

Your Story Matters

Author: Fritz Nelson



Told well, with a forthright integrity, the Reverend Fritz Nelson combines his Presbyterian pastoral education and experience with his passion for storytelling. Having co-directed the Hub at Columbiana First Presbyterian, the pastor and his co-director, Jo Barto, Roman Catholic in faith commitment, have sponsored and developed the art of storytelling for numerous years. This is well illustrated in his emerging book, Your Story Matters, recently released in September 2026. With his ordained Presbyterian minister credentials coupled with this work, a most interesting and valuable book that blends both rationale and manual is produced and available.

Within the pages, Pastor Fritz advocates the storytelling in three major arenas: Grace-Space, Sacrament, Spiritual Listening. With each of these he gives very practical reasons for their inclusion as well as how this can happen in valid lists. Grace-Space is fundamental to the technique with a serious listing of how this must exist to validate the storytelling. Spiritual Listening comes late in the book as a “must” for those who participate. Blending all of the ideas together is his middle chapter: “Story as Sacrament.” His theological background is evident in this significant chapter as is his deep understanding and faith. The Sacraments assume a new identity and intensity with the storytelling system and tool.

Currently, Rev. Nelson continues to pastor in three Presbyterian churches (PCUSA) Columbiana and East Palestine, and he has recently added New Lisbon Presbyterian Church to his call. Sharing through his writing and preaching continue. As the sincerity of his beliefs and approach shine through his book, he gives a valuable resource in instructions, bibliography, and strong faith to the churches and world of the twenty-first century.

Reviewed by Ruth Gerrard Cole