



WE ARE THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN COLORADO

Pressing News

Summer 2019

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| Cont. Summery of Presbytery | 2 |
| Order request | 2 |
| Parish Paper: Tips for Starting and Managing A Worship Band | 3 |
| Cont. Tips for Starting | 4 |
| Parish Paper: Overcome Volunteer Burnout by Building Capacity | 5 |
| Cont. Overcome Volunteer | 6 |
| Notice of Pending Retirement of Jeff Harmiling; Stated Clerk | 7 |
| Prayer Request | 7 |



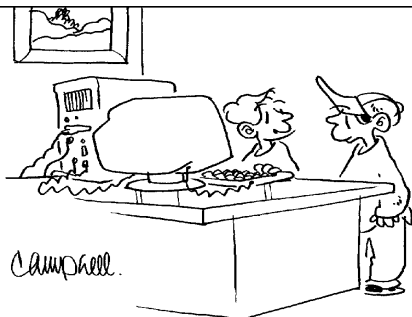
Summary of the May Presbytery Meeting

We inhabit some pretty awe-inspiring country here in Western Colorado. On May 3-4 we held our Presbytery meeting in the midst of it at beautiful Sonlight Christian Camp on the outskirts of Pagosa Springs. The Rev. Emrys Tyler, camp Director and member of our Presbytery, extended the warm hospitality of the camp and its resources to us which included some wonderfully good food including an endless supply of chocolate chip cookies. The camp-like sleeping accommodations were a departure from the typical hotel stay, but I think it helped build a sense of community and, perhaps, instilled a bit of humility.

Along with lots of familiar faces, we welcomed three new ruling elder commissioners: Dan Branaman (Covenant), Nancy Senti (Bayfield) and Michelle Winner (Allison). It was a joy to have them present and actively participating and making a contribution to the flavor and efforts of the gathering.

The theme for our meeting was *"Finding our Mission and Identity."* We approached the task through three separate conversations dispersed throughout our meeting. On Friday, Rev. Matt Royston and elder Sherrie Blake led the first conversation seeking input about what we believe we do well as a Presbytery. Myriad responses were grouped into three main categories: Relational Trust, Support and Nurture, and Working With an Informal Structure and Process. Later, Rev. Emrys Tyler led us in a discussion about "What Makes Us Struggle?" relating the story of Sisyphus endlessly pushing the rock up the hill. "What rocks would we like to stop pushing up the hill?" was the follow-up question. On Saturday morning Rev. Bill Mangrum and Rev. Matt Royston led us in a discussion addressing the question, "What are we supposed to be doing as a Presbytery? What is our purpose?" Conversation was active, honest, and thoughtful. Despite the progress we made, more work remains to be done.

Another highlight of our meeting was the time devoted to sharing and celebrating the many exciting and faithful ministries undertaken by our congregations. While too extensive to list here (they are noted in the minutes of the meeting), it should be said that our congregations are doing a lot of good work for the Kingdom of God and the large variety of things



"Let's type in some Old Testament verses and watch the spell-check go crazy."

shared are evidence that the Kingdom is indeed "at hand."

On Saturday morning the gathered body celebrated the ministry of Alan TeBrink with the Allison church. Alan retired at the end of May after something like 14 years with that congregation. The moving testimony from elder Michelle Winner of the Allison church, and that of other members of the Presbytery, was clear affirmation of the good work Alan has done as pastor to the Allison congregation, his service in the Presbytery and, not least, his volunteer work at Sonlight Camp. Thanks and best wishes from all of us, Alan!

The report from the Committee on Ministry (COM) included the reception of the Rev. John Bruington from Glacier Presbytery as an Honorably Retired member (many of us know John from when he served as pastor to First Presbyterian Church in Grand Junction). Additionally, the Rev. Elizabeth Jordan was transferred to Grace Presbytery (Texas) and the Rev. Charles Packard was transferred to the Presbytery of Santa Fe (New Mexico). The Committee reported progress on the development of protocols for the administration of the Shannel Lorange Clergy Wellness Fund as directed by the Presbytery at its September, 2018 meeting. And, upon recommendation by their Clusters, Jan Gammill and Mary Hammond Atkinson (Northern Cluster) and Thelma Starner and Keri Shelton (Central Cluster) were approved for another two-year term.

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (COPM) introduced us to Mideum Hong as a new Inquirer under the care of the First Presbyterian Church of Durango where he is doing an internship. Mideum is from South Korea and attends Princeton Theological Seminary. The Presbytery examined Candidate Becky Branton who has been working as Church Resident at the First Presbyterian Church in Cuero, TX. Becky was certified by the Committee as ready to receive a call. The Committee reported that Inquirer Anthony Saturno has completed his first year at Gordon Conwell Seminary and will be seeking Candidacy status at our September Presbytery meeting.

The Trustees and Finance Committee (TFC) presented the 2018 year-end financial reports and the year-to-date financial report as of March 31, 2019. Moderator Marj Carey offered to address questions, but there were none. The Committee also presented the results of the 2017 annual financial review (completed in the fall of 2018) undertaken by the firm of A.D. Saito, CPA, PLLC. The report described the procedures followed and affirmed there were "no exceptions."

On behalf of the Al Ruth Award Committee, Sherrie Blake reminded congregations about the opportunity to apply for the Al Ruth Award (grant) noting that applications were due in August.

Sherry Kenney traveled from Denver to tell us about resources available from the Presbyterian Foundation to assist congregations with the important work of Stewardship.

These are resources often overlooked by our congregations. Sherry also told us about scholarships available for pastors to attend the Stewardship Kaleidoscope event.

Finally it should be reported that, following meaningful conversation, the Presbytery approved all but one (18-C) of the Proposed Amendments to the Constitution. Our vote on the amendments was exactly in line with the vast majority of the 170 presbyteries in our denomination.

I think most attendees would agree we had another fruitful meeting (in a beautiful place!). Our Fall Stated Meeting is scheduled to be at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Grand Junction, September 27-28 (Friday-Saturday).

Jeff Harmeling, Stated Clerk



Its Time to Order Presbyterian Planning Calendars

Please place your orders for Presbyterian Planning Calendars with Beth by July 17, 2019. Remember the more we order as a group the better discount we all receive. You can order via Phone at 970-240-8455 or email at beth@wcopresbytery.org.

Please also let Beth know if you are in need of Books of Order or Book of Confession.

TIPS FOR STARTING AND MANAGING A WORSHIP BAND

“How often, making music, we have found a new dimension in the world of sound, as worship moved us to a more profound Alleluia!”¹

The worship band represents a way of discovering “a new dimension” in sacred music, yet that music must be carefully shaped and the band well managed. Managing a band, and forming one in the first place, is a piece of work. Just as the church organ requires regular maintenance and the choir and soloist require ongoing rehearsal, a worship band has to come from somewhere and someone must lead it, whether it’s the church’s music director or a person specifically designated for that job. Whoever the leader is, knowing a few management tips can make the job feel much less intimidating.

Recruit a Leader

Forming a worship band typically starts with recruiting a leader. This person must possess not only musical skill but also the ability to recruit and manage others. Well-resourced churches might consider hiring an experienced contemporary music director to help with the hiring and interviewing, yet the basics of the search are the same for any congregation. Call pastors or church leaders in surrounding churches with musicians who might be qualified to lead when they are not playing elsewhere. Post a flyer on the bulletin boards at university music departments, music stores, or recording studios. Network with others using the snowball technique, which involves asking one person to recommend two or three others who might know someone who plays. Advertise on job search websites dedicated to musicians or to contemporary music in particular.²

Expand the Circle

Once the leader is in place, it is time to recruit musicians for the band. The recruiter must discern the potential band member’s level of skill, usually through an audition. However, calling it an audition may raise unnecessary fears for recruits who may have experience and skill yet be a little rusty and may feel intimidated by the prospect of stepping into the spotlight. Calling it a jam session and inviting potential recruits to play together at the same time provides cover for the amateur and is a lot more fun than a one-on-one audition.

When promoting the jam session, frame the experience as a chance for someone whose instrument has not been played for years to explore their interest in this music ministry. At the jam session itself, the music should be familiar, and band members and potential recruits can all play together. This allows current band members the chance to evaluate the musical potential of recruits, and provides recruits the



FLETCHER

WE CURRENTLY HAVE A LIMITED POOL
OF AVAILABLE MUSICIANS
DUE, IN PART, TO LAST SUNDAY’S “BOOING INCIDENT.”

opportunity to learn what the band is like. Granted, this way of conducting auditions makes it harder to assess a musician's true ability than a simple one-on-one audition, so the band leader will need to listen carefully to each musician both for their immediate ability and for their potential to improve.³

Schedule Musicians

When band members play week in and week out with each other, they can build musicianship, strengthen teamwork, and offer sense of predictability for worshippers. Unfortunately, some bands become so self-contained that when one band member must be away, the substitute finds it difficult to fit in. Rotating musicians in and out of the band on a more regular basis can solve this dilemma. In this alternate model, the band leader asks members to provide dates when they will be unavailable in the coming six to eight weeks, then shapes the worship schedule around it. Short-term scheduling like this addresses a key problem for many worship bands: musicians' busy family life and work schedules.

This more flexible arrangement could especially benefit churches with a limited pool of available musicians. In one small church, the pastor, who also coordinated music for the contemporary service, contracted with four different musicians to serve as the music leader one Sunday per month. The designated leader then brought in musician friends from outside the church or asked church members to play whenever available, similar to a game of pick-up basketball.

Sharpen Musical Skills

Band leaders can offer musical training to help musicians gain confidence. Start with vocal training by offering a full-day or half-day workshop taught by a vocal coach from a local university or by providing resources for private or team workouts when the band rehearses. See Chris and Carole Beatty's website, *The Vocal Coach* (www.vocalcoach.com) for downloadable MP3 resources or compact discs.

Instrumentalists can learn to improve their technique by playing more inversions of the chord using printed resources or online videos. Every chord can be played in several different ways. Each variation creates a different tonal quality to the sound. Keyboardists and guitarists who play more chord inversions can add variety and interest to a simple song.

Second, instrumentalists can improve their reading skills. Some guitarists play solely by ear, while others prefer to rely on lyric sheets with chords written above the words. A chord chart, which many jazz and pop musicians use, offers a more detailed road map than the lyric sheet by providing information about how the piece should be played (time signature, rhythm, and key notes in the melody) without specifying how and when every note should be played, as sheet music would do. Chord charts provide a little bit of structure with ample space for musicians to improvise without having to play the piece entirely by ear.

Third, instrumentalists can improve their technique by listening to each other during rehearsal and performance. Think about the song in sections and leave spaces and holes in each for players to add their contribution, rather than having everyone play in every section. During rehearsal, after finding parts for each piece and spaces when each musician is silent, memorize it or write it on a chart, and commit to play it the same way every time for a while.⁴

A More Profound Alleluia

Listening to and singing along with a worship band, with its richly amplified sound of vocalist, guitars, electronic keyboard, and drums, can be a profoundly moving experience. For those who grew up with rock and pop music in the surrounding culture, a worship band's music can serve to integrate two halves of an otherwise divided life—sacred music and everyday experience. For this reason, it's no wonder that the worship bands have become a fixture in a variety of congregations.

1. "When in Our Music God Is Glorified" (No. 68) in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989).

2. Lance Winkler, *Starting a Praise Band* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007), 28-29.

3. Stacy Hood, *ReKindling Your Music Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002), 28.

4. Tom Lane, *Worship Musician Presents! The Worship Band Book* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Books, 2012), 93-95.

OVERCOME VOLUNTEER BURNOUT BY BUILDING CAPACITY

Vital congregations reach out to strengthen the communities where they are located. Different denominations give different names for this ministry, including mission and outreach, home missions, and social ministry. But where do congregations get the strength for mission? How do they retain that strength in the midst of providing food and clothing, mentoring individuals, or advocating community change? How do they keep from burning out? They do it by building capacity.

What Is Capacity?

Capacity has to do with the amount of resources in hand. For churches, capacity could be reflected in the number of members, size of the budget, number of buildings, amount of land, funding, number of volunteers, or equipment supporting its programs. Organizational theorists describe organizations or programs with a relatively high degree of “slack” as robust. Imagine a large, well-stocked supermarket on the eve of a hurricane whose stock gets utilized as the crowds converge on the store to fill their pantries. Normally a convenience store would do just as well, but with the storm coming in, the supermarket seems more likely to have everything buyers need.

When Capacity Gets Overwhelmed

Failure to pay attention to capacity can have disastrous consequences. In a workshop we taught together on equipping churches for outreach, the Reverend Roderic Frohman, a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pastor in Rochester, New York, described a worst-case scenario:

A couple of years ago at Third Presbyterian Church, our Saturday noon lunch program had a glut of unexpected visitors, probably double the eighty people we usually feed every Saturday noon. We later learned that a neighboring social service agency, which held a Saturday lunch at exactly the same

time, had shut down for a month in order to repair their facilities. The ten volunteers who served the lunch that Saturday were completely overwhelmed. Worried about not getting enough food, two guests began to fight, duking it out on a table, which fell on an elderly lady, breaking her hip. Pandemonium reigned, the police and an ambulance were called, order was restored, but our volunteers were significantly rattled.¹

The breakdown is simple to explain: a sudden surge in demand had overwhelmed capacity. A lunch program equipped to serve eighty persons experienced an influx of 160. The results not only included altercations and injuries, but also a base of volunteers who now have a sense of fear attached to their community outreach.

In the case of Third Presbyterian’s lunch program, robustness might have to do with any number of factors in addition to a hearty soup, such as (1) having more than enough volunteers (2) with ample training (3) serving an abundance of food (4) according to



“TECHNICALLY, YOU CAN’T CALL IT
VOLUNTEER BURNOUT
UNTIL AFTER YOUR FIRST COMMITTEE MEETING.”

guidelines that are published in a clear, easy-to-read handbook (5) with an appendix telling you what to do when emergencies happen.

Sabbath Rest

What about individuals? Here, capacity has to do with the amount of time, energy, or ability to get the job done. We know why volunteers burn out. Running a program that offers food or clothing assistance can feel unrelenting. How can program leaders build capacity when the needs are so overwhelming? Remember the adage: take time to sharpen the saw. As the saw becomes dull, the woodcutter or home builder may find the project imperceptibly slowing down. When this dulling happens to individuals, we call it burnout.

To build capacity, congregations can provide a context for program activity that encourages Sabbath rest. Volunteers can be encouraged to stop the rush of activities to talk, think, study, and pray about their lives. Pastors can match the content of adult education courses to outreach programs that are currently underway in order to nourish its basis in theology. Program leaders can encourage volunteers to deepen their friendship by sharing a meal together outside of the work environment and to strengthen family life by reflecting on their ministry around a family meal.²

The Courage to Halt Operations

An example of preventing burnout and building capacity comes from Greenpoint Reformed Church in Brooklyn. They answered a crisis of morale among its volunteers by shutting its lunch program down temporarily. Serving a predominantly poor neighborhood with a poverty rate of 36 percent, the church found its food pantry and lunch program overwhelmed by a rising tide of clients. Worried about running out of food and funding, and saddened by the death of the chef and the departure of a college student intern, the pastor made a drastic decision: the program would temporarily shut down. For two months during the summer, the program closed its doors. Suddenly there was time to build capacity!

Volunteers cleaned out the kitchen and brought it up to code, visited other food pantries to learn best practices, and drafted a set of volunteer guidelines. The result? Some volunteers got angry and quit. Clients were forced to go elsewhere, and when it reopened, they did not immediately come back. Yet happily, vol-

unteers and staff discovered a newfound sense of joy in their work. The Reverend Ann Kansfield remarked, "I love being around on Wednesdays and Thursdays now. I never would have thought that managing a soup kitchen requires every last ounce of skill and brains that I have. It is the hardest thing I've ever done."³ It took courage to shut down operations temporarily, but it rejuvenated the program.

Strength through Collaboration

What if leaders lack sufficient capacity to organize a project of their own and do not expect to gain that capacity anytime in the near future? In this case, try collaborating with a social service agency by providing them with volunteers from the congregation. They can still count this as part of the congregation's ministry when it reports on activities. Collaborating broadens the impact of the work without squeezing resources. Doing so makes it possible for congregations to have a larger impact than they otherwise would have by practicing more efficient pooling of resources. Social service agencies provide a certain level of professionalism unavailable to volunteer groups working on their own. Furthermore, these volunteers gain valuable experience about best practices. If the congregation wants to continue working toward building capacity, these volunteers can provide direction and insight into what is needed and how it can be achieved.

An Enduring Ministry

Building capacity not only increases church leaders' ability to respond to crisis, but it can create a higher sense of morale as volunteers feel more effective and better able to accomplish what they set out to do. Having ample capacity increases the likelihood of an enduring ministry. For example, congregations that regularly integrate social concerns into prayer and worship and regularly take the time to affirm the service of members are less likely to experience a dramatic ebb and flow of community engagement activities. They take time to sharpen the saw.

1. Roderic P. Frohman, presentation for "Equipping the Congregation for Outreach and Mission," Trinity Episcopal Church, Seattle, WA, Oct. 26, 2013.

2. Ibid.

3. Genine Babikian, "A Brooklyn Church Temporarily Shuts down Its Hunger Ministry in Order to Sustain It," *Faith and Leadership*, <https://tinyurl.com/yd43soob>.



Notice of Impending Retirement Jeff Harmeling: Stated Clerk

Jeff Harmeling, Stated Clerk for The Western Colorado Presbytery for the past four years, formally notified the Human Resources Committee of his intent to retire during the coming year, 2019, with a outside retirement date of June 30, 2019.

HRC, as a result, has regrettably begun a search for his replacement.

Anyone interested in serving as Stated Clerk and for additional information, should contact Katherine Trimm (970.243.4881: kt.trimm@bresnan.net;) or John Thompson (562.714.7540: johnthompson.claimslitigation@gmail.com).

The current Job Description for Stated Clerk is in the Presbytery of Western Colorado Employed Personnel Guidelines Section 2.100, "Stated Clerk". Additionally, various responsibilities of the Stated Clerk can be found in the By-Laws (see "Officers" in the Index) and Standing Rules (see "Stated Clerk" in the Index).

Jeff Harmeling has provided a "skill set" required, based on his experience over these past four years:

The position of Stated Clerk does not require extraordinary abilities. But, as with most positions, certain skills and characteristics are either necessary or useful for the satisfactory completion of the required tasks. The following skills will be useful to the person serving as Stated Clerk.

Basic organizational skills and the ability to meet deadlines

Willingness to respond promptly to communications (mostly email)

Modest Computer skills including navigating the internet, doing emails with attachments, creating documents and files (pasting and similar "tricks" are helpful skills)

Willingness to become familiar with how "presbytery works" (including our By-Laws and Standing Rules), the Book of Order, and basic parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules of Order) most of which can be learned simply by reading

Additionally, the Stated Clerk needs to be available for daytime meetings of Presbytery (meets twice a year), Committee on Ministry (meets monthly most months), Council (meets two times a year), the Human Resources Committee (meets about three times a year), and the Trustees and Finance Committee (meets about twice a year). Once a year the Stated Clerk travels to Denver to meet with the other Presbytery Stated Clerks in our Synod for the annual presbytery record review.

It is the intention of the Human Resources Committee to solicit, interview and inform potential candidates of the duties and obligations of this position in Presbytery in a timely manner, with a goal of selecting a Candidate for the position of Stated Clerk, to be presented for election at the Fall Presbytery Meeting at Covenant Church.

Prayers for Clark and Mary Hammond Atkinson and family upon the death of Clark's mom July 1, 2019. A Memorial Service for Elizabeth Atkinson will be held in a few weeks .



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Return Service Requested



In fact

CHRIST

has been raised
from the dead,
the first fruits
of those who
have died.

1 Corinthians 15:20