

**General Presbyter Report to Yellowstone Presbytery May 17, 2024 Rev. Kathy Goodrich**

“It is foolish and vain to attempt to do God’s work without God’s power [the Holy Spirit].”

*Remain (abide, stay rooted) in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain (abide, stay rooted) in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:4 ,5 NLT*

Psalm 1: 1-3a *(The Voice) God’s blessings follow you and await you at every turn: when you don’t follow the advice of those who delight in wicked schemes, when you avoid sin’s highway, when judgment and sarcasm beckon you, but you refuse. (NRSV) {Your} delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law {you} meditate day and night. {You} are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season.*

*When we are deeply rooted in Christ, nurtured and filled with the Holy Spirit’s presence, wisdom and power, we are connected to one another and empowered that Jesus’ work, love and transforming power can work through us in the world. Cultivating the practices which keep us rooted and connected with Christ, ourselves and one another must be top priorities if we wish to be fruitful and Christlike in these contentious, divided times.*

Joshua 1:9 *(The Voice) This is My command: be strong and courageous. Never be afraid or discouraged because I am your God, the Eternal One, and I will remain with you wherever you go.*

Interesting reading:

Functional deism ->Pastoring in a Secular Age: Confessions of a Recovering Deist

<https://pres-outlook.org/2024/05/pastoring-in-a-secular-age-confessions-of-a-recovering-deist/>

Moral Therapeutic Deism – *Almost Christian, & Growing Young*

Dr. Andy Root – When Church Stops Working

Church in the Accelerating Age; Part 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3AtwuFkY3k>

Church in the Accelerating Age: Part 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLma6tvGc8U>

**Leadership Cabinet** – I have met several times with LC, and worked on a range of things with and for leaders outside of meeting as I seek to fulfill this important role in leadership and visioning amidst changes and challenging times with fewer people. Times dwelling in the Word and sharing Spirit Sightings and Surprises from our lives and across the presbytery are always lifegiving and encouraging. They continue to attend to a very wide range of work on behalf of the whole presbytery including property matters, work on the finances, higher education partnerships,

personnel, policy work for new or updating policies. I work with Ric Tieman as he has needed as our our new website, launched mid April launch. DO check it out.

I work with the Presbytery Planning Team, including the new task force, Uncovering Buried Treasure and Sharing the Light.

**Exploring and learning about Dinner Church and Fresh Expressions of Church** – this continues to be one of the ways established, mainline churches are loving, listening, serving, connecting with, and discipling those who do not attend church in their communities. I and several others are learning and plan to start networking, dreaming together her in Yellowstone. Please talk with Julie Boksich or myself about this.

**PMT –**

**Pastoral Ministry Team – These are extraordinarily busy times for this Team, with co-moderators Neva Rathbun and Debbie Ernst, RE, Bozeman, and members giving generously of their time, energies, wisdom, discernment, care and prayer. Grateful for the presence, wisdom and gifts.**

**Pastor Searches, CLC** – ¼ of the presbytery's congregations are in searches, or may be soon, with PNC's and sessions and PMT liasons/moderators serving sacrificially, along with the work Caroline and I do for/with them. . And that at a time of clergy shortages, fewer going into pastoral ministry, and difficulty retaining pastors.

All of us must continue to educate ourselves about various aspects of the new CLC system, seek help on various aspects, create some materials ourselves as the CLC still does not have all of what is needed for PNC's. We need to continue to seek ways for the system to actually provide some matches for our congregations and find and use "work arounds" of many kinds. This continues to be a time consuming and ongoing concern at every EP gathering in the synod or nationally.

PLEASE put our congregations, our leaders, PMT, and Caroline and myself on your *regular* prayer lists.

And, pray for that we and leaders will recognize and be part of the Spirit calling those gifted for ministry now and in the future.

**Board of Pensions announced their major changes for 2025+.** I have been seeking to stay abreast on these, meeting/coordinating/planning with Christine Long and communicating individually with pastors, PNC, elders, and in writing to the presbytery on this since January. PMT met with her for a training last week. We are all grateful for her great combination of experience and gifts to inform ,consult, advise pastors, staff, and churches through the learning and discerning phases and that she can be with us in person these 2 days.

NOTE: the calculator has just been released. Ric has made it an easily accessible red button on our beautiful NEW website.

I have had conversations and been researching **The Omaha Seminary Foundation's** just released new **Synergos "grant/residency"** has very specific criteria for a few churches in the Synod through their application which could help subsidize a new pastor out of seminary in a church. More to follow.

**Required Boundary Training (every 3 years), will be offered jointly with/for Glacier Presbytery, August 3 & Nov. 9, via zoom. 9-1 pm, with Mark Bassingthwaite, Esq.**

NOTE: this is **now required by our BOO, for EVERY pastor, CRE, AND elder, every 3** Further details including promo ad registration info should be out shortly. Caroline and I have met several times with Janet Potter, COM chair, Glacier.

**Synod** – In addition to meeting monthly with the Staff Forum, the work on the Dubuque CRE cohort requires significant time, along with exploring collaborations (sharing time, money and gifts) on equipping or areas of current need and pursuing opportunity.

I worked with Plains and Peaks Presbytery getting a synod grant so that anyone in our presbytery and synod could **meet virtually with Dr. Andrew Root May 13**. Quite a good group from Yellowstone were part of a helpful and encouraging discussion about the spiritual practices that are foundational to focus on "When Church Stops Working" the title of his latest of many insightful books. I and others would be happy to share insights.

**226<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, meeting in Salt Lake City** – in person June 29-July 4 with worship around the region Sunday and then long plenary meeting days. Committees meet virtually immediately ahead and then travel to Salt Lake. Format is condensed with OGA's decision not to have/invite the range of ministries and groups, seminaries, networks, presentations, or "reunion" gatherings of various sorts which have been a part of these gatherings for many decades. Desire for commissioners to be on the floor except for meals, cost cutting measures, and other reasons have led OGA not to provide for an exhibit hall or gathering space for general visitors, commissioner spouses, Presbyterian groups...

General Volunteers – Utah presbytery is in need of volunteers.

We will send out information which just arrived.

I have been researching it's business and discussing with our leaders