

Minutes of phone call Meeting of Yellowstone Presbytery June 8, 2019, 9:35 AM, MDT

19.021 Opening Prayer, Rev. Susi Ennis, Moderator

19.022 Churches and attendees;

Billings FPC: MSW Dave Thompson, RE Sandi Schoenberger

Billings St Andrew: RE Ben Larson

Bozeman FPC: MWS Jodi McDevitt, MWS Dan Krebill, RE Suzanne Bratsky (LC)

Butte: MWS Harland Rounds

Dillon: MWS Daniel Triller

Deer Lodge: MWS Teresa Kendall. RE Susi Johnson

Ennis: MWS Jean Johnson

Manhattan: (Excused)

Miles City: (Excused)

Poplar: MWS Susi Ennis, RE Wanda Kirn (Excused)

Stanford: CRE Jack Bell (LC)

Wise River: RE Julie Boksich (LC)

Churches not represented:

Anaconda, Colstrip, Forsyth, Harlowton, Hysham, Jordan, Lewistown, Phillipsburg, Stanford, Terry, White Sulphur Springs, and Wolf Point.

(Reminder: A quorum for a meeting of the Presbytery requires 3 ruling elders (Commissioners) from 3 different churches in the presbytery. S3.04 of our standing rules applies. At this meeting we had 3 RE commissioners not on Leadership Cabinet, so one less church commissioned RE attendee and we may not have held a meeting.)

At Large: Rev. Dick Davis

Also, on the call:

RE Jim Tarr Stated Clerk, RE Melissa Perrault, Asst. Stated Clerk, Rev. George Goodrich Co General Presbyter, Rev. Kathy Goodrich Co-General Presbyter, RE Russ Kline, Vice Moderator

19.023 A quorum was declared by the Stated Clerk

19.024 The Docket for the meeting was approved.

19.025 Minutes of the March 29,30, 2019 Presbytery Meeting were approved as placed on the website.

19.026 A procedural motion for a teleconference meeting was approved as follows:

1. That the roll for this meeting be established by email to:
statedclerk@yellowstonepcusa.org
2. Call in attendees shall indicate in the email if they are a Member, Minister of Word and Sacrament, Elder Commissioner, Other Member with vote according to the presbytery standing rules, or guest.
3. That written requests for excused absences received by the Stated Clerk be approved.
4. That any Corresponding members present on the phone call be seated.
5. That the Presbytery grant the Moderator the authority to give privilege of the floor to persons, other than Members or Commissioners, for the purpose of reporting to this meeting.
6. That the Moderator and the Stated Clerk be empowered to suggest and make adjustments to the Agenda during the meeting, as may be necessary, to provide for efficiency in reporting, and
7. That all reports received at this meeting be accepted and if not supplied to the presbytery office in advance an electronic copy shall be supplied to the office of the stated clerk and the presbytery office immediately following the meeting.

19.027 Dwelling in the word Acts 1: vs 1-11, the Pentecost story.

After much discussion the Moderator offered a prayer for us to be aware of what we are called to do.

19.028 Co-General Presbyters Report: Exhibit A. Reminding us that in times of change we need to recall our priorities and improve our focus on the basic functions of preaching, speaking as God speaks, spiritual formation, and in general get back to the basic functions of being a church. The planned fall retreats will be a time to discuss the issues of change and as the Lewis and Clark expedition found out, that to reach the top of the continental divide, there comes a time when you must realize that it is impossible “to canoe the mountains”.

19.029 Report of the PMT was not made but Dave Thompson noted some actions will be needed at the November Meeting.

19.030 The Leadership Cabinet made a report which included actions to approve a change to the procedures at St Timothy’s Chapel as follows:

- It was voted that the Financial procedures of St Timothy’s Chapel, as relates to the Presbytery, be set aside (and the Presbytery’s management team deactivated); that the St Timothy’s financial procedures be rewritten and adopted as proposed by the St Timothy’s Board, which requires only one annual review by the Leadership Cabinet and approval by the Presbytery.
- It was voted to accept the 2018 year-end financial report and the 2019 Budget for the St Timothy Chapel.

(Note: This was an exhibit in the March 29, 30 meeting minutes but not adopted at that time because the old procedures were not rescinded yet.)

With this vote the financial activities and changes recommended and approved by the St Timothy Chapel committee are now approved by the Presbytery of Yellowstone.

The Child and Youth Protection Policy (CYPP). Many churches have now completed theirs. Help is available to assist in the process if needed.

The Leadership Cabinet advised the meeting participants that there will be a series of regional retreats so that church leaders can gather close to their church locations to work on empowering people to share in discipleship. Each congregation is strongly encouraged to attend one of these events. The retreats will have leaders assigned by the Leadership Cabinet. These will not be regular meetings of the Presbytery. Dates and places are:

September 14, FPC Butte

September 21, St Andrew, Billings

September 21, Terry Community

A fourth location has yet to be announced for Central Montana.

19.031 Camping and Youth Report: Exhibit B, was included in the meeting package. There is a need for two more counselors at Westminster, one male and one female. Re-Vamp the Camp went very well, the camp is in much better condition now.

19.032 Stated Clerks Report: Exhibit C, was included in the meeting package. The CYPP completed numbers will be revised. There will be a follow up with those churches that have not completed theirs.

19.033 PW Report: Exhibit D, was included in the meeting package. There is an upcoming meeting at the Synod of the Rockies in Sheridan, Wyoming. Please encourage people to attend.

19.034 The next Presbytery meeting will be November 1-2 at 1st Presbyterian Church in Lewistown, MT. It will be framed by Acts: 16. Stan Ott will be presenting Part 2 in his series. Russ Kline and Julie Boksich will be having a panel discussion on "How to empower people for discipleship".

19.035 The meeting was adjourned with a Closing Prayer by Rev. Susi Ennis at 11:30 AM, MDT

The next meeting of the Yellowstone Presbytery is November 1-2, in Lewistown, MT. Rooms should be reserved early.

Respectfully submitted:

Jim Tarr

Stated Clerk

These minutes were approved at the Oct 8, 2019 Phone call Meeting

- Exhibits:
- A. Co GP report
 - B. Camping and Youth report
 - C. Stated Clerk report
 - D. PW report

Exhibit A. Co GP report

Co-GP Report Yellowstone Presbytery, June 2019 Kathy and George Goodrich

“Seek first the reign of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you...” Luke 12:22- 34

This prompted the question, “Do I/we seek the reign of God today, in and for my/our life? Congregation? For the presbytery? For the world and my/our sphere of influence?” And HOW? How would you answer?

“You will know as much of God, and only as much of God, as you are willing to put into practice.”

Eric Liddell, The Disciplines of The Christian Life

“We would like a church that again asserts that God, not nations, rules the world, that the boundaries of God's kingdom transcend those of Caesar, and that the main political task of the church is the formation of people who see clearly the cost of discipleship and are willing to pay the price.” **Stanley Hauerwas, Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony**

“If western societies have become post-Christian mission fields, how can traditional churches become then missionary churches?” **Darrell Guder, PhD, PCUSA pastor, author, retired Dean of Princeton Seminary**

“At the moment of crisis, you will not rise to the occasion, you will default to your training.” Tod Bolsinger (From training talks, Canoeing the Mountains, to church leaders in February What Do You Do in Default Mode?)

*Preaching (“Talking Longer”) *Programs (“Old Tricks”) *Pastoral Care (“Trying harder”)

We start with a regional perspective first this month, reporting from important time with Rocky Mountain Synod Staff Forum, in Denver:

A. Trends across the Synod of the Rocky Mountains. What may God be saying in all of this?

a. Clergy shortage is here for small, rural & smaller town churches in our region & across the nation. Other synod presbyteries are in it, too.

3 presbyteries committed to further conversation and exploration as to ways we can proactively collaborate such as interpret, recruit, explore a rural internship for seminarians, ...all ideas welcomed. Let's make time to explore this.

b. The pace of change and technology is impacting all of our churches and ministry – **How?**

We need to discuss and be learning/teaching ongoing adaption as the NEW NORMAL

c. Essential to explore new ways/model of equipping, pastoring church in rural areas, small towns and cities, including:

i. Equipping, empowering lay people:

- to discover, develop and use their spiritual gifts, including additional training for some in areas to cover much of what a pastor would do,

- creating a ministry team/teams for a congregation or cluster of congregations, especially those with no pastor, but goal is for ALL congregations

- churches *“discover their resources in God/faith, selves, church, community, and ...”*

ii. Dinner Church / “small discipleship communities,” as part of existing congregations, instead of stereotypical, institutional/building/program focused “church.” Addressing spiritual hunger, loneliness, identity and purpose

d. Presbytery meetings:

- i. Need ways for times of listening, asking and conversation for input on the topic of “Imagining the future of the rural church.”
- ii. Times for educating and empowering lay leaders as well as. How do we spark saving change in rock-ribbed, determined congregations? See iii.
- iii. See ways to address the need in bold below.

A resource to watch and discuss we and consider ways to share broadly- Tod Bolsinger’s videos, *Canoeing the Mountains*, and accompanying book of presentation to Philadelphia Presbytery & that ELCA Synod. See section II G below for info & links

B. Yellowstone Presbytery, synopsis we shared of goals and challenges:

- a. Equipping and encouraging focus LC Goals for 2019, including Creating a Discipleship Culture versus membership/consumer culture (a need all others concurred with)
- b. Challenges of small and/or rural churches, most of which apply to medium sized churches –
 - i. Financial challenges
 - ii. Need to transition to practices and culture of disciple making & equipping the saints for ministry, to discern where the Spirit is at work, be creative, relationally based, spiritually strong, embodying Christ, outwardly focused... and how to be *adaptive* 21st century congregations.
 - iii. Hard to attract pastors, especially 21st century culture *equippers*
 - iv. Shrinking pool of existing leaders through death and people leaving community
 - v. Fear and/or resistance to adapting for 21st century in local congregations, and pastors and sessions not trained how to lead change – see ref. to Bolsinger materials below

II. Steps we are taking to provide strong pastoral leadership and equip other for pastorless congregations:

- A. Aiding the search: George is contacting seminaries and working with the placement office to publicize our vacancies.
- B. Publicizing the calling, opportunity and need for CRE’s. Working with PMT on giving prayerful thought to varied aspects of training, preparation and oversight: Margee Smith, Lewiston. Formal coursework complete. Several others expressing interest or praying about whether God may be leading them to explore this training and calling.
- C. Training lay leaders in Jordan, monthly. Lewistown on Spiritual Formation and direction, at their request.
- D. Rethinking curriculum for training. Some of the material is dated for equipping leaders for the church of the 21st century. It’s no longer 1960! The overwhelming need is for what can be called a missional mindset modeling Christ and sent OUTSIDE the church to join in Christ’s mission versus the old “attraction” model. Interestingly, in small towns the people can be very missional with eyes, hearts for meeting needs, relating and embodying Christ in the community, but may need training to share the Good News and their own story/testimony of faith and God at work in their lives and ways to adapt as a church.
- iii. Search committees need to be informed about the new realities and needs trends in mission and ministry as they begin to search for a pastor trained to equip and help them navigate these trends into fruitful ministry and mission. Usually this requires a fresh study of scripture and their community to discern God’s mission/vision for them NOW. Gospels and Acts helpful here.
- E. Observation: two of our pastorless churches are numerically growing without clergy pastoral leadership: Hysham and St. Andrew.
- F. Regional or cluster equipping is more important than ever. LC offering opportunities in September.

G. Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory, by Rev. Dr. Tod Bolsinger (PCUSA pastor, trainer, seminary prof.) All day training for PCUSA's Synod of the Trinity, Philadelphia Presbytery and regional ELCA in Feb. 2019

4 video presentations, 4 podcasts for download. I have heard a previous version of this at PCUSA events and watched several of these. Very important to understand and practice.

What Brings Change? * Relate (new communities)

* Repeat (new practices)

* Reframe (new ways of thinking)

* **"Shifting"**

Radical = change at the root (Not "tweaking!" or "improving" *the ways we have been doing it*)

Go to - Philadelphia Presbytery's Facebook page, under videos, has these 4 videos posted from Feb 28.

<https://presbyphl.org/re-cap-canoeing-the-mountains-event/>

Summary article of the training [http://www.syntrinity.org/featured/author-tod-bolsinger-helps-direct-leaders-as-they-are-canoeing-](http://www.syntrinity.org/featured/author-tod-bolsinger-helps-direct-leaders-as-they-are-canoeing-the-mountains/?utm_content=Michael&utm_source=VerticalResponse&utm_medium=Email&utm_term=here&utm_campaign=March+8+Enews%3A+Future+Church+Symposium%2C+Canoeing+the+Mountains)

[the_mountains/?utm_content=Michael&utm_source=VerticalResponse&utm_medium=Email&utm_term=here&utm_campaign=March+8+Enews%3A+Future+Church+Symposium%2C+Canoeing+the+Mountains](http://www.syntrinity.org/featured/author-tod-bolsinger-helps-direct-leaders-as-they-are-canoeing-the-mountains/?utm_content=Michael&utm_source=VerticalResponse&utm_medium=Email&utm_term=here&utm_campaign=March+8+Enews%3A+Future+Church+Symposium%2C+Canoeing+the+Mountains)

God's Opportunity for adapting leaders and church cultures for effective ministry in these new and shifting times. We need to be equipped and proactive NOW, as urgency of our churches is acute.

Some will not be viable in 3-5 years with approaching pastor transitions.

Kathy's Observations of urgency focused after preaching and meeting with some of our church leaders:

a. **Financial and membership crises are God's opportunities.** We need to be ready for, catalysts for change which most will never consider or do unless desperate, "We can't go on as we are".

(pain of staying the same and dwindling/dying is now worse than that of growth and change with its pain, unknowns and loss).

b. A Need for Vision, Hope, cultivating spiritual growth/roots, being good neighbors – locally, globally.

c. Need to discover, develop a new culture and way of being church for 21st century, and start to live into it or only a chaplain/caretaking, old school pastor will be interested, further accelerating decline.

d. Essential to live and grow and discern God's mission *before* and *while* finishing MIF, calling of a pastor.

e. A culture of Lay equipping, training and ALL in ministry according to gifts is essential in all churches.

f. Important for LC and PMT to communicate and collaborate on this, which is starting.

Recall Two National Needs within the church from the Heath Rada Moderatorial Term:

a. **Improvement of Preaching** – Thus preaching cohort

b. **Improvement of Spiritual Formation** – A request from Lewistown Church.... Do we need to provide training for pastors in spiritual formation and then group spiritual direction?

BUT- Also living God's concerns for compassion, righteousness, justice, as we respect the many and varied ways our diverse presbytery may see as best to live out their faith in addressing them

a. Immigration

b. Economic plight of ranchers and farmers caught in the trade wars. (see Bozeman Chronicle article 4/7)

c. Our shrinking, underserved Rural Communities who grow our food, protect our land

d. Stewarding creation (Gen 1) Environment – Climate Change and various pollutions; i.e. impact of longer summers...

e. Racism in our bounds: Native American and Anglo and Latino,

Camping and Youth: Met after Presbytery on March 30, George attended. See Curt's Camping report.

- a. Staffing and publicity are essential and underway now.
- b. Child and Youth protection policy will be highlighted again in training.
- c. A lot of rental of the space this summer during off-camp weeks.
- d. Summer camp speakers:
 - a. Elementary camp (July 14-18) George
 - b. Junior High Camp (July 21-26) George
 - c. Senior High Camp (July 28- August 2) Daniel and Callie Triller

2. We continue to see the need for Increased Discussion and Understanding of:

- a. **Christian Discipleship for the 21st Century:** What does a discipleship culture look and act like? "How would Christ live? What would He do if he were in my body?" Different congregation should be asking this question in its local and cultural contexts... And the, with God's leading and prompting, do it.
- b. **Spiritual Conflict:** From Job 2 to Jesus himself, to Ephesians 6 and Revelation, the Scriptures are clear that we are embroiled in the unseen, epic spiritual battle of good and evil. What evidence do we see of this in our day? How might God be leading us to better understand, be equipped for and live out this part his commission to disciples (Luke 9, Mt. 10...)? What might be the consequences if we do not? See Andrews' article in May/June *Presbyterians Today*.

Opportunities for equipping, connecting: Please publicize & bring group to Regional gatherings in September

"Won't You Be My Neighbor?" Jackson Hole conf May 31 -June 1 including Co-moderator Vilmarie @ https://pcjh.org/?event=wont-you-be-my-neighbor-presbytery-event-with-vilmarie-cintron-olivieri&event_date=2019-05-31

Whitworth Leadership Summit – June 24 -27, @ Whitworth Univ., Spokane. Note the Speakers, schedule, tracks and more info @ <https://www.whitworth.edu/cms/administration/church-engagement/whitworth-ministry-summit/> Yellowstone is a partner presbytery.

1. Stated Clerk Transition from Jim to Melissa:

- a. June 1, 2019. Each having half- responsibility for the job.
- b. November 2, 2019. Melissa becomes stated clerk, performing 2/3rds of job.
- c. January 1, 2020, Melissa has the whole job.

2. Charles and Melissa Johnson, PCUSA co-workers from Zambia again this August: Suggested Donation to cover their travels: \$250 per Church.

a. August 17 & 18 - FPC Billings

b. August 19 -?

c. August 20 - FPC Dillon

d. August 21 & 22 - Personal time

e. August 23 - FPC Stanford?

f. August 24 & 25 - FPC Great Falls

g. August 26 - FPC Bozeman

h. August 27 - Ennis with Steve and Elaine Hundley, maybe with church folks

i. August 28 - Personal time

j. August 29 - Depart for Texas

k. Is this schedule correct?

Personal – Both of our moms have had increased challenges and needs the last several months.

Exhibit B. Camping and Youth Camping and Youth Report May 2019

Finances:

We have received some contributions to two accounts related to camp. Thanks to the offering collected at the Presbytery meeting and other donations, we have approximately \$2,700 available for Camp Scholarships. We have also received a donation to the Westminster Spires Upgrades account and this now has a balance of approximately \$4,300.

Camp Staff:

We have a number of returning counselors and staff and expect a few new CITs and counselors to join the ministry team.

Staff Training George Goodrich

Elementary Camp George Goodrich

Junior High Camp George Goodrich

Senior High Camp Daniel and Callie Triller

Program Director Kara Todd

Crafts Nichole Ferestad

Returning Counselors Megan Dupuis Stephanie Brewster Scott Sherman Kristin Kochner (part of Junior High and all of Senior High camp)

New Counselors Brooke Moen (Possible) Whitworth Fellow

New CIT Eli Todd Samantha Welk (Possible)

Camp Registrar Curt Kochner

Camp Schedule: Staff Training June 10-13

Elementary Camp June 14-18

Junior High June 21-26

Senior High June 28- August 2

Promotion:

All previous campers and participants in Winter Youth Retreat have been sent camp brochures. A slide show is available on flash drive for any church that would like to show to parents and youth to help promote camp. We have scholarship funds available so cost should not deter anyone from participating in camp.

Facilities:

Sandy Welch, Jim Tarr and Curt Kochner will visit Westminster Spires on May 11 to determine projects to be completed during Revamp the Camp weekend which will be held on May 31-June 2. A number of trees have been killed with the Ips beetle infestation. Our caretaker Simon Hill is taking down some of the diseased trees and we are paying him extra for this work which is beyond his regular duties.

Other Guests for Summer 2019:

On3PSkis June 14-16 (Returning Group)

Bridger Ski Foundation June 17- 22 (Returning Group)

AdvantEdge Ski Camp June 16-30 (New Group)

Padon Family Reunion July 1-5 (Returning Group)

Redding Wedding July 6

Drake Wedding August 30

2019 Presbyterian Youth Triennium at Purdue University in Indiana

Pastor Dave Thompson from Billings First Presbyterian will once again provide leadership for the Triennium trip.

Depart Billings: Sunday, July 14

Triennium: July 16-20

Return to Billings: Tuesday, July 23

Contact: Pastor Dave Thompson

First Presbyterian Billings

Email: pastordave@fpcbillings.org

Phone: 406-696-4913

Additional information:

The Methodists are no longer offering camp at Camp on the Boulder and have been leasing the facilities to Faith Chapel in Billings. The future use of that camp is in transition. The United Church of Christ will vote this summer on ceasing their camping program at Camp Miminagish which is also on the Boulder River south of Big Timber. We may want to consider inviting the UCC churches to rent Westminster Spires for their program, or at the least invite UCC youth to participate in our program. They will still be offering a camping program at Camp Miminagish this summer.

Exhibit C.

Stated clerk report March 2019 to June 2019.

Stated Clerk attended stated meeting of the Presbytery March 29, 30 2019 in Billings and took minutes of meeting. During the month of April those minutes were perfected with the help of the LC Moderator and The Assistant Stated Clerk. These minutes are ready for adoption at the June 8, 2019 conference call meeting of the presbytery.

Reports on minister transactions and changes made over the past year were finalized and reported to the office of the GA.

Attended meeting of Leadership Cabinet in Bozeman April 9, 2019 and took minutes of meeting.

I participated in a staff training session with George and Melissa on April 10, 2019 and we discussed process for transferring duties and responsibilities of the clerk office to be shared in the next few months and to make recommendations to the personnel committee on changes we proposed to make.

Stated clerk attended a meeting of the PMT on May 9, 2019 and took minutes and reviewed the PMT task list. Thanks to George Goodrich for taking task list notes.

Met with the Assistant Stated Clerk in Billings May 13, 2019 for a couple hours and we reviewed our job-sharing duties and how in the next few months work will be performed. The ultimate goal is for Melissa to be elected Stated Clerk at the November meeting of the Presbytery in Lewistown and for the current Stated Clerk to resign and move to be an assistant until the end of the year. This plan was accepted by the LC at its meeting the following day.

Attended the Leadership Cabinet Meeting on May 14, 2019 and took notes of meeting for review after the assistant clerk completes the minutes and task listing.

The At Large out of bounds members were sent a letter for them to consider options regarding their status at the direction of the PMT.

Other work of the office was to report the votes of the presbytery to the GA on the overtures to make several changes to the Book of Order. The Yellowstone Presbytery was in agreement with the final voting in all but items B1 and B2 of the overture package presented at the March meeting.

Four of our 23 churches now have active MIF's reported to the CLC and are actively seeking pastors. The Clerk assists those churches as needed and validates them as required of the PMT.

Preparation of the docket and filing reports for the presbytery meeting in June are tasks worked on prior to this meeting.

Jim Tarr

Stated Clerk

Exhibit D. PW Report.

PW REPORT TO YELLOWSTONE PRESBYTERY May 27, 2019 Presbyterian Women will be meeting in Sheridan, WY this summer for the Synod of the Rockies 2019 Triennial Gathering. Women from across the Rocky Mountains will come together to reconnect, to worship, to pray together, to learn how God is leading us in this world.

Several women from the Bozeman area will be attending. There will be a PW Synod of the Rocky Mountains Coordinating Team Meeting the day before starting at 4PM, August 8. Attached are agendas for both meetings, the Synod Gathering and the Team meeting. Please consider attending the Gathering and if you are a member of the Coordinating Team gather some friends and bring them along!

Let's coordinate rides. I will be attending, and as a member of the Synod CT I will be going on Thursday, August 8. The Gathering activities will start Friday, August 9, at Noon (a change from the printed agenda).

To clarify about hotel reservations in Sheridan. Make your own room reservations for every night you will be in Sheridan, including both the CT and gathering nights. You will submit a receipt for reimbursement of the night of the CT meeting only if you are a member of the Coordinating Team. Half of the cost of the room will be reimbursed for the CT meeting. Everyone is responsible for paying for the two nights of the Gathering, Friday and Saturday, on your own.

Spring has been slow in coming this year for those of us in Yellowstone Presbytery, but things are beginning to change. If you have any questions about the Gathering please contact me.

Suzanne Bratsky

406-539-0211

suzbratsky@gmail.com

End of Minutes June 8, 2019 Presbytery Meeting