

“Where Two or More are Gathered...”

At the February Presbytery meeting we hope to offer a brief taste of what our future could be like, expose leaders from throughout Los Ranchos Presbytery to the possibilities for strengthening our churches through our new Vision for Mission Design.

To do this we will employ a large-group technology called *Open Space* that is both similar and even more radically participatory than we have used in any of our past gatherings. *Open Space* has been used by groups of sizes from 25-2000 people at one time. It has been used all over the world in groups with far more diversity of opinions, languages and backgrounds than we have in the Los Ranchos Presbytery.

What does it require of you? **Passion, participation**, and a willingness to take **responsibility** for a topic of discussion around a broad theme inspired by the Vision for Mission Design that said, “The Presbytery exists to further the missional effectiveness of congregations within our geographic region.” During the Odyssey process we identified a little maxim: “Where members of two or more churches are gathered together, that IS the Presbytery.” So, in line with that theme:

In our changing world, what can a “two or more gathered” Presbytery of faithful missional churches do together?

Please consider this your personal invitation to be part of this *Open Space* Introduction.

Also, ***please consider inviting other leaders from your congregation to join us, promptly at 2:30 PM.*** Not only will they experience a creative, interactive way for the Presbytery to learn and move forward in our mission together, but you and your leaders will experience a simple group practice that can be used at your church to stimulate creativity, collaboration and the identification of emerging leaders.

After you experience *Open Space* you will find that it is simple to lead in your own church setting.

Our Introduction to Open Space Gathering will begin promptly at 2:30 PM, and will end promptly at 6:00 PM.

Please note two things:

- ***Attendance is completely and utterly voluntary.*** Come be part of whatever portion you want for as long as you want, with as much passion and energy as you can bring.
- ***Those who are present will shape our future together as a Presbytery.*** We will initiate, discuss, dream, and make strategic decisions that will continue to move us into the future that God has for us.

Introduction to Open Space

Open Space is a technology that uses large group participation to harness passion and responsibility to set direction and make decisions. It has been used by groups of 25-2000 people at once, in settings and cultures all over the world.

Open Space is simple. A broad, compelling theme is chosen. This theme is announced in invitations. A large room is set aside. The chairs are put in a circle. Two walls are available in which to tape large pieces of paper. A leader explains some very simple rules and individuals stand up and announce a topic around the theme. After everybody has had a chance to announce the discussion topic he or she would like to lead. Everybody in the group signs up for a discussion topic.

The groups meet. They generate a one page report. The reports are posted back on the wall in the main room. At the conclusion of the last session, participants take time to scan the reports and a short time of summary (What did we learn? Where do we go from here?) is offered to the whole group.

Then we are finished.

Suggested schedule

2:30 Open Space Meeting Begins. Introduction of Theme, Introduction of Open Space

2:45 Topics are announced, groups formed.

3:00 First Session meetings

4:15 Second Session meetings

5:30 Closing Large Group Session

6:00 Open Space Meeting Ends.

Some Details

The most important things are the SET UP, the LEADER, and the COMPELLING THEME.

Set up: 12 NOON on Presbytery Day (February 25). Tod Bolsinger will lead the set up team, will bring in an assistant to help and will need the members of council to assist.

- We need A LARGE GROUP ROOM that is basically empty but with chairs placed in circles.
- Access to TWO WALLS to which we can tape sheets of paper.
- At least two computers and printers.
- Wifi connection.
- Microphone.
- All the rest of the materials Tod will bring.
- As many break out rooms or “spaces” as possible (10-15?)

"Village Market Place"

Chairs in a circle

Buffet

Leader: Steve "Hold the Space" Yamaguchi.

Compelling Theme: Need input from Council. There is an idea starter theme above.

Meal: Buffet style, set up in the Main Room. Eat as you meet, eat as you need, eat as you go. We'll need the council to help with this. Lots of coffee, water, drinks available.