

Pressing News

January February 2018

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"All Are Welcome" at First Presbyterian, Glenwood Springs

When the youth group from St. Stephen Presbyterian Church in Fort Worth, TX, rolled into Glenwood Springs on July 21st, Elders India Mount, Dave Merritt, and Steve Boat were there to welcome them and show them their accommodations for the week.

India and Elder Debbie Crawford-Arensman had been working since January with an ecumenical committee in Glenwood Springs to bring the Vacation Bible Camp/youth mission trip designed by the youth and adults at St. Stephen. Every year, that youth group and its leader Beth Fulz, design a VBC for children in the Fort Worth area. Then, they take it – curriculum, materials, youth and adult leaders – on the road, to hold for underserved kids in other cities in the U.S.

Late 2018, they sent a letter to 10 western presbyteries announcing they were looking for a location for their summer 2019 VBC mission trip — "All Are Welcome Here." The Presbytery of Western Colorado sent it to all its congregations. Karl Oelke, Clerk of the FPC Session, sent it to all our Elders. India and Debbie saw the email. A week later, they mentioned it at a meeting of 5 Glenwood Springs churches looking for a project they could do together – talk about providential! First Presbyterian, Defiance Mennonite, First United Methodist, Good Shepherd Lutheran, and St. Barnabas Episcopal churches asked India and Debbie to contact Beth Fulz at St. Stephen about bringing their mission trip to Glenwood Springs. The answer was "YES!"

From January-July 2019, India and Debbie worked with a committee from the 5 churches, handling all the details it would take to make every element of the VBC a go. With help from the local school districts, the churches recruited 66 children, ages 4-11 – most from the larger Roaring Fork Valley community (Rifle to Carbondale) and not part of churches.

Every church had an essential role to play. Good Shepherd Lutheran hosted the VBC. Girls from St. Stephen stayed at the United Methodist Church. St. Stephen boys stayed at First Pres, where all of them cooked and ate breakfast and dinner every day. Teams from all the churches provided daily volunteers, snacks and a meal one day of the week. Pastors from each church taught a

(Continued on page 2)

Bible lesson one morning of the week, also.

One of the adult volunteers from St. Stephen Presbyterian said, "We do this because it is easy for us to be kind to those we love. We want to teach youth to be kind and generous to those we do not yet know or care about." The youth raised \$7,000 to fund this VBC. For five days they sang, played, listened, taught, and shared their faith with children who will never forget them.

Through this mission trip, the churches together reached 55 families, with a week of free Bible-focused activities, from 9am-5pm daily, along with snacks and lunch. KUDOS to India Mount and Nicki Loth who were there every day as volunteers, and to twenty plus First Presbyterian members who brought food or volunteered through the week.

Melinda Veatch began as Interim Pastor at First Presbyterian, Glenwood Springs on March 1, 2019. She joined the Presbytery of Western Colorado shortly after she and her husband re-located here in September of 2017 from Fort Worth, TX. She served as Associate Pastor of St. Philip Presbyterian Church in Hurst, TX, from 1996-2006 and was formerly a member of Grace Presbytery. From 2006 -2017, she served as Executive Director of Tarrant Churches Together, a county-wide ecumenical network, based in Fort Worth. As a member of Grace Presbytery, Melinda served as Presbytery Moderator, Council Moderator, on the Committee on Ministry, and other presbytery structures. She is currently a member of this presbytery's Trustees, Budget and Finance Committee and the Human Resources Committee, and she is active in the Northern Cluster. Melinda lives with her husband, Glen Ely, in Grand Junction.



Sara Armstrong Pastor Montezuma Valley Presbyterian Church

By way of a short introduction, I have served 13 years as pastor of churches in Ohio, New Mexico and Colorado, 7 years in ministries outside the parish (as Chaplain of the Presbyterian related Menaul School in Albuquerque and Executive Director of the Storehouse, a Christian ministry to impoverished people in downtown Albuquerque.) The last ten years I have worked as a PC(USA) Mission Co-Worker in Peru. I shared this last position with my husband Rusty Edmondson.

A little bit about Rusty; he served in the Navy, enjoyed more than two decades in the National Park Service, and then worked as a building contractor for years before we left for Peru. He has officially retired as of April 1 and is planning many ways to enjoy his new freedom.

We both love outdoor activities; hiking, skiing, rafting, sailing and kayaking. Rusty is an enthusiastic motorcycle aficionado. We have not

been able to participate in all these activities for many years so we look forward to a lot of fun in southwest Colorado.

We both have extended family in New Mexico and Arizona. We also chose our "heart family." We shared our home in Peru for nine years with Urpi Luna and her daughter Gabriela. We claim Gabi as our daughter and Urpi as one of our closest friends. They have greatly enriched our lives and we miss them a lot!

I look forward to meeting you all and to working with the other churches and Presbyterians in the area. Yours in Christ, Sara

CHALLENGING CHURCH!

Traveling as Disciples in Uncharted Territory



In a world and in communities that are quickly and sometimes radically shifting, following Jesus today can often take unexpected turns.

God is inviting our churches into uncharted territory.

God is calling us out into new waters, into deeper discipleship.

God is calling us to be church in new ways.

It's scary. It's risky. It's amazing.

It's all about trust. It's all about faith. It's all about following Jesus as the Body of Christ.



Join Rev. Cindy Kohlmann, Co-Moderator of the 223rd General Assembly of the PC(USA) as she shares how churches and presbyteries in the PC(USA) and around the world are launching new and vibrant ministries that are literally changing their communities – and the planet.

Cindy has served as solo pastor of churches in Ohio and Massachusetts. She is the Resource Presbyter for the Presbyteries of Boston and Northern New England. Her focus is church revitalization, and she helps churches of all sizes engage vibrant ministry.

The Presbytery of Western Colorado Invites you to one – or more – of three conversations:

Friday, September 6, 2019 6:30-8:30pm First Presbyterian Church Durango – Southern Cluster Potluck dinner and conversation Bring a dish to share! Saturday, September 7, 2019
12:30-2:30pm
Christ Presbyterian Church
Telluride – Central Cluster
Potluck lunch and conversation
Bring a dish to share!

Sunday, September 8, 2019 4:00-6:30pm First Presbyterian Church Grand Junction – Northern Cluster Potluck dinner and conversation Bring a dish to share!

For more information and details, contact Rev. Melinda Veatch at meldotcom@charter.net.

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TEAM TALK CAN STRENGTHEN VOLUNTEER MINISTRY

Team talk can build a strong ministry team. Of course, some may not think of conversation as an important task, viewing it as getting in the way of work and slowing it down. On the contrary, conversation plays an important role in the life of a team, builds group durability, and sustains effort. Talking about the work helps to reinforce the reasons for doing what we are doing.

"Plug-in" Volunteering

Make no mistake: the American volunteer experience is decidedly task-oriented and talk-averse. Sociologist Paul Lichterman observes that a "task-oriented, shortterm, plug-in style of volunteering . . . has become nearly synonymous with volunteering in the United States."1 Churches, like many other nonprofit organizations, typically assign volunteers to fill short-term tasks, not long-term assignments. In some ways, the arrangement works out well. Volunteers appreciate that, with only a few hours commitment, they can experience the satisfaction of having "helped out." It's also easier for staff, who create slots for volunteers to fill and tasks to complete, which can then be quantified and reported to funders. Yet "plug-in" volunteering hampers dialogue.

"Fun Evenings"

Working side by side on tasks does not necessarily build a team. Lichterman's research bears this out. The researcher volunteered for Fun Evenings, a project offering a drug-free, violence-free evening for disadvantaged youth, anticipating many opportunities for conversation. After all, the event had been billed as a "fun evening" at the Downtown Community Center, and included ping pong, dancing, and youth leadership training for the mostly Black, Latino, and Laotian teenagers, as well as a few white teenagers. The volunteers, all white and a generation or two older, would provide supervision.

From the outset, Lichterman found the situation confusing for himself as a volunteer. What exactly was he supposed to be doing? No one else seemed to know either. Polly, the coordinator, instructed them to monitor the youth and make sure no drugs got in. They were also told that any youth who leave should not be allowed back in, though he observed that the volunteers were lax with this requirement. Notably lacking was any process for building the team itself. Volunteers exchanged pleasantries and nothing more, failing to go deeper into conversation that might have strengthened their bond as friends. It even occurred to Lichterman that he did not especially care how he came across to others, knowing that he would not see these people again. An opportunity had been missed. Volunteers had been "plugged into" their tasks but not each other. Volunteers had "helped out" but not formed a team. More and deeper talk would have built a stronger team.2

Four Ways to Build Team Talk

Team dialogue can be strengthened in four ways. First, seek to move the team from shallow conversation to a deeper dialogue that airs genuine feelings and brings differences to the surface. Most small groups have plenty of



JUST ASK DOUG.

conversation, yet plentiful talk without real communication can signal trouble. Practicing honesty and expecting it from others can strengthen the team and bring to the surface real issues that may need to be dealt with.

One technique for practicing honest conversation is called the EIAG (pronounced eye-ag) process. EIAG is an acronym that stands for Experience, Identify, Analyze, and Generalize.

- Experience. The process allows group members to understand one moment in the flow of events taking place in the group and how it affected every group member.
- Identify. First, identify when someone says or does something that could have a big impact on other members, positively or negatively, asking that person, "Would you be willing to explore the effect this had on the others?" If so, ask that person to withhold comments until everyone has finished.
- Analyze. Then analyze what happened by asking everyone present to talk about their own reactions. For example, "When [name] said (or did) this, I felt (thought, observed) or I did (or said) this." Or, "When it happened, I assumed this, which led me to react the way I did." After this, you can ask the person whose action you are analyzing, "What was your intention?"
- Generalize. Finally, the group can take a moment to generalize or think more broadly about how to act in other situations. Ask the person, "What have you learned?" and ask others the same question. This can deepen the trust required to form a genuine team.³

Second, strive for informal, relaxed meetings. The Fun Evenings volunteers never held meetings, but simply showed up for their assigned time slots. Regular meetings empower volunteers to make decisions for themselves, which builds teamwork. However, try to avoid "business-like" meetings that can be deadening. For instance, holding every meeting in "the boardroom" (the designated room where meetings are to take place), can be like always eating in the formal dining room. Look for an informal setting, perhaps somewhere offsite, and share a meal whenever possible to warm up the conversation.

Third, find ways to equalize the conversation so that the same people do not always dominate the conversation. Letting the big talkers have more airtime can be a conversation killer. Granted, some persons are more temperamentally suited to talking and others to listening. Yet the team nearly always gains more from sharing its wisdom than from listening to long-winded monologues. Ask the group to police itself. "If you tend to be a talker, pay attention to how much you talk, and try to talk less. If you tend to be a listener, try to talk more." Or if someone has been quiet, ask, "We have not heard from you yet. What do you think?" 4

Fourth, draft a team covenant: a written or verbal agreement that describes and defines members' relationship as a team. Lack of trust is a key source of trouble in failing teams. Unless members feel safe and secure with the group, they will not contribute to their full potential. Some groups allow sarcasm to predominate, which stifles those who have sincere contributions to make. Or the problem may be more general, such as not knowing what sort of behavior to expect from other team members. A team covenant can correct this situation. George Cladis describes the covenant he developed with his church staff in Darien, Connecticut. It included these promises: (1) intentionally encourage and bless one another; (2) disagree openly, avoiding triangulation and speaking unkindly of others; and (3) like the potter and the clay, be willing to be molded and changed.5

Changed by Others' Testimony

Talking while we work not only sustains the team, but helps its members grow in faith. Ann Morisy, who works with British churches seeking to expand their outreach, sees dialogue as central to the church's work in the community. She writes, "The essence of dialogue is that each person who is party to the communication is open to the possibility of being changed by the testimony of the other." Talk does more work than we give it credit for.

Paul Lichterman, Elusive Togetherness: Church Groups Trying to Bridge America's Divisions (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 66.

^{2.} Ibid., 88-89

Jackie Bahn-Henkelman, "Reflection: The Role of the EIAG," *Emotional Intelligence and Human Relations Skills Workshop Student Participant Guide*, EQ-HR: The Center for Emotional Intelligence and Human Relations Skills, 25–27, www.eqhr.org.

Marlene Wilson, Creating a Volunteer-Friendly Church Culture (Loveland, CO: Group, 2004), 47–53.

George Cladis, Leading the Team-Based Church, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 160–61.

Ann Morisy, Beyond the Good Samaritan: Community Ministry and Mission (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), 65.

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LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR CONGREGATION THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

For church leaders seeking to better understand their congregation, it pays to listen. Everyone knows the value of one-on-one conversations, yet it might not always be the most efficient use of time for a busy leader. In these situations a focus group can help. Simple in design, it honors the experience of congregants in the stories they tell, the questions they ask, and the concerns they express.

What Is It?

A focus group typically consists of eight to ten participants who meet for ninety minutes to two hours of discussion led by a trained moderator. Typically, a narrow range of persons is invited to contribute, such as those who share a common demographic (such as age, race, or income) or similar interests or a similar relationship to the topic at hand. For instance, to learn more about a congregation's music programs, do not include both music leaders and musicians in the same focus group.¹

The Moderator's Role

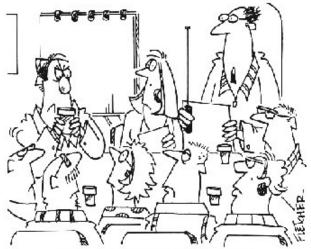
A good moderator is key to success. Should this person be an insider or outsider? Well-resourced churches might have no problem hiring a trained professional from outside to do the job. However, if cost is an issue, the pastor or another church leader could play this role as long as the moderator prepares well, knows the basics of group dynamics, and is committed to fairness. While an outside moderator can be expected to have no particular investment in the outcome of the discussion, a self-aware insider who is committed to neutrality could get the job done for a fraction of the cost of hiring a professional.²

Whether insider or outsider, a good moderator must be able to listen well, paying attention to what is said and paraphrasing or restating the participant's comments when necessary to reflect that he or she has been heard. It helps to have an excellent short-term auditory memory, remembering comments made early in the group and correlating them later with comments made by the same participants. Finally, the best moderators know how to establish a rapport with group members in a short time and think on their feet, using the information the group generates to determine the best line of questioning later.³

Typically the moderator prepares a discussion guide ahead of time. Questions are mapped out in advance yet kept open-ended so that the conversation can go in any number of directions. Move from the general to the specific in asking questions, and record answers on a flip chart or have someone take notes.

Getting Started

To organize a focus group, first define the problem or research question, and then write a statement of the group's purpose. For example, "This focus group will explore ways to shape our music ministry by understanding the experience of those who take part in it." Second, identify a sampling frame (who are the participants?) and identify a moderator. Next, invite your participants. It doesn't hurt to overbook your ideal number of participants by at least 10 percent.



FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT NOT HAVE HEARD MARVIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCUSSION, LET ME RESTATE... "WHY DON'T THESE DANGED FOCUS GROUPS EVER HAVE GOOD COFFEE!"

Once you have gathered the focus group, welcome the participants, briefly state the purpose of the group, and break the ice by having people introduce themselves and their experience with the issue. One idea would be to have each person tell a story related to the question under discussion. Next, let people know what questions will be asked and what you will do with the data. At this point, introduce a few ground rules for discussion. Lisa Hinz, extension professor at the University of Minnesota Extension, provides a sample list of ground rules for group discussion that can be utilized in focus groups.⁴

Next, begin asking your questions using a discussion guide. For example, in the case of a youth music program, plan to start out with simple questions such as: (1) How long have you been involved in this program? (2) What kind of music do you like? (3) How do you get to the program? (4) What, if any, challenges do you run into with participating every time? (5) What would you like to learn? The purpose is to get people talking about things that will give clues that can shape the ministry approach.

If unclear about how to start, try asking a fairly general question that anyone can respond to, and ask each person to share. As moderator, make sure everyone participates. This can be accomplished by having group members reply either in random or specific order. It is ideal if everyone responds to each question, but let the group know it is acceptable to pass. One trick to ensure that people are selected randomly is to use a pack of three-by-five cards with names on them, pull a name of two or three persons and ask them to respond.

Evaluating the Data

When it comes time to analyze the data, the amount of data collected can seem overwhelming. To make the job easier, look back to the original purpose of the meeting and the questions asked. There are four ways of analyzing the data. For best results, choose the method before conducting the group. The data can be analyzed based on:

- Transcription: Write down everything that was said and analyze the transcript.
- Recording: Make an audio or video recording of the meeting and create an abridged transcript for analysis.
- Notes: Take notes on flip charts or ask some to serve as a recorder, using audio or video recordings only to double-check accuracy.

 Memory: Present the results of the group to church leaders immediately after the session is over, relying primarily on personal recall.

The first step in analyzing involves looking for themes in the material, sometimes called "coding." A simple way to code data is to review everything said during the session to determine if it constitutes an answer to any question the moderator asked. This "cut and paste" exercise may unearth hidden themes in the material.

The next step is content analysis. There are seven general guidelines for analyzing the content: 1) consider the actual words used; 2) consider the context for the response; 3) consider the consistency of the responses over the course of the interview, whether answers stayed the same or shifted over time; 4) consider the frequency of comments, 5) their intensity, 6) or how vague or specific they were; and finally 7) find the big ideas or larger patterns that may have emerged. This analysis can form the basis for a written report. ⁵

A Powerful Tool

Focus groups can be a powerful tool for understanding the congregation. Yet every technique has its limitations. Unlike surveys, which rely on a random sample of the population studied, a focus group cannot reveal exactly how many people in the community feel a certain way about the subject, though it can go a long way toward painting a picture of the population studied. To check and substantiate what was heard in a focus group, try holding multiple interviews with diverse groups in the congregation. The power of the focus group lies in its ability to use the safety and protection of the group to bring private thoughts into the open. Listening to others can be a vital first step toward understanding.

Thomas L. Greenbaum, The Handbook for Focus Group Research, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), 2.

^{2.} Ibid., 68-69.

^{3.} Ibid., 77-79.

Lisa Hinz, "Setting Ground Rules for Productive Discussions," University of Minnesota Extension, https://extension.umn.edu/public-engagement-strategies/setting-ground-rules-productive-discussions.

Thomas Justice and David Jamieson, The Facilitator's Fieldbook (New York: American Management Association, 1999), 201–10.

Scott Thumma, "Methods for Congregational Study," in Studying Congregations: A New Handbook, ed. Nancy Ammerman et al. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 208.

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A TEAM APPROACH TO WORSHIP DESIGN

Audrey Wells, director of *Under the Tuscan Sun*, describes how the use of non-professionals enriched the film crew's effort to tell their story. For scenes in the town's piazza, local people who walked there every day were asked to serve as "extras." For the food scenes, a nearby restaurant cooked the meals. After its release, many local participants gathered at the movie theater, which itself had appeared in the film, to enjoy the story they had helped to tell. From the director's perspective, non-professional involvement only served to enhance the filmmaking experience.¹

The same can be true for worship. Appreciation increases when everyone, professionals and non-professionals alike, take part in the preparation. In this method, the pastor gives up the role of solo operator to recognize the part that worship leaders can play in "producing" the worship service. Though more complicated than working alone, it can also be more spiritually rewarding. Len Wilson and Jason Moore, writing for the context of contemporary worship, offer a model for worship teams that can be adapted to a variety of worship styles.²

Recruiting Team Members

A worship team does not have to be large to be effective. In fact, large teams may be more complicated to manage and more prone to conflict than small ones. The best size for brainstorming appears to be between four and seven persons. In recruiting, seek generalists rather than specialists, and try to represent the church's demographic makeup such as age, gender, race, and cultural or political perspectives. People who get along well with others are always a plus.³

Team Member Roles

To facilitate planning, roles may be assigned to certain team members. The **pastor** selects a theme and interprets the Scripture lesson that supports it.

However, the role of producer (or team leader) is better filled by a lay person. Though this role is frequently overlooked, the producer manages the team and acts as the point person in all stages of implementing the worship plan. The key purpose is not to act as the decision maker, but to implement decisions that were made as a group.4 The band leader or music director ensures that the music selections align with the team's design for the service. Some churches opt for full team involvement in selecting the songs, while others will leave this entirely up to the music leader. A writer develops language and metaphors that express the theme set by the pastor. This can be a call to worship or more informal opening remarks by the person who opens the service. For leaders who prefer not to read from a script, "talking points" can be used so that the speaker can then improvise. A technical director is needed to deal with various aspects of media, including sound, lighting, and projection.



"...CLAIMS HE'S PART OF A WORSHIP TEAM AT HIS CHURCH... AND THE CREATIVE ELEMENT OF A SERMON ABOUT SOME GUY NAMED...JONAH?"

How Often to Meet

Worship planning can be time intensive. Team members' available time and the team's scope of responsibility are important considerations when determining how often to meet. Most churches select one of three options.

Some churches use a **single team meeting once per week**. One advantage of this approach is that frequent meetings tend to be an aid to relationship building. This arrangement can often seem better suited to paid staff members than to volunteers with busy schedules to navigate, and it can be wearing over time.

To alleviate the burden, some churches spread responsibilities out by creating multiple teams that meet weekly or on rotation. In the rotation option, different teams take responsibility for one Sunday out of three or four, meeting one time ahead of the service to do planning.

Finally, some churches hold a **single team meeting once every few weeks or monthly**, gathering for several hours to plan multiple services. This model may work best for a small church or one in which volunteers, not staff, do much of the work. In this approach, the team may find it necessary to focus more on the big picture by brainstorming themes, metaphors, songs, and other creative elements without worrying at this point about how it will all fit together. Some of the details may need to be left up to individual team members to determine outside of the meeting.⁵

A Weekly List of Team Decisions

No matter how frequently it meets, every worship team or its appointed leader must make a series of decisions:

- 1. the Scripture lesson on which the service is based
- the central theme or main idea of the service expressed as simply as possible
- 3. a statement of the human condition, the real life issue that the good news of the service addresses
- a visual metaphor, a single image that expresses the main idea in a way that the congregation can connect with
- 5. the goal that the team is trying to achieve
- the creative elements to include in the service to get the idea across, which could include photos, video clips, graphic images, or anything else that

worshippers can see, hear, feel, taste or touch that might help them experience the message.

These decisions, when made by the group, become action items to check off and report back to the group about.6

Organize Loosely

Cathy Townley, a worship consultant, offers another way to think about worship teams that emphasizes building relationships over filling specific roles based on skills. Based on her experience in starting a new church, she advocates organizing loosely, allowing newcomers to seek their own level of participation, and resisting attempts to be locked into a set pattern. As a church planter, she discovered that she was really a one-person team, and that she spent much of her time networking with a variety of people, building relationships with them, and asking them to take one piece of a particular week's worship plan to help her with. The result may be a worship service that is not highly produced, but immensely satisfying for participants, and it can spur member involvement and church growth over time.7

A Richer View from Many Perspectives

Marcia McFee, a worship consultant, compares the congregation's experience of worship to a circle of people viewing a beautiful sculpture from the perimeter of the room. The experience is richer from many perspectives than from only one or two angles. In the same way, worship planning using teams can create a fuller, more meaningful experience than if only one or two persons are involved. That fuller experience is what congregations are all about.⁸

Marcia McFee, Think Like a Film Maker: Sensory-Rich Worship Design for Unforgettable Messages (Truckee, CA: Trokay Press, 2016), 43.

Len Wilson and Jason Moore, Taking Flight with Creativity: Worship Design Teams That Work (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009).

^{3.} Ibid., 25-29.

^{4.} Ibid., 39-48.

^{5.} Ibid., 49-55.

^{6.} Ibid., 79-92.

Cathy Townley, Missional Worship: Increasing Attendance and Expanding the Boundaries of Your Church (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2011), 61-79.

^{8.} Marcia McFee, Think Like a Film Maker, 65.

'SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE'

(SHP)

SHP was founded to provide beds for children from 3 yrs - 18 yrs of age who do not have a bed. Many of the kids sleep on the floor in sleeping bags, air mattresses and couches every night. The beds SHP builds are bunk beds and include a new mattress, pillow, sheets and blankets. After the beds are built on a 'build day' they are taken to homes where needed and assembled in the home.

The labor to build the beds is all volunteer. All monies have been direct donations from individuals, businesses or organizations within the community. Using SHP's assembly line process, the lumber for the beds is cut, sawed, assembled and stained during one 'build day'.

The Presbyterian Church of Delta learned of the SHP Chapter in Montrose from our pastor, Keri Sheldon, and the session voted to support a 'build day' at our church on March 23, 2019. All the lumber and tools were provided by SHP and the congregation supplied the labor and acquired sponsors to pay for the project. Our personal goal was to pay or find donations to cover a cost of \$ 3500.00 to build 10 beds. We met that goal and also received donations of bedding.

On March 23 all volunteers arrived by 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. and the SHP had a regular assembly line laid out on our lawn and inside Westminster Hall. We had 15 members and 16 outside volunteers from other organizations show up and the fun began! We served drinks and snacks during the entire 8:00 to noon time to build. Instead of 10 beds, we did sixteen!! Everyone had a task to perform and the comradeship and 'feel good' was evident everywhere.

We felt pride in what was accomplished in just a short time and SHP sent us pictures of some of the beds assembled in the homes. This mission project for our community just shows what a small congregation can do when motivated.

Do You Enjoy Writing? Do You Hate Writing but Have Great Ideas to Share? Is Your Congregation Reaching out in Mission? How? Want to Get the Word out about amazing happenings at your Church? Beth is

waiting to hear from you!!!

The Presbytery Blog is in need of contributions. We need to stay connected and one way to do this is through the Presbytery Blog on our website. Please consider contributing to the blog even if you are not a writer. Prayers, concerns, joys, celebrations all are shared here. It is a wonderful way to share what is going on in our daily lives, congregations, and Presbytery.

Also appreciated would be ideas to share on the Presbytery Facebook page. What would you all be interested in learning about? Beth is always looking for ideas and inspiration.

Livestreaming Presbytery and Beyond

Many may already know, several of our churches videotape their services, some their sermons only, putting them on their respective church websites for viewing by church members and any interested folks from their communities.

Covenant Church, Grand Junction, has taken the concept further, by "livestreaming" their entire services on their Facebook page. Being on Facebook, the church staff can monitor the site for viewers. There is even a "click on" for anyone who cares to donate to the church.

Part of the concept began with the ability to reach "shut ins" and folks from their own congregation who were unable, for whatever reason, from making it physically to the church service. What a wonderful idea! These folks get to "participate" and enjoy worship, as it is occurring!

Why not have Bible studies livestreamed? Cluster events? Notable events at a particular church within our Presbytery?

Why not have Presbytery meetings, at the minimum, worship at Presbytery, livestreamed? How about "workshops" offered during any Presbytery meeting, over the two day period.

Many folks at our churches do not fully understand what Presbytery actually does. Bringing them into the room, worship service, plenary session, etc. during a Presbytery gathering would provide firsthand the activity of Presbytery and its committees. Reports of committees, notwithstanding confidentiality issues, could be posted on the site in conjunction with the livestreaming of the meetings. Informing our congregations was a topic of major concern at our last Presbytery meeting in May, held at Sonlight Camp in Pagosa Springs. This approach could be a step in the direction of providing serious and timely knowledge of "...what Presbytery does...."

The author has been advised that the process itself is relatively simple and not very costly at all. The major stumbling block would likely be audio, as all of our churches do have their own "acoustic issues". The "audio issue" could be the cost impact to a plan to livestream, but it certainly sounds capable of being handled, without major effort, just some additional, potentially more sophisticated equipment.

Where currently, individual churches utilize their own Facebook pages, for Presbytery purposes, suggest using the Facebook page for WCP!

Let's channel ideas through our Presbytery Administrator, Beth Gilleece!



Presbytery of Western Colorado

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970-240-8455 fax 240-1318

Return Service Requested



Installation of Sara G. Armstrong

As Pastor of Montezuma Valley Presbyterian Church Cortez, Colorado

Sunday August 25, at 2 PM

A Luncheon will be held before the Installation service will start At 12:30 PM. All are invited to Join with Montezuma Valley Presbyterian Church and Sara G. Armstrong at this celebration.

If you are unable to attend please keep the congregation and Sara in your prayers.