

PASTOR'S REPORT

Another year has come and gone, the 27th year in which I have been serving the Lord as a Presbyterian pastor, and the beginning of my fourteenth here at Second Staunton.

I have often compared serving as a pastor to an iceberg. Not that it makes you cold and rigid, but as an iceberg is 90% hidden under water, 90% of what a pastor does is largely hidden to the congregation. The more public responsibilities of my position are like the tip of an iceberg that anyone can see, like leading worship services and Bible studies. More under the surface are other items, like administrative tasks in support of the Session and its committees, attending meetings (lots of meetings), pastoral care duties, and other similar tasks.

The last time I specifically tracked my time usage revealed it being spent in the following areas:

Worship..	22%	Meetings..	5%
Teaching.	12%	Pastoral Care.	26%
Administration..	30%	Larger Church (Presbytery, G.A.).	5%

These figure are based on a 55 hour work week, although many weeks are longer, and a few, shorter. (The percentages may vary due to seasonal activities, etc.)

Among the sermons I delivered in 2008 were three series: a Lenten series on the “I AM” sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of John, a series in November on the Marks of the Church (one holy catholic and apostolic church), and a series during Advent on the Advent Candles of Peace, Hope, Joy, and Love. I also preached at my ‘home’ church on April 20, the first time I had done so in almost 30 years, as part of their program to have the four of us who were in seminary in the late 1970's - early 1980's return and update that congregation on our ‘travels’ since then. (I also was able to help celebrate my father’s 80th birthday that same weekend.)

I offered three Bible Studies during 2008:

- A winter-Lenten topical study on some hard sayings in the Bible.
- A study focused on the 218th meeting of the General Assembly, which served at least two purposes: to deepen the understanding of participants in that level of our church government, and to help me prepare for my service as a commissioner
- A Fall study on the Epistle of Hebrews

Studies planned for 2009 include the Gospel of Matthew from January - May, and possibly the Book of Revelation in the Fall.

As mentioned above, it was my honor to serve as a commissioner to the 218th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in San Jose, California, in June. My service made me a third generation commissioner in my family. My maternal grandfather was an elder commissioner in 1952 (New York City), and my mother was an elder commissioner in 1983 (Atlanta reunion assembly). I served as Vice Moderator of the Assembly Committee on Form of Government Revision, and through that service, was appointed by the G.A. Moderator to the Task Force on Form of Government Revision, where I now serve as one of that body’s Co-Moderators. Since my appointment, I have attended one overnight meeting of the Task Force, and participated in about six conference call meetings lasting between 30 minutes and two hours. I also made two trips totaling six days to speak about the work of the Task Force, although I worked on church-related tasks during flights and at other times on these trips. Through email, I can keep in touch with Kathy at the office when I am using my “mobile office.”

Because of the above service that will last until the General Assembly meets in July 2010, I have made adjustments in my other areas of service beyond the local congregation. For the past five years, I have served as convener of the Highland Augusta Mission Community and one of their representatives on Presbytery Council. I have now given both of these responsibilities over to others. The only regular activities I have beyond Second Church are the Task Force work, leadership in the Baja Mission Team, and as part of the Shenandoah Presbytery Renewal Network, a group of pastors and elders that meets prior to each presbytery meeting to plan strategy for advocating evangelical causes.

In 2008 I was presented with a unique opportunity for continuing education for 2008 and 2009. I am part of a Rehoboth Group, which is a small group of ten pastors, lay pastors, and educators who meet occasionally for study and fellowship, through a program funded by a grant from the Lilly Foundation. I met with this group twice in 2008 (3 nights away total), and will meet two more times in 2009, February 2-5 at a monastery/retreat center in Richmond, and August 30-September 5 in Duck, NC.

– Dan Williams
Pastor