

Synod Assembly  
June 7-8, 2013  
Denver, Colorado

### Synod Assembly: A Commissioner's Report

Thank you for the privilege of participating as a commissioner to the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly. It is my hope that what I share with you in my report is only a part of what Rev. David Ezekiel, Interim Executive Presbyter, Rocky Mountain Synod, will share with you.

First of all, Ron Hanson has been re-elected to complete his third "one year" term on the Synod Coordinating Council. Members may be elected for three terms. In addition, the Synod Record review reported that all eight presbyteries had "No Exceptions". Congratulations, Ron, for your service. Thanks for a job well done.

As you have been hearing for quite some time that the block grants we have been receiving from Synod via the General Assembly were disappearing in 2013. The block grants have died from General Assembly as of 2013. There have been two sources: 1. The block Grant from General Assembly and 2. Synod mission monies. The good news is that in 2014, the Synod will continue 75% (seventy-five percent) of the Block Grant. Monies out of reserves will be used to continue this opportunity. However, this will probably not continue in 2015. Grants will be available by application from Presbyteries. Moreover, the 2013 Per Capita of \$5.98 (five dollars and ninety-eight cents) will be reduced to \$5.75 (five dollars and seventy-five cents) for 2014.

Commissioners from each presbytery shared stories of the mission work and trips happening in their part of the world. You may hear more about these from Ron Hanson, Jim Tarr and Neva Rathbun or today from Rev. David Ezekiel.

Our plenary speaker, Jill Hudson, spoke with us about the *Mid Council Partnerships and Shared Approaches*. Hudson mentioned seven trends that are happening with synods and presbyteries. One is the flattening of structures –includes cleaning out of unnecessary committees, moving toward Synod within a Synod. Virtual Offices and Virtual Synods are being explored and experienced. More Virtual meetings and social net-working is being explored and used as well.

With all the changes that have taken place we are still Euro-American folks and without a lot of ethnicity. According to Hudson, in today's new communities folks do not have sessions; do not know about presbyteries, synods, G.A. or the Book of Order. Something that many of us have heard over and over lately is that we need to make ourselves uncomfortable with Christ. Step outside the "Box".

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve as a Commissioner to Synod Assembly.

Submitted by:  
TE Neva Rathbun , June 2013