

**Yellowstone Currents**  
**A Newsletter of Yellowstone Presbytery**  
**June 2017**



Curt and I walk regularly on the rimrocks above Billings. The views are glorious! From the walk, the city of Billings, the Yellowstone River, and the Beartooth Mountains spread out before us. And there is always something new along the path. A few days ago, we noticed that someone had placed encouraging rocks along part of the walk. We noticed *Pray, Play, Love Life*, and *Dance* printed on different small stones. The stone with the words *Be Brave* caught my eye.

So many times that thought resounds in scripture! As the Israelites prepared to enter the promised land, they were encouraged to “be strong and courageous” (Joshua 1:9). Jesus often said, “Do not be afraid.”

How can we have bravery and courage in life? The rest of the verse in Joshua reads this way: “Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” When Jesus asks the disciples to be brave, he also reminds them he is with them, or promises his presence (John 14:27). Psalm 23 reminds us not to fear because God is with us.

When those moments arise when we need courage or hope, our strong and sure resource is the presence of God, always with us.

**Yellowstone Presbytery May Gathering**

*Thanks to Jim Tarr, Elder, St. Andrew Presbyterian, Billings, for sharing the following report on the May 12-13 Yellowstone Presbytery meeting at First Presbyterian Church, Dillon, Montana!*

George and Kathy Goodrich shared with us in a series of comprehensive discussions on how we can equip our fellowships to do more **discipleship**. (Matthew 28:18-20) The focus was on how we can go about being sent. The points of the discussions were using Rev. Stanley Ott’s input on equipping people for discipleship. Each church has received a DVD presentation on this

equipping and revitalization process. Part of the time was spent on bringing the people an understanding of the first meeting we had with Stan in Billings.

George pointed out the needs for many churches to find part time and some full time pastors due to people leaving and retiring from many of the churches in this Presbytery. Looking forward and considering **how to help keep these churches nurtured** will offer some challenges. One solution would involve creating more CRE's who can serve in temporary positions. Jack Bell and Jim Tarr will be visiting more session meetings to seek out persons who might be called to this service.

Actions taken were a first reading of **a change to the Standing Rules** which will give a vote at Presbytery meetings to Ruling Elders who serve on the Leadership Council or who are commissioned to serve on the Synod Assembly. This is an addition to the rules and no current rules for those who can vote will change. Goal is to insure balance in the voting attendance of RE to TE persons at these meetings.

A vote was taken on **the new "Directory for Worship"** in the Book of Order. The motion to adopt came to the floor from the PMT with no recommendation for or against. After discussion the vote by the presbytery was unanimous against the change to the Directory. Our vote meant little since enough Presbyteries already had voted to approve the changes and they are now in effect.

Please note **one position remains open on the Leadership Cabinet** but filling it is not required. Elders willing to serve may contact the Nominating Committee.

**The Whitworth College interns** will be available again this summer on a limited basis since funding was reduced. If a church wants help from them they are to contact Kathy or George with a plan for how they will be used to help the church grow younger. They are already committed to work with the Dillon, Lewistown and Miles City churches and will attend some of the camps at Westminster Spires so time may be limited.

A new book **"Growing Young"** by Kara Powell, Jake Mulder, and Brad Griffin was made available for purchase. Books cost \$15 each and the Dillon and Miles City churches are using them with a group of people in each church who want to learn how to attract and speak to our younger generation.

Two information packets are available to churches as follows:

1. How to talk to any young person. An intergenerational conversation toolkit. Fuller Youth Institute.
2. Vital Churches Institute, The Acts 16:5 Initiative. By Rev. Stanley Ott. Ph.D.

A handout from *Growing Young* included this information on the Core Commitments of Churches Growing Young:

1. **Unlock keychain leadership:** Instead of centralizing authority, empower others—especially young people.
2. **Empathize with today's young people:** Instead of judging or criticizing, step into the shoes of this generation.

3. **Take Jesus' message seriously:** Instead of asserting formulaic gospel claims, welcoming young people into a Jesus-centered way of life.
4. **Fuel a warm community:** Instead of focusing on cool worship or programs, aim for warm peer and intergenerational friendships.
5. **Prioritize young people (and families) everywhere:** Instead of giving lip service to how much young people matter, look for creative ways to tangibly support, resources, and involve them in all facets of your congregation.
6. **Be the best neighbors:** Instead of condemning the world outside your walls, enable young people to neighbor well locally and globally.

### **Honoring John Clark!**

Many of us in Yellowstone Presbytery have met John at Presbytery meetings or served with him on committees. John and his wife Laura are moving to Texas to be closer to family. First Presbyterian Church, Butte, where John and Laura have been longtime beloved members, will honor John and Laura following the 10:30 worship service on Sunday, June 25. They would be pleased to surprise John and Laura with cards from members of our presbytery. Please send them in care of First Presbyterian Church, 901 Platinum, Butte, MT 59701. Let's thank John and Laura for their lives of gracious service among us!

### **Revamp the Camp**

Revamp the Camp, a time to ready Westminster Spires Camp for the summer and continue maintenance projects, will be held June 2- 4. Please contact Sandy Welch at 861-1691 or Curt Kochner 259-7368 for more information.

### **Westminster Spires Camp**

Camp Counselor Training July 6-8  
 Elementary Camp July 9-13  
 Junior High Camp July 16-21  
 Senior High Camp July 23-28

### **Yellowstone Presbytery Clusters**

Miles City Cluster - Neva Rathbun, (msrev@midrivers.com)  
 Billings Cluster - Mary Davis, (mdavisrev@gmail.com)  
 Butte Cluster - Teresa Kendall, (teresakendall@mac.com)  
 White Sulphur Cluster - Debbie Funke, (funkepastor@yahoo.com)

Most clusters meet monthly. Contact the cluster coordinators listed for more information.

### **Presbytery Meetings for 2017:**

November 3-4 First Presbyterian Church, Bozeman

### **Upcoming Opportunities:**

June 2 – 4	Revamp the Camp	Westminster Spire Camp
June 6	Leadership Council	Goodrich home, Bozeman

**Remember our Round of Prayer as we keep our churches, ministries, and leaders in prayer:**

Sunday, June 4 Rev. Leon Rathbun, Honorably Retired, Terry

Sunday, June 11 First Presbyterian Church, Miles City

Sunday, June 18 Madison Valley Presbyterian Church, Ennis and Pastor Jean Johnson

Sunday, June 25 Federated Church of Forsyth and Pastor Cathy McLean  
Rockhaven and Westminster Spires Camps

Sunday, July 2 Rev. Kathy Goodrich, Yellowstone Presbytery Co-Presbyter

Please send news and announcements to Susan Thomas at [ckochner@mcn.net](mailto:ckochner@mcn.net).