legacy that continues today as they tour the land bringing Southern Gospel to a new generation of fans from across the years! Admission is Free. A love offering will be taken.
- * **July TBA - The Mayberry Bible Study** where we look at an episode of the wonderful old TV show and see the Biblical values that were expressed time and again from episode to episode. Join the gang back in Mayberry yet once again, and yes, there is a real Mayberry. I know, it is 52 miles northwest of my hometown and it is called “Mount Airy, NC”, alive and well and forever Mayberry!

Coming in August:

- * **Bible Study, Food and Grill And More Food and Bible Study ! Wednesday evenings beginning in August we will be reading together and discussing Galatians and Amos**
- * **Good News To The Poor : Peacemaking in The Gospel Of Luke** including *The Spirit Of The Lord Is Upon Me, Blessings and Woes, The Right Use Of Wealth, Justice For Women*, and more !
- * **Theological Movie Night : *Finian's Rainbow, What Dreams May Come* ; possibly *Sister Act* with Whoopi Goldberg if time permits**
- * **Lake City Gospel Choir Concert** – late August, probably the last week of August
- * and, yes, **The Andy Of Mayberry Bible Study** continues in the month of August.....

Come One, Come All, Come As You Are !

Presbyterian Church of Delta will be wishing Becky Branton a fond farewell On August 11, 2013 as she heads off to start Seminary this fall. God's many blessings Becky on this phase of your Journey.



Annual Gathering of the Synod of the Rocky Mountains

Report from Western Colorado Commissioners

Denver, June 7-8, 2013

Attending from Presbytery of Western Colorado:

Minister Commissioners Dan Straw and Alisa Secrest,

Ruling Elder Commissioners Jan Gammill and Michael Rogers.

RE Steve Gammill attending as guest.

SELECTED BRIEFS ON SYNOD ASSEMBLY ACTIONS

Elected TE Steve Nofel to Synod Committee on Representation and RE Michael Rogers to Synod Coordinating Council. Heard reports from RE Jan Gammill as Synod Coordinating Council Moderator and TE Alisa Secrest, reporting on the ministries of Presbytery of Western Colorado. Affirmed RE Katy Trimm's leadership with the synod's Committee on Representation and RE Vicki Sutton's leadership in Presbyterian Women for the synod.

Extended mission block grant toward the work of presbyteries at 75% of 2013's grant. **Approved grant to Presbytery of Western Colorado for 2014 is \$26,400.** (*This was an unexpected grant to PWC.*)

Grants are to facilitate presbytery transitions from synod financial support during a time when synods and presbyteries are re-organizing and re-aligning to changing ministry priorities. There was much discussion about resourcing innovation and encouraging congregational leadership.

Reduced synod per capita from \$5.98 to \$5.75 for 2014

2015 will bring more synod operational change ... perhaps with grant applications extended for regional missional activities or a smaller block grant to presbyteries.

NARRATIVE RECAP

Opening worship contrasted the 7 last words of the church "*we've never done it that way before*" to Jesus' 7 first words to the church: "*See, I am making all things new.*"

Dan Saperstein outlined a new Presbyterian ecology (citing Louis Weeks):

Ecumenical at the core, infused with Reformed thinking

Nurtures Christian family in the various forms of family experienced

Realizes our work and our worship are more fluid, occurring at unconventional times and places.

Relies on digital communication and social media

Bubbles up from the passion of members rather than top-down. Innovation, peer networks, community involvement and flexibility are key markers.

Change is the new normal. God is in the business of change.

"See I am making all things new." May our prayer be: Let it begin with us.

Jill Hudson presented trends of presbyteries and synods as they adapt for greater agility and flexibility.

Seven Trends

Changing shape and form of staff

Flattened structures, less hierarchy, minimal ecclesiastical committees. We heard of a presbytery that eliminated COM. Instead, there's an agile team which commissions short-term task teams as needed. They report more energy for mission.

Many presbyteries without an executive presbyter

Increased collaboration, creativity

Virtual office, virtual meetings, social networking

Responding to immigrant congregations = a growing edge in mission and ministry.

Emphasis on spirituality

Pastor accountability groups with spiritual discipline commitments and mutual encouragement

Congregations/presbyteries implementing spiritual revitalization programs such as ENGAGE, Acts 16:5, and Unbinding the Gospel

Emphasis on missional

Learning how to have missionary encounters within our own culture

Use of demographics to know our neighbor

Multicultural

Emphasis on community

Clusters with built-in accountability

Presbytery-wide reading of a common book (Peter Block's The Structure of Belonging was mentioned)

Sharing of faith stories as a regular practice

How do we form true community? What does this look like?

Emphasis on leadership

Equipping local church leaders

Encouraging pastors in leadership development /creativity

Resourcing congregations

Presbyteries hosting conflict management training and equipping teams for prevention, intervention and support.

"Healthy Congregation" and New Beginnings consultants

Natural Church Development & coaching training for pastors

Innovation

God is in the business of change and new creation. Creativity and change are not to be feared.

Synods are also in a process of restructuring. A report will come before the 221st General Assembly in 2014 (Detroit).

We heard reports from each presbytery. These are a few key points we noted...

Denver Presbytery: 4 congregations participating in the New Beginnings redevelopment program. Several international mission workers supported.

Glacier: An emerging skateboard VBS/ministry to reach an unchurched group is fruitful beyond expectation.

Plains and Peaks: Transitioning to a new staff model. 45 youth to 2013's Triennium. Highlands Camp is operating day camps through several local churches (rural and urban) – fruitful outreach.

Wyoming, Pueblo and Yellowstone: using (or exploring) resources from the Office of Church Growth & Evangelism:

ENGAGE (programming to enliven the spiritual and community life of the church)

1001 Worshipping Communities (grants, ideas for new ministry).

New Beginnings (revitalization program for churches).

Utah: Exploring the Acts 16:5 initiative

Yellowstone: Dwelling In the Word, a Presbytery-wide Bible study practice

Alisa Secrest gave the Presbytery of Western Colorado report, highlighting hopes and learnings about our new cluster concept.

WESTERN NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING (WNLТ)

WNLТ is the first week of October @ FPC Jackson Hole each year.

In 2013, Richard Mouw (retired president, Fuller Seminary) and John Buchanan (editor, The Christian Century) will keynote on the theme "Being Civil in Uncivil Times." Participant scholarships are available

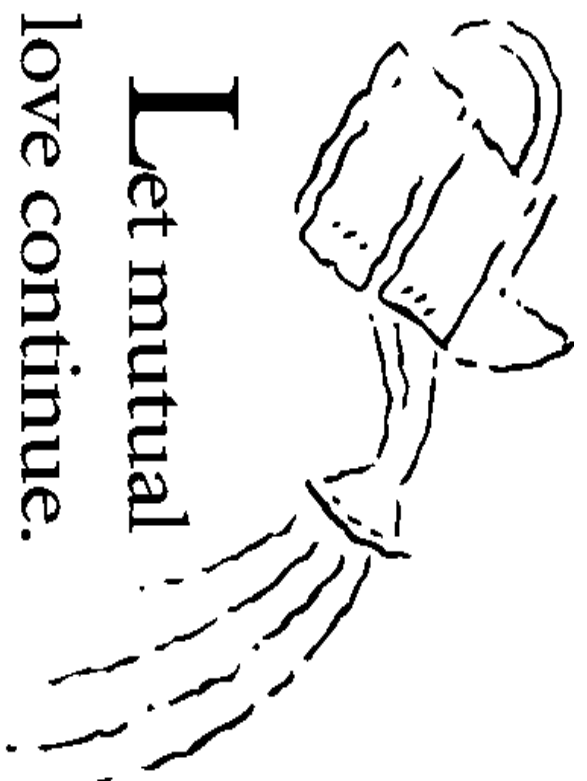


Presbytery of Western Colorado
101 N. Uncompahgre Ave. #9
Montrose, CO 81401-3763

970-240-8455
fax 240-1318

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
MONTROSE CO
PERMIT # 28

Return Service Requested



Let mutual
love continue.
Do not neglect to
show hospitality to
strangers, for by
doing that some
have entertained
angels without
knowing it.

H e b r e w s 13:1-2