

## Thoughts from David ...

*From the Weekly e-News of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa*

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**Editor's Note:** The Presbytery Council of the Presbytery of North Central Iowa approved this month a shared office administrator position with the Presbytery of Prospect Hill. David Feltman wrote about the shared position – along with a number of other concerns – in his column below that appeared in the presbytery newsletter distributed Nov. 5.

*Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,*

*Last week we had a combined meeting of North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill Presbyteries; it was held at the camp. You may recall we shared a meeting with Des Moines Presbytery in June. The extra work of preparation for the combined meetings makes me ask - why are we doing this, but when we get to the meeting it becomes obvious. The worship is sweeter, the fellowship is rich and we see more clearly we were not intended to work in silos.*

*Prospect Hill Presbytery voted to share their Office Administrator with us. Our Council still needs to act on this at their meeting in December but it seems wise. One of the great advantages for us is we will have the blessing of an experienced Administrator. Kay Lenhart knows the job; she has been in the position for 15 years. Also it will be approximately a \$30,000 savings to our Presbytery from this year's budget. Of course – this change will have it bumps along the way as we learn to get most of our work done via the Internet. If you have opinions about this change you may share your thoughts with anyone on the Council. And, we know this significant change will lead to other change.*

*This Tuesday we had a gathering in Ames, representatives from five of our presbyteries in Iowa met to discuss, discern our future ministry as Presbyterians in Iowa. It was an encouraging meeting and as an outgrowth a task force is being formed made up of two representatives, hopefully from all the Presbyteries in Iowa. Their first assignment is to organize a joint Presbytery meeting in June of 2017.*

*Wisdom makes it clear we will not be able to go on with business as usual, the numbers, when studied, are rather harsh. Two matters seem important to me. I am hoping we can organize (reorganize) in such a way that there will be good support to churches and Pastors in the future. Please notice I underlined GOOD. These days, more than ever, pastors need good support and churches need resources and help, especially in the difficult times. The second matter is the dollars.*

*I am into my 10th year in this position and it has always seemed foolish to me that we have four presbytery offices in the state, providing the same services. Business would have a word for us here. The resources and help needs to get to the corners of the state, but there could be a central office. The dollars saved could be made available for "hands on" mission.*

*I offer one more word, this is not intended to be for my personal job security; I am of the age where that is not as important as it once was. In my opinion, there is merit to this position – call the position whatever you will – Pastor to the Presbytery, General Presbyter, Mission Worker to connect, and resource churches and pastors. In January, after Rev. Phil Barrett retires from Des Moines, I will be the last one standing in Iowa.*

*Healthy churches will have to make this more of a priority in their mission budgets if we hope to have some structure in place for churches and Pastors. I am open to dialogue about various viewpoints on this.*

*With love in Christ,*

*David Feltman*