

Coordinating Commission Report to Presbytery March 14, 2019

Minutes, Coordinating Commission Presbytery of Transylvania February 8, 2019

The Coordinating Commission of the Presbytery of Transylvania met at 10:05 AM at the Salem Presbyterian Church, Winchester, KY. The meeting was a combined meeting of the Coordinating Commission and chairs of presbytery commissions and ministries. Coordinating Commission members present: Mike Ward, Linda Crawford, Nell Line, Katie Busroe, and Mary Reed. Commission members excused: Tom Burns, David Hoskins, Linda Maconochie, and John White. Chairs of commissions/ministries present: Connie Turner, Jay Mumper, Janet Prewitt, Lisa Eye, Kathy Riley, Matt Falco, David Crawford, Melissa Bane-Sevier, and Ryan Shrauner. Chairs excused: Anne Chesnut and Beth Garrod-Logsdon. Presbytery staff present included Robyn Justus, Robby Lear, Philip Lotspeich, and Jerry Utt. Philip called the meeting to order and provided an overview of the day's schedule. Philip led a devotional on Acts 2 and divided the group into smaller groups for individual prayers and sharing of lives.

Philip began discussions by introducing the leaders of the presbytery and reviewing the goals of the Long-Range Plan. Target areas include: neighborhoods, technology centers, strengthening small congregations, effective presbytery meetings, Burnamwood, Staffing, and Communications. Philip outlined the current presbytery structure. Commissions: Pastoral Transitions, Congregational Issues, Church Closings and Dismissals, Administration, Preparation for Ministry, Representation, Burnamwood, and Coordinating. Ministries: Mission, Leadership Development, Church Revitalization and Redevelopment, Christian Formation, and Presbyterian Women.

Philip asked the question: What are we missing? Open discussion and comments listed:

- Need for training: chairs, new members, education and nurture
- Clearer responsibilities and expectations
- Include former chairs to help?
- Whom to contact when have questions or need help
- Yearly planning meetings important
- Intentional gatherings to talk about coordination, areas of overlap
- Less independent groups and more working together
- Can entire commissions/ministries meet together for leadership or training?
- Not much intentionality on worship life of local congregations and presbytery as whole
- Can we add a worship ministry team?
- Can this worship team help congregations and lead presbytery events?
- Can we use teams of people to plan presbytery worship?
- Workshop or presbytery day: share resources, ideas, conferences
- Can we encourage participation at Montreat and other events?
- Can we share a presbytery-wide common liturgy or Lenten study?
- Can we introduce pastors and worship leaders to the new Book of Common Worship?

Can we include more leaders? Different leaders? (Music directors, youth, young adults)
How can we think about technology (worship, church life)?
Acknowledging different comfort and skill levels with technology
What experts do we have and what can they teach us?
Weekly E-News: articles on open spaces, best practices in worship and welcome, what works?
How do we move forward? What's the "different" that we need to be doing?

Philip asked another question. What should be eliminated from our structure?

Comments listed:

Encouraged that Presbyterian Women is strong and active in life of presbytery
Need for discernment: commitment levels, identity issues, how can we decide to let go of things?
Comment that presbytery will be smaller in 10 years by all measures: # of churches, members
What model do we have for downsizing effectively and faithfully?
Problems of pessimism and avoidance of hard topics
Churches tend to think of themselves as how they used to be
How help churches grapple with realities of who they are now?
How can we make a system that functions with who and what we are?
How do we meet this cultural moment?
How do we reclaim optimism and hope in the midst of decline?
How do we proclaim the Gospel and find new ways of church?
How do we reframe mindsets (scarcity and abundance)?
Tensions between realism and optimism
Can we pay attention and keep checking in with each other?
Where is the abundance we can draw from?
How do we make disciples?
Who is our neighbor?
How do we love those outside the church doors?
How do we honor the past? Stories of Charles and Emily Egbert: called to mountains in 1930s and 40s. Trained themselves to live and work in the Eastern KY context.
Can our old stories help us find new models?

Philip asked the question what commissions and ministries need from the Coordinating Commission and presbytery to be effective. Comments listed:

Training, earlier rather than later
How to lead a meeting
What are the expectations of leading a commission/ministry?
Can we communicate to COR needs so that qualified (best-skilled) members can be found?
What grants are available and for what purposes? (especially CPM inquirers/candidates)
Fuller understanding of presbytery financial resources and limitations
How can we know what local congregations are doing?
(Mission ministry would like to share positive news)
Are there grants for church maintenance and renovation (historic buildings)
What does healthy assessment look like? (churches and presbytery systems)

What measures should we use?

What would a cycle of review look like?

Questions about budgeting and yearly balances. Does the money go away?

Can presbytery meetings include breakout groups, educational offerings, open space discussions?

How can COR support the process and the system better support COR?

Can this leadership group meet again in the late summer/early fall for check-in?

The meeting included a lunch break, and Mike prayed for the meal and fellowship. At 2:15 PM, there being no further business, Philip ended the meeting and Melissa closed with prayer.

Submitted:

Jerry L. Utt, II

Stated Clerk