



PRESBYTERY of SANTA BARBARA

September 10, 2019

Greetings Most Excellent Followers of Christ!

After 23 years of Santa Barbara Presbytery meetings, I am super excited to serve as the Moderator for the next year – that will require your vote at our next Presbytery meeting in Summerland.

And yes, I did say, “super excited.”

Because after 23 years of Presbytery meetings, I am more committed and dedicated to the health and well-being of our Presbytery than at any other time in our history.

The last few years have been rough, for sure. Lots of grieving over friends who have left our denomination, plenty of confusion about finances and reflections on Presbytery meetings that at times felt hostile. While we may still have grieving in our future and perhaps difficult conversations about finance, I am quite confident we have moved beyond hostility and are currently dwelling in a season of healing and restoration for our churches and our Presbytery.

Super excited to see what the Lord is going to do next.

I look forward to seeing you at our Summerland church on Saturday, September 21st. At this meeting, we’ll have a great time of worship – thank you Ron Urzua for preaching. We’ll also hear about how God is working in Grover Beach via a video from Andy Rock and Paul Dugan. You will also receive many reports of good news and places of growth throughout the Presbytery.

For example, did you know that The Way Station began The Philippian Project? Our new worshipping community in Camarillo has enlisted the help of eight of our pastors to preach twelve sermons through this powerful and joyful book. It began on Sunday, September 8th – at that meeting, a homeless man named James left in tears. You see, James has been in and out of the hospital and some time in the local jail but when he is free, The Way Station is his church home. Great news for the lost and hurting =- so good.

One more piece of Good News, at this Presbytery meeting you’ll receive two free books – one by Father Greg Boyles and another by Kara Powell. These two authors will be the primary speakers at our Santa Barbara Mission Conference in January 2020. Kara Powell’s book, Sticky Faith was written for churches who want to increase their effectiveness of their Family Ministries.

What we discovered in our interviews with Session last year was that many churches want to increase their Children’s Ministry – so this resource is given to you so that your church might have a great resource to reach families in your area. The leadership at Presbytery is listening and we are responding.

Like I said, I am super excited. See you on September 21st.

Tom Stephen