

## **JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERY**

### **Report of the Executive Presbyter**

Several months ago, I joined a Facebook group called Our Old House. Today it has almost a million members. There is no way I can keep up with all the posts, but it's a great source of information about everything you might want to know about caring for an old house. You can see people's triumphs and disasters, and discern the value of differing advice on plumbing, wiring, structural issues, plaster, historic colors, and more. The Spencer old house was built in 1892. Sometimes I read something that might be useful one day.

Sometimes things I read there make me think of the church.

Recently a woman wrote that she is rehabbing a house, and every time she walks into it, her eyes water so much she can hardly see. A few people wrote that it was probably lead or asbestos. It didn't seem right to me that the immediate, severe eye watering could be caused by lead or asbestos. My opinion aligned with many others who actually wrote on the page.

One member suggested that her house might be occupied by a spirit. I was surprised to see that a few people chimed in on that. Someone took those comments down.

The majority answers were black mold or previous meth production and came with advice on how to remediate these problems. The woman got useful advice.

Sometimes the people who post include an entreaty for people to be kind in their answers.

- Let's be kind!
- Have you ever asked a question at church and received an unkind answer?

Questions are good. It seems Jesus asked questions.

- Not all answers are of equal value.
- A breadth of answers (and questions) gives the greatest chance that something useful will emerge.

This report is not about lead and asbestos. It's about the value of questions, and keeping on looking for answers. In I Corinthians 13, Paul says, "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known." We can hope to get closer to the right answers.

And in case I Corinthians 13 is not complete for you without the last verse, I include it here: "And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

See you at presbytery meeting!  
Malinda