

## Synod of Rocky Mountains commissioners update to Yellowstone Presbytery March 2016

Rev. Kathy Goodrich, TE and Ron Hanson, RE

The WNLT conference will NOT be held this coming fall. They said they were unable to get a keynote speaker. Susi Ennis's presence and wisdom have been very valuable as she serves as Yellowstone's representative on the Planning Team.

### Synod Mandate for reduction and mergers .

The GA voted (in 2014) a mandate to reduce the number of synods to 10-12 - voluntary action or else national level will decide and impose restructuring. Synod of the Rocky Mountains has been one of the few actively exploring options and has had several informal conversations and 2 formal exploratory meetings, Ron Hanson a participant :

1. with Synod of the Southwest ( some areas in common but no indication of desire to move forward at this time)
2. Synod of the Pacific . interest expressed on both sides by those present at talks. Their size, west coast location and enormous financial reserves seems to indicate their location would serve as a new locus *if* a merger happened.

There are several overtures to 2016 GA asking to rescind 2014 decision, including one from Presbytery of Sante Fe. Plains and Peaks has concurred and they are hoping for more concurrences. Rationale and serious concerns include:

- 1) The ability to form and re-form synod boundaries already exists in the current Form of Government, G-3.0502 (items a through e).
- 2) This massive restructuring effort will refocus leaders, presbyteries and synods away from the important ministry and mission at this pivotal time of change and opportunity and drain much needed time, energy and money. Estimates range from \$5 - \$10 million will be needed for meetings, legal matters, travel and all for what?
- 3) Even more Enormous presbyteries in the west would be detrimental on every level.
- 4) The PCUSA is in a tenuous time of change and downsizing and this effort will unnecessarily drain valuable time, energy, people and monies.

Representatives from the 15 affected Synods met in Dallas in November to discuss the issue of reducing the number of Synods. The bottom line of those discussions is a report to GA to rescind the decision to reduce the number of Synods.

David Ezekiel no, Synod Exec. now serves ¼ time.

Synod of Rocky Mountains meets next Monday, March 7 via conference call