

Staffing and Finance Task Force Report 2-26-22

We have begun our adventure in off-road travel! We've found a pathway that will take us much further into our new reality!

In 2019 Ryan Landino, our Lead Presbyter for Transformation, presented us with a metaphor of coming to the end of the highway and needing to maneuver our vehicle into a very different environment. We would need, we determined, to find new ways to be Presbytery, to connect together in order to serve our churches and communities.

The Finance and Staffing Task Force is pleased to tell you that we have now left the highway! Have you noticed that we are moving relatively easily on this newly discovered path? There might be a few bumps, but we're doing it! Give yourselves a pat on the back! This new roadway has been accessed by measures that contain our annual expenses by over \$100,000 from that time in 2019. We have found that virtual committee meetings, a virtual assistant and no physical office can work! We've hired a highly effective Bridge Presbyter to help steady our vehicle. We've created an exciting new Vision Statement which is our map to this new destination we seek. It's all good!

Now we need your help in steering our vehicle on this upcoming stretch. If we assume a Lead Presbyter or other leadership will solve our problems, we're taking on the attitude of so many congregations who want their pastor to do the heavy lifting of ministry. It simply can't work that way! We, as committees and members, need to maintain our grip on the steering wheel. We can't relax in the back and hope someone else will steer this vehicle to our desired destination. If we do so, we will find ourselves stuck in the mud or crashed into a tree. We need you!

As the taskforce, we hope to bring the locus of Presbytery to a more grassroots level, but to have any hope of success, we invite you, our committees and members to help develop the way forward. Below you will

find several suggested actionable practices about how we can BE THE PRESBYTERY in a way that begins to live into the aspirations of our 2020 Vision Statement. It is a recipe, not only for creating the base upon which the road we seek will be built, but we pray it can be the Spirit leading us to health and vitality. We invite you to study this list; pray it; discuss it and find ways to make it a part of our joint adventure into a joyful new reality.

Scripture that guides us

The New Life in Christ

Romans 12:1-2 NRSV

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

What is needed is deep, adaptive change. This will not happen overnight. However, we can begin by implementing the following practices in 2022. As our practices are followed, our ministries will grow. Some of these steps are technical changes. Many of these are designed to happen simultaneously. These technical changes will create space for the needed adaptive change to occur. Here is what we recommend.

Ten Action Items to strengthen our Presbytery

- 1. Tell the stories – Communicate the mission & ministry of PGR**
 - ❖ Establish a regular publication schedule for the Good News. Ask committees and task forces to write articles or updates after each of their meetings. Recruit a volunteer to collect this content and submit in prepared format to be added to the Good News by our Virtual Assistant.
 - ❖ Include links and connections to the larger church (see Presbytery of Wabash Valley’s e-letter for an example of how this could be done).
 - ❖ Feature a mission story at each Presbytery assembly related to our Matthew 25 initiative.

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of connecting, supporting, spiritually engaging and focusing the presbytery on our Matthew 25 identity.)

2. Develop an annual presbytery wide engagement with our Matthew 25 identity

- ❖ Examples: Go as a Presbytery and Serve, PDA teams, RIP Medical Debt, CWS kits, food bank support.

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of seeking justice and focusing around Matthew 25 identity)

3. Develop a culture of accountability.

- ❖ Ask all committees and task forces and Sessions to choose three aspirations from the 2020 Vision Statement for their primary focus for the year. Each time these groups meet, include in the agenda an assessment at the meeting's end as to how the business conducted/discussed during the meeting has aligned with the three focus aspirations and record these ponderings/learnings in the minutes. **See 2020 Vision Statement attached at the bottom of this report.**
- ❖ Follow up on the meeting assessment by creating at least one SMART goal to follow before the next meeting that will move that entity towards their focus aspirations. The SMART goal will be based on what's just been learned. (SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Action Oriented, Realistic and Time bound)
- ❖ After two months of practice, develop further accountability steps for the committee or group.

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of transforming, connecting and focusing)

4. Expand presbytery wide educational/fellowship opportunities

- ❖ Host occasional presbytery wide educational and fellowship opportunities such as seasonal Bible studies (Advent, Lent, etc.); Lunch and Learn opportunities; Book studies, etc. with

the presbytery providing Zoom support and recruiting leaders for these events.

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of connecting, spiritually engaging, seeking justice, resourcing)

5. Develop job descriptions for volunteer positions

- ❖ Committees and task forces develop job descriptions with expectations for committee members and send these to Nominating.
- ❖ Nominating committee to initiate conversations now with every pastor and commissioned lay pastor in congregational settings about potential volunteers known to them in their congregations suited to the varieties of service needed to fill the committee positions in the presbytery.
- ❖ Nominating committee to work year round to build up files of potential volunteers. Fill positions as they occur so that committee rosters are full and they can fulfill their responsibilities.
- ❖ Match volunteers to responsibilities based on their spiritual gifts and their ability to effectively serve on that committee.
- ❖ Keep committee rosters by class and use awareness of rotation as a tool to continually nurture leadership within committees (this allows for continuous development and nurturing of new leadership).

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of seeking justice, resourcing and spiritually engaging the presbytery).

6. Broaden the leadership pool across the presbytery

- ❖ Set and meet the goal of adding at least 25% new membership annually on each committee.
- ❖ Each committee to determine how many people are truly needed to do their work and what skills members need in order to participate.

- ❖ Consciously broaden the leadership pool by lessening the current practice of moving a small cadre of folks from leadership role to leadership role within the presbytery.
- ❖ Shift from automatically renewing terms for committee members to provide opportunities to expand our leadership pool and to allow more voices.
- ❖ Ask Committee chair to provide annual input to Nominating Committee. Does member fulfill committee assignments and responsibilities? Attend meetings?
Comment area to note exceptional attributes.

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of transforming, connecting, supporting and spiritually engaging)

7. Volunteer appreciation day

- ❖ Provide recognition annually for service with a luncheon and certificate and thanks, which acknowledges the volunteer efforts that sustain and give life to the presbytery.
- ❖ Send notes of thanks to Sessions for sharing their human resources (their members and pastors) with the presbytery.

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of connecting, supporting, resourcing)

8. Develop a presbytery database that is readily and directly accessible for use by volunteers, congregations and staff

- ❖ We presently have no easy access to this information, which slows down fulfilling our responsibilities as we wait for the information from another person.

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of connecting, supporting and resourcing)

9. Improve organization of Presbytery Assemblies

- ❖ Create a presbytery packet that cross references the agenda to the papers provided; include page numbers in agenda as to where materials are located in packet.
- ❖ Each person presenting refers Assembly to this information and allows a moment for it to be located.

- ❖ Do not conduct business by expecting people to absorb new information through screen sharing, other than if it comes up under other business.
- ❖ Put times on the docket (allow for the order of the day).

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of transforming, spiritually engaging, focusing, resourcing)

10. Continue the development of the use of technology, social media, etc. by the presbytery and within the presbytery

(Meets the 2020 Vision Statement aspirations of connecting, resourcing, supporting)

The Task Force invites you to share and discuss these ideas in your congregation and Presbytery committees and groups.

Will you also consider sharing 60 minutes of your time to further discuss these practices with a group of your peers and the Task Force? Please post “TF Talk” in the chat now or submit your name and email address to Joyce Chamberlin by emailing jkchamberlin1@gmail.com. Times for these discussions will be determined according to availability of those who are interested. Your thoughts about next steps are the ticket to our future!

Questions? Contact a Task Force Member.

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2020 Vision Statement

We are followers of Christ. We are a community of congregations and ministries bound together by God's love. We are humans who journey through blessing and brokenness, striving to be faithful, in need of connection and community, grace and repair, guidance and support, affirmation and encouragement, solidarity and celebration. We have faith that we have each been gifted and charged to a specific work of ministry in our particular time and place, the kind of work that changes lives. We are a people who accept that the ministry landscape is changing, and that we need each other, and we affirm that God is with us and at work in our midst. We are a body that tries to live faithfully together through covenants

rooted in our love for one another and a polity that seeks to foster accountability to our promises to each other, a polity we have the collective power to change as needed.

Our aspirations:

TRANSFORM We aspire to change, to grieve and to let go, to ask new questions, to challenge old assumptions, to seek joy, and to build different structures that more closely align with our mission. We aspire to make space for new partners, to assist each other with how we may fit into new realities where we may be unsure. We want to move into a new future together.

CONNECT We aspire to be together, connected and connecting, to each other and God. We aspire to keep relationship first and to encourage collaborative ministry. We desire the presbytery to meet us where we are. We want to contribute where we can make a difference.

SUPPORT We aspire to support one another personally, professionally, and holistically, to build each other up, to bear one another's burdens, to create space for mutuality, solidarity, and support. We aspire to listen.

SPIRITUALLY ENGAGE We aspire to be spiritually overflowing and worshipfully engaged. We want to be inspired and to share that inspiration. We want to glorify God above all and recognize the divine in our midst, manifest in the multitude of gifts around us, filling every space in our presbytery. We aspire to have intentional moments of prayer for each other.

SEEK JUSTICE We aspire to bless the range of identities in our midst, to embrace the leadership of peoples long silenced, so we may challenge each other and be enriched by the unique perspectives of others. We aspire to repair, reorient, rearrange, or reject what we must in order to build the Kin-dom of God on earth as it is in heaven.

RESOURCE We aspire to be resourced and resourcing, to teach and to learn, as we respond to the unique challenges of today. We want spaces to reflect on our effectiveness and sharpen our discipleship, attentive to our heads, our hearts, and our bodies. We want to be strengthened, trained, and equipped for 21st century ministry in our local contexts.

FOCUS We aspire to rally around a unifying missional focus by uniting around our Matthew 25 identity, centering the needs of the people as if we were serving Jesus himself. We want to be a meaningful presence in our communities and honor Christ's Great Commission.