

General Presbyter's Musings – Rev. David A Walker

April 2009

At our March Presbytery meeting at Raeford, the Chair of Presbytery Council, Julie Stocks, shared a citation of commendation for the Presbytery staff. So it is in that spirit that I share the following personal reflections:

"I sit behind the clerk's table at the Presbytery meeting, and observe **Laura Lupton** handling the PowerPoint, and think of the workshop that she led recently for churches that are trying to establish their own website, and I say to myself how blessed we are with the staff we have here. The next morning I receive in the mail a large envelop stuffed with reports from completed Ambassador session visits in region 1, and I say to myself, how blessed we have been to have had **Robbie Phillips**.

Later that day, I over hear **Gayle Boykin** on the telephone with a church treasurer, explaining in such a caring way the details of a financial report. And I say to myself, how blessed we are to have such devoted staff in this presbytery.

A few days later, I walk back toward the Resource Center in the Presbytery office, and I notice **Kaye Bledsoe** packing up her boxes ready to set up the display for the PW gathering. I remember that she has only recently unpacked those same boxes from the material brought back from the Presbytery meeting set-up. And I say to myself, how blessed we are with our staff.

Sometime later in the week, I walk past **Terry Johnson's** office on the second floor here, and I hear her carefully and sensitively explain to one of our smaller churches how to handle mission remittances and camping fees, all in the same conversation, and I say to myself, how blessed we are to have such competence on staff. I drive into camp Kirkwood on a road that has been recently graded and crowned for drainage, using equipment that is quite old, once died, but has been resurrected by **Jerome Patterson**. And I say to myself, how blessed we are to have a staff that's willing so often willing to go the extra mile.

One morning I am on my way to the office, later than usual, I call ahead to get some information on a church. **De Scott** answers the phone with her cheerful greeting and a voice that is always smiling, and I say to myself, how blessed we are to have the staff we have.

That evening I go to a session meeting where a session has been working hard on how to be a session, in a congregation that has been wrestling with how to be a Presbyterian church, and making considerable progress under the guidance of **Hazel Wilson**. And I say to myself, how blessed this Presbytery is to have the staff that we have. Recently I attended a gathering of folk from all of our Hispanic missions, hosted by the Rios Church – over 300 people. It is largely the culmination of **Eduardo Moreno's** efforts over ten years, and I say to myself how blessed we are in this presbytery. At a recent staff meeting, I listened to **D Askins** describing the joyful experience of a festival of choirs that was organized in her region (2), providing many people with the opportunity to sing in a choir much larger than they would ever experience in their own congregation. And I say to myself, how God has blessed us through the leadership of our staff.

Meanwhile, there is **Jennifer Moffia**, whose middle name is “Awesome!”, no doubt the result of much time spent with teens, middle school and senior high youth, in her own church, but also with our Presbytery Youth Council. She must have had as much fun at the recent middle school retreat as the students. And I say to myself, how bless we are to have this staff who really care about the people they’re working with.

Most recently, **Ann Locklear** has transferred from our office to Camp Monroe to prepare for the summer camping program. Within days she was up to her ears in camping schedules, fees, staff recruiting, training – not to speak of organizing an office that hasn’t been much used for a considerable time. Meanwhile, **Jon Stricklin** moves effortlessly from a pile of pine straw, to an outline of the accreditation process with the national camping organization, to a description of how to re-route natural drainage to protect the Lodge. And I say to myself, how blessed to have this kind of expertise.

And lastly, and likely that which prompts this line of thinking, is the steady hand and seasoned experience of **Penny Cooper**, who since she has been out with knee surgery, has come to be even more appreciated by me, but who even from her re-cooperation at home assists me frequently on the phone. And I say to myself , how blessed....

And then I must add, thank you member **churches of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina**, for supporting and valuing these people, and their work within this branch of our Presbyterian family.