

OPEN SPACE is for EVERYONE!

A way to connect, learn, and build God's church.

The Presbytery of Los Ranchos www.losranchos.org 714.956.3691

What is Open Space?

Open Space is a time set aside at every Presbytery Gathering to discuss any topic you want. That's right. These times are for you to explore ideas and connect with others around topics you're passionate about. Want to revitalize your church? You can have an Open Space on that. Want to share about your church's mission in Bosnia? This is the place to do it. Want to network with other church educators? Well, you get the idea. All this, and much much more, is possible at Open Space.

Who is invited?

Anyone and everyone! The vision is that hundreds of people will connect, network, and learn at Open Space. Anyone who believes they have something to share or learn about God's kingdom is enthusiastically encouraged to participate. Open Space is for church members and non-members alike; it's not just for pastors, elders, and church leaders.

How can I host or convene an Open Space session?

1. Topics for Open Space may be presented at the Presbytery Gathering itself and require no prior publicity or planning. However, most conveners choose to promote their sessions in advance. See the section "How do I prepare for my Open Space session" below. If you are convening a network or partnership, it will be best to promote your session in advance.
2. Develop a simple plan for what you'd like to achieve by meeting with others and, at the very least, how you intend to get the conversation started.
3. Be willing to report regarding (a) who came to your session and (b) what was discussed or decided. An "Open Space Reporting Form" is provided at the registration table at each Presbytery Gathering and on the PLR website.

How does Open Space Work?

1. Participants gather in a large room to be introduced to the day's Open Space topics, as well as room assignments for each topic.
2. The rule of "Two Feet" is presented: participants are encouraged to use their "two feet" to move to other groups if they feel they are not contributing or learning from the group they are in. It's okay if there is little or no attendance at any one group; that's just the way Open Space works.

3. The convener or recorder completes an “Open Space Reporting Form” when the session is over and submits it to Bonita Carr bcarr@losranchos.org for future publication.

How do I prepare for my Open Space session?

1. Submit your topic to Tom Cramer (tcramer@losranchos.org) or Bonita Carr (bcarr@losranchos.org) at the presbytery office. They are happy to discuss your ideas by phone (714) 956-3691. Once your topic is submitted, it will be added to the day’s agenda, and you will be informed of other submitted topics planned for that day. This information will allow you to pick the best Presbytery Gathering date for your topic (Feb., May, Sep., Nov.).
2. Once the topic is added to the Gathering’s schedule, it will be publicized on the website and to appropriate groups through email. It is best for you submit a short 3-4 sentence summary of your topic that will capture people’s attention.
3. If your topic is about an upcoming trip, an emerging network or partnership, or an activity that requires action, please prepare information that participants can take back to their congregations. Please remember to include information such as how churches can be involved, who they should contact, dates for follow-up meetings, and any next steps that need to be taken. Presbytery staff will be happy to assist you in making copies and reviewing documents if you submit them in a timely manner.
4. If you need audio visual equipment for your presentation (e.g., projectors, screens, laptops, etc.), the presbytery staff will also arrange these for your use.
5. Remember, Open Space topics are up to you. But if you would like presbytery staff to assist you with publicizing your event, we are available to do so as outlined above.

What happens after my Open Space Session?

The convener or host of the Open Space group submits an “Open Space Reporting Form” to Bonita Carr (bcarr@losranchos.org). Sometimes the convener will have a “recorder” who does this on his or her behalf. Information from that form is then posted on the presbytery website at www.losranchos.org so participants may follow up on any actions that were taken or recommendations that were made.

Please contact Bonita Carr (bcarr@losranchos.org) or Tom Cramer (tcramer@losranchos.org) with any questions you may have (714) 956-3691.