

Practices that Enhance the With-God Life
CLP Ron Anderson, Presbytery Spiritual Renewal Consultant

The Pueblo Presbytery CLP group (CLPs commissioned to a ministry and others still in the preparation program) just spent a Saturday dealing with the topic of spirituality – a contemporary term for the biblical idea of the “with-God life.” We addressed the abundant New Testament attention to repentance, inner transformation and fruitfulness as reflections of this life with God. Within this context we dealt with the place of various spiritual disciplines (or spiritual practices or exercises as some prefer) in our lives. The list of such practices is long, of course, with most of them being explicitly mentioned in Scripture, such as fasting, study, prayer, keeping Sabbath, witness, worship, hospitality, service, silence, solitude, and the list goes on.

The place of spiritual disciplines in our lives is a rich topic with implications for how we live and how we minister to others. Our discussion was far-ranging but two guidelines stood out. First, these practices are an *indirect* means of submission to righteousness. In and of themselves they do not give us an exalted status with God; they are a means of enhancing our *relationship* with God. Fasting enhances our awareness of God’s presence and intensifies our attention to prayer over an extended time. Witness makes visible to others what an ongoing relationship with God can be and enhances our own awareness as well. Silence and solitude shut out some of the din of our existence and enable our relationship with God to grow. All of the disciplines have this relationship-enhancing potential.

The second guideline is that the collection of disciplines in a person’s life can and should vary from person to person and time to time. Prayer is the very essence of the with-God life, but the prevalence of many of the other practices varies. While such guidelines were considered in the CLP meeting in terms of their application in our personal lives, we attended also to their place in our ministerial roles. We help people see the place of these practices through classes, workshops, retreats, sermons and individual dialogue. We would love to be able to extend this conversation to include you at some time and place.

MISSION STATEMENT



**The Presbytery of Pueblo believes we are called
as the body of Christ to...
Learn to live together,
Live to love each other,
Love to serve God and neighbors.**



Presbyterian Connections

A Newsletter of the Presbytery of Pueblo

Synod of the Rocky Mountains * Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
803 W. 4th St., Ste. H, Pueblo, CO 81003 * Phone (719)542-1013/(800)662-1013 * FAX (719)545-7956
Website: www.PuebloPresbytery.org * E-mail: puebloppy@aol.com
Fourth Quarter, 2010

What is God Doing With Christ’s Church?

I believe we are living in exciting and anxious times with all the changes in our world, our culture, and our church! God is evidently reshaping Christ’s Church for the 21st Century from the inside out. It would appear from the rapid decline of mainline churches that current denominational structures are being dismantled in order to support the innovative alternatives to “doing church.” Churches that are desperately holding on to the way we’ve always done it before are doomed to extinction. In our July newsletter, I referred to some of the changes taking place in Christ’s Church globally and the Presbyterian Church nationally. Our synod, the Synod of the Rocky Mountains, is also in a period of transition. Our Synod Executive, Zane Buxton, has accepted a call to return to parish ministry as an interim pastor of First Presbyterian, Boise, Idaho, effective mid-November, 2010. And I announced at our October presbytery meeting that **I plan to retire December 31, 2011.**

In our last newsletter I mentioned that the Presbytery of Pueblo has not only declined in membership but will also be losing nearly 10% of our financial support from the General Assembly and Synod by the fiscal year 2014. So, even though the “Future Presbytery Task Force” (FPTF) was originally established by the Presbytery to consider various models of a faithful and sustainable future for our presbytery, their timeline has been stepped up by my retirement announcement. It seems to me our choices are basically two: 1) either we continue to maintain current staffing and program offerings after 2013 by *significantly* raising per capita apportionments to the churches; or 2) we find ways to reduce staff and program costs to conform to our present presbytery per capita costs of \$17.50.

The members of our Future Presbytery Task Force plan to come to our June 18, 2011 Presbytery Meeting with a solid plan and recommendations for our financial and faithful future. Please be responsive to their requests of your thoughts and insights and hold

them in prayer. Again, the Task Force members commissioned at the July 14th presbytery meeting are:

C.L.P. Ron Anderson, Pueblo First, co-moderator
C.L.P. Terry Buckman, Gateway, co-moderator
Elder Jean Ferren, Mountain View
Rev. JoAnn Brechbill, Honorably Retired & Moderator-elect
Rev. Gwen Brown, Penrose
Rev. Henry Hanna, Del Norte
Rev. Dr. M. J. Romano, La Junta
Rev. Dr. Jim Singleton, First, Colorado Springs

Peace & Joy,

Gary Weaver
Executive Presbyter

News from the Stated Clerk

Elder Pricilla Hill

AMENDMENTS

We have a lot to think about regarding GA actions of this summer. We will be voting on three proposed amendments to the Constitution at our meetings in 2011.

- Part I – Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and Form of Government, aka: nFOG
- Part II – Adding the Confession of Belhar
- Part III – Amendments to the BoO which includes G6.0106b

Part I was distributed at the fall presbytery meeting and the booklets for parts 2 & 3 are being given out at the clerk of session trainings. If not there, they will be hand delivered or mailed.

You can go to <http://oga.pcusa.org> to review them, as well as the Association of Stated Clerks analysis.

A schedule of voting at each meeting will be published in the January newsletter.

TRANSITIONS & CONCERNS

▪ *Please remember in your prayers:*

- The Rev. Dr. Pat Jeffrey (Grace Community Church, Falcon) and his family, on the death of his mother in July; and Joyce Jeffrey's mother, recently diagnosed with cancer;
- Mrs. Blanche Scott, recovering from a broken arm;
- The Rev. Sidney Skirvin (Hon. Retired), recovering from hip surgery.

▪ *Transitions:*

- The Rev. Dr. Tom Trinidad will be installed as Pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church on November 7, 2010.
- A Service of Ordination was held Oct. 5 at First, Colorado Springs for the Rev. Amy Heit.

▪ Remember to use the Presbytery's Weekly Prayer Calendar in your prayers. Requests for November, 2010 - January, 2011 are:

- Nov. 7 – Monument Community Presbyterian Church
- Nov. 14 – Kirkwood Memorial Presbyterian Church, Penrose
- Nov. 21 – Faith Presbyterian Church, Colorado Springs
- Nov. 28 – Arkansas Valley Hospice
- Dec. 5 – Ecumenical Church of Pueblo West
- Dec. 12 – First Presbyterian Church, La Junta
- Dec. 19 – Youth Ministries Committee
- Dec. 26 – Community Presbyterian Church, Rocky Ford
- Jan. 2 – San Pablo Presbyterian Church
- Jan. 9 – United Presbyterian Church, Antonito
- Jan. 16 – Presbytery's Committee on Ministry
- Jan. 23 – First Presbyterian Church, Las Animas
- Jan. 30 – Rev. Dr. Karla Koll, Mission Worker & Teacher, Guatemala

(The Prayer Calendar can also be accessed online at our website.)

Presbytery Calendar

(subject to changes/additions)

November, 2010:

- 7 – **Installation of Rev. Dr. Tom Trinidad**, Faith PC, 4 p.m.
- 12-14 – **High School Retreat**, Horn Creek Ranch, Westcliffe
- 20 – **CLP Training Event**, First/Pueblo, 9 a.m.
- 25-26 – **Thanksgiving Holiday**: Presbytery office closed

December, 2010:

- 9 – **Growing Healthy Pastors**, Pueblo cluster, Presbytery office 9 a.m.
- 23-24 – Presbytery office closed for **Christmas Holiday**
- 25 – **Have a blessed, happy Christmas**
- 31 – **New Year's Eve**: Presbytery office closed

January, 2011

- 12 – **Coordinating Council**, First/Pueblo, 11 a.m.
- 19 – **Committee on Ministry**, First/Pueblo, 10 a.m.

Presbytery Stated Meetings scheduled in 2011:

- **February 9**, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Pueblo
- **June 18**, Pioneer United Church, Del Norte
- **October 14-15**, First Presbyterian Church, Pueblo