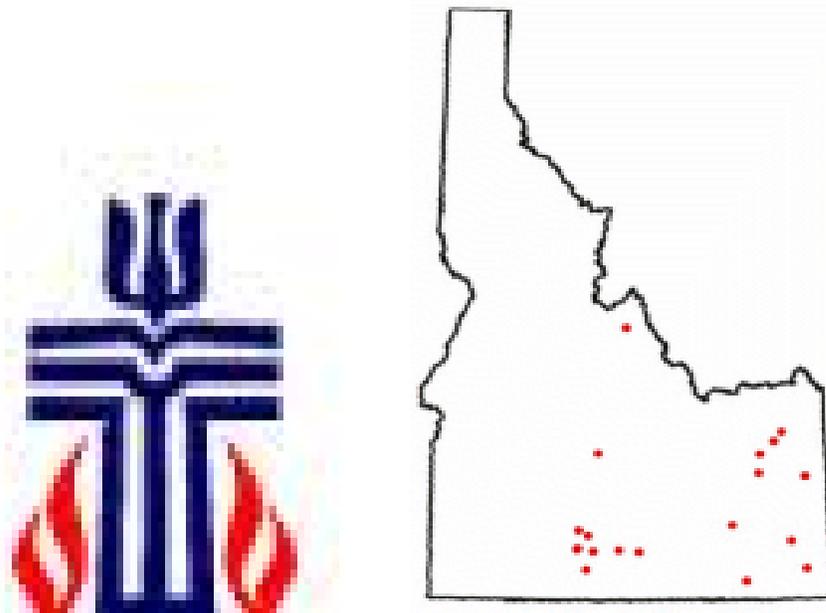


THE KENDALL CONSTELLATION

A Newsletter of Kendall Presbytery

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“Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.” (Revelation 1:19-20)



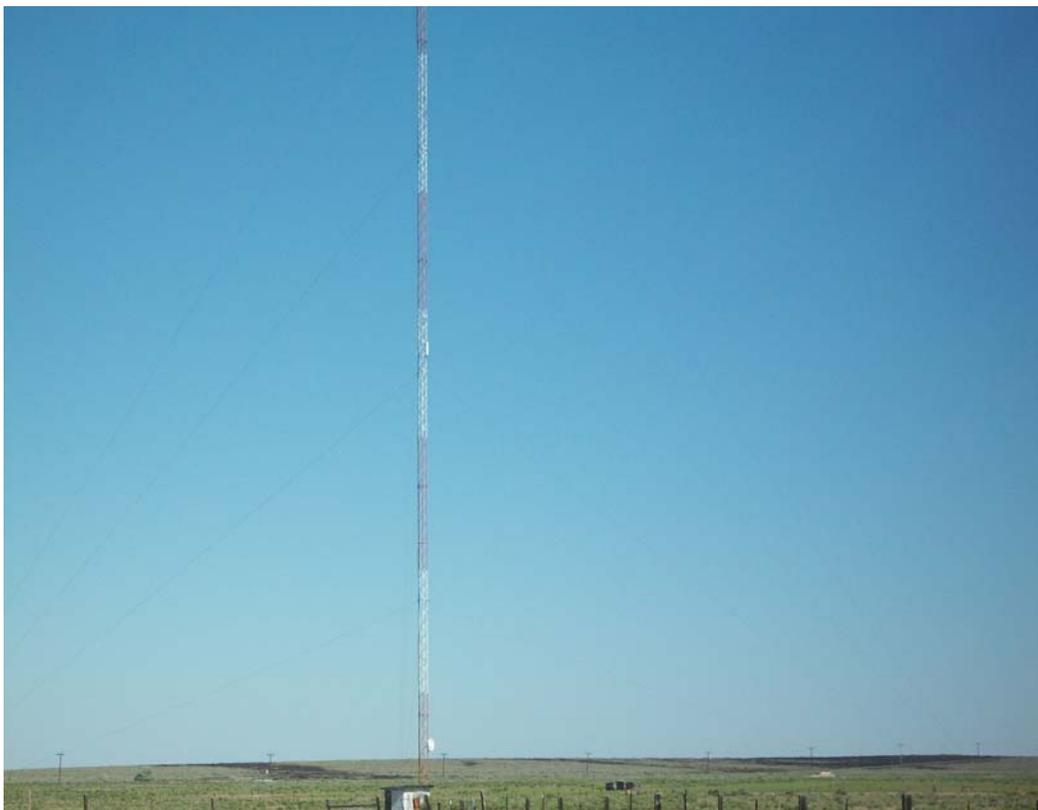
***Please forward this to all your friends
in Kendall Presbytery.***

Dear Friends and Fellow-laborers in Christ's Service,

My time among you thus far as your Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk has served in helping us to get to know one another and has provided a foundation for future ministry and shared leadership in Kendall Presbytery. I have visited each congregation in our Presbytery and preached in every pulpit. I have met with the pastors, both Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders, and have begun meeting with those interested in serving as CRE's for their congregations as well as at-large service in the Presbytery.

From my perspective, it has been a rewarding and exciting time and I now wish to begin, with this edition of *THE CONSTELLATION*, our Presbytery's Newsletter, sharing ideas for our mutual reflection.

In the photo below, we see a communications tower which stands very near the Hollister Community Presbyterian Church. (See below for a "Spotlight" tour of the Hollister Church).



Barely visible in the photo are the many guy wires which support the tower and without which it would surely fall. In fact, the wires are

practically invisible to most observers until they are pointed out.

These all-important but nearly invisible supports are, for me, a metaphor for the many supports the Church once enjoyed from a friendly, affirming society. In so many ways, from social pressures to conform to traditional moral norms to expectations about public respectability which shepherded people into Church membership if not regular attendance, with the subsequent consequences for business success and individual professional advancement, the Church was being supported by very important taken-for-granted societal supports.

Add to this the affirming public school curriculum and policies, the practice of prayer in school and various public events, the practice of placing of one's hand on the Bible and swearing to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, *so help me God*" as one prepared to testify in court proceedings, and the many public square displays of manger scenes, of various "Easter" and "Christmas" observances at school and work, and we readily realize that we are recalling a very different time and social status for the Christian Church and its gospel message.

And perhaps most notably, the media, both news and entertainment media, generally abided by and often celebrated Biblical themes and moral values. Remember Charlton Heston's portrayal of Moses in the block buster movie "The Ten Commandments?" It's hard to imagine such a movie being a huge box office hit today. And then there was "The Sound of Music," which portrayed Church life so positively. Times have changed, no doubt, but how has the Church adapted to this change?

Most Churches today do little advertising, just like the Churches in the 1950's. Maybe it wasn't needed then, but times have changed. Even well-established companies like McDonald's and Coca Cola spend a large amount on advertising and, with their well-established place in society, they might be able to make a solid argument that it was no longer necessary, but not so the Church. Advertising is expensive, but so is a constant loss of membership. And in regard to so many things we consider too expensive, how many of these would be possible if our people truly

gave a tithe of their income? Yet even now, when money (or the lack of it) is often a big problem we tend to soft-pedal most of our stewardship campaigns. That's the way it was done in the 50's and we have not adapted. In the process, we short-change our God, our Churches, our mission, and our selves. Of course, the real sin in withholding the full tithe is not so much failing to give a certain amount of money, but in the very notion that our lives would be more abundant if we gave less to God. That's no way for God's people to think and it underlies a deep spiritual problem at the core of our faith experience today that deserves to be addressed without mincing words (see Malachi 3:8-12).

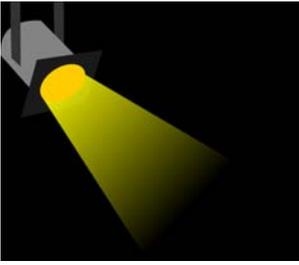
Beyond advertising, there's the matter of prayer. Do we pray, daily and fervently as individuals, as Sessions, during worship - do we for God's help in reaching the un-churched in our community? Do we pray for better stewardship of our means (for ourselves and our congregations) so that we can do what we now think is impossible for lack of money? How about our Churches sponsoring a weekly prayer circle, whether mid-week or prior to Sunday worship, for the express purpose of praying for faithfulness to the Great Commission? Perhaps we can't afford much media advertising right now, but how much does it cost to pray?

Times have changed. More than ever in recent times, we must bear the burden, endure the strain, and fight the good fight. If we are too timid or shy to witness our faith, we can pray for courage and for the words to say. We can pray for our Pastors and all Church leaders. We can pray for our society. We can pray that true stewardship will dawn upon us and all our Churches.

More than may have been necessary in the good old days, we must be a "people of prayer and of the Word." We believe that God has given us all that is necessary for the carrying out of our mission in the world. Let's take what God has given us: Time, Talent, Treasure, and devote them to His service as faithful witnesses of His grace in these challenging times.

In Christ's Love and Service,

Ron Lavoie



**Spotlight on:
Hollister Community Presbyterian Church**



The Hollister Church is a nicely maintained, functional facility - inside and out. It is situated near Jackpot, Nevada and surrounded by sagebrush desert and livestock farming operations. The facility is handicapped-accessible at both entries.



Ilona Hanstock is the Church musician and also helps the congregation with worship preparations.



The Hollister Church has a long history of faithful witness and service. Many of its members have generational ties with the congregation since its founding.



The worship space is comfortable and functional and the stained glass windows, given in memory of departed family members, are beautiful.







Commissioned Ruling Elder, R.J. Hansen (from Twin Falls) is on the regular rotation for pulpit supply. R.J. preached an excellent sermon on the subject of the Trinity on May 26th, Trinity Sunday.



left to right: Ilona Hanstock, R. J. Hansen and his wife, Chris.



The congregation is small, but friendly and faithful - they truly care for one another and it shows.



They have a “birthday offering” (one penny per year) tradition at Hollister. This time it’s John Lanting turn. He is a newly-elected member of the Board of Managers of the Hilda Thompson Ranch. We are grateful for his willingness to serve.



May the sun always shine brightly on the Hollister Church - as brightly as the Son shines in the hearts of its people!