

Presbytery Theme for 2017 – Ephesians 4:11-12: The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,...

We organize our report around the Action Goals established by the Leadership Cabinet for 2017...

1. *Emphasize disciple-making and disciple-sending among the congregations of our presbytery and at the presbytery level. This includes equipping people of all ages to know that they are Loved & Called, Gifted, Equipped, and Sent.***

- a. In every venue, we try to emphasize disciple-making principles and practices, particularly at the presbytery meetings: Dwelling in the Word; equipping and resourcing, such as Stan Ott in February and the provision of his sessions by video to every church.
- b. At the presbytery meeting in November in Bozeman, the theme will focus on this Goal including ... Hearing from how this is being implemented through a year of CALL at FPC, Bozeman; George's workshop will focus on the "Pastor and Elder as Disciple-makers."
- c. Integrating this into our conversations and times with pastors and churches - Asking and working with pastors, elders and sessions as to how they can integrate this theme and resources into their training and equipping of folks.
- d. Pastor Clusters focus on mutual and collegial discipleship with spiritual practices
- e. This is the foundation of our way of being, discipling the Whitworth summer Fellows
- f. We have both had conversations with young people re prayerfully considering God's call to become pastors or CRE's.
- g. The Camping and Youth focuses almost exclusively on disciple-making:
 - a. September 29- October 1 – Camp Staff reunion retreat at our home did this
 - b. Fall Junior / Senior High retreat with collegians in support will take place on October 19-21 at Rockhaven Camp. George is coordinating this event in Curt Kochner's absence and speaking. Brochures have been mailed, but for info, speak with George. The theme: "Living the Christ-Life in a unsettled world."
- h. **Sent** - Several of our churches did mission projects or trips or VBS's this summer, come in their own communities or elsewhere: i.e.
 1. FPC Billings teamed up with the Whitworth Fellows in Lewistown and led VBS, partnering with FPC in Stanford for second year in a row – wonderful fruit;
 2. FPC Butte – Some adults did a service project at Intermountain while the youth pastor and youth teamed with the Bozeman Whitworth Fellows and led VBS for Intermountain resident children; touching stories
 3. FPC Bozeman adults had a mission team who went on a third trip to partner with some Dakota Presbyterian churches to serve, learn and build bonds of friendship and understanding. They were hosted by the Chelsea church, Dakota, and FPC Poplar, Yellowstone.
 4. Manhattan Presbyterian Church had a youth mission team come to join them in a large VBS for their community. Rich fruit, a baptism in September.
 4. Others? Please send us the info so we can continue to compile this list, praying for God to raise up some folks whose gift and calling this is!

Consider inviting some of these folks to come and fill the pulpit and share with other congregations.

To consider – might we ask our churches there be some NEW and some younger faces who are involved with their own congregations' being sent who could partner and join folks to share what many congregations are doing and explore way they might discern and join to partner together in Christ's mission?

2. Focus on spiritual nurture of pastors, leaders and potential leaders across the presbytery by identifying, understanding and using spiritual gifts.

- a. Yellowstone Presbytery continues to emphasize Whitworth Institute for Ministry (WIM) and the Preaching Cohort through the rest of the year. Seven YP pastors and leaders attended in July. Kathy taught a seminar at WIM.
- b. Day of fasting and prayer for country, state, churches, Monday, October 16th. George is pulling together a liturgy that may be followed in groups or individually.
- c. We are emphasizing now, especially with churches in transition, the need for lay leaders to use Stan's videos and materials and to work on identifying their gifts and those of other church members. Especially as some churches can no longer afford full-time, or even part-time gifted pastors.
- d. Prayer: George and Kathy pray through the week for the Yellowstone pastors and Congregations.
- e. Needed – Focused questions, ideas, resources for churches to do this with sessions, or an interested group (start an experiment on the margin and see what happens) and offer this in their congregations in ways that suit each congregation. Younger folks usually very intrigued and open.

3. Foster community in the presbytery, encouraging congregations and clusters to share stories of God's work in their midst as we build and grow relationships and communication, sharing in the fellowship and work of ministry and joint mission.

- a. **Presbytery Sunday, October 9** encouraging and to offer guidance for pastors and leaders on how to share the vision of the presbytery. This week watch for the bulletin insert and some brief suggestions to guide this observance. George is doing with Teresa's help.
- b. **Clergy Clusters** all are operational, but need encouragement. We both meet with the clusters when practicable.
 - i. **Miles City Cluster** meets Wednesday, October 4 at FPC Miles City. Neva Rathbun coordinates: msrev@midrivers.com.
 - ii. **White Sulphur Springs Cluster** met Sept. 13 and meets on Monday, October 16 by phone. Debbie Funke coordinates: funkepastor@yahoo.com.
 - iii. **The Butte Cluster** meets at 10:00 AM at FPC-Butte on Monday, October 16. Teresa Kendall coordinates: Teresakendall@mac.com.
 - iv. **The Billings Cluster** meets at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, October 17 at FPC-Billings. Dave Thompson coordinates: pastordaver@fpcbillings.org.
- c. **Yellowstone Currents** is the presbytery's communication tool, Susan Thomas, who is walking the Camino with husband Curt, is our contact person, ckochner@mcn.net.
- d. **We seek to share the stories we hear** of what God is up to and connect folks and want to see this sharing/interacting aspect of the presbytery meeting increased, and to better use various virtual means as well, including pictures and video clips. Jack, let's reignite this and pray for and seek out new and younger folks to join in.
- e. **See summer mission and VBS above 1.h.**
- f. **Prayer Concerns** expressed for leaders, some in general prayer e-mails:
 1. Jim Kidd is in a coma in A Denver Hospital.
 2. Leon Rathbun is awaiting results of a liver biopsy.

4. Explore partnership and collaboration with presbyteries and other organizations as we grow in disciple-making and disciple-sending. And this the presbytery is doing well...

- a. **The Whitworth / YP preaching Cohort** will begin its second year shortly. Seven are committed to participate.

- b. **The PMT / AC and George are working with Glacier Presbytery** to re-ignite the Geyser Church, which the presbytery closed at its June meeting.
- c. **The Whitworth / YP Fellows Program** successfully finished its third summer. This is a period of evaluation and projection towards advancing the partnership in 2018.
- d. **The ELCA Montana Synod and YP for the training of lay leaders in Eastern Montana.** The Lutherans will lead the program and we will join in as potential lay pastors show interest. Katie Emery is integral to this work. The first training session is on Saturday, October 21 in Shelby. Topic: Prayer.
- e. **The UCC and UMC and YP board members of Rocky Mountain College** exploring with chaplain Kim Woeste the training and placing of Fellows in Churches, on a similar plan as the Whitworth partnership. Details still sketchy.

5. Equipping leaders and congregations in Growing Young, per the research

A. **Whitworth Fellows** were very well received and we continue to hear ways the Holy Spirit has used them. They had our Goal 5 as their primary ministry this summer. We resourced, supervised, coached, prayed, supported, encouraged them watching the Holy Spirit work in a wide range of people and ways.

Britt & Joel met with the Lewistown session and Growing Young Team and staff weekly, with youth and young adults in the church and some interested in the church, and shared ideas and observations with a wide range of leaders and members, preached (Kathy was able to attend and hear Joel) and did special things according to their gifts.

Luke and Kristen, based in Bozeman with us, traveled and stayed and served, spoke, preached, and focused on Growing Young in a wide range of ways.

See separate report for more details and their feedback.

B. We have sought to keep training and some experience about this part of each Presbytery meeting - Kathy presented in Dillon in May.

November mtg - Joel, Whitworth Fellow, preaches, several speak and share about findings, ideas from the summer & conversation with presbyters.

C. Kathy, Debbie Blackburn and Teresa attended the Webinar on Leading Change in churches with a focus on Growing Young and the many uses for the new assessment tool congregations can use.

D. Kathy has shared this research with some of the Westminster Spires Staff and Presbycats to begin to explore ways they can understand and perhaps be used by the Spirit in further ways in their home churches, with other churches and for the presbytery.

6. However, much of what has occurred in the last 12-18 months in the presbytery from pastor departures, pastor family or health crises, drought and devastating fires, administrative matters, has meant that some of what we are doing is more broadly under the presbytery's Vision and our job descriptions and not as neatly under one of these Leadership Cabinet's Goals:

- a. St. Timothy's Chapel has new leadership and they are not necessarily aware of the facts or the history and legal aspect and are raising new issues. George and Debbie, and Susan Seibert and Sheryl Hallin somewhat, have put in large amounts of time in the summer and fall this fall on many aspects, including financial, communication and establishing facts and the nature of the presbyteries legal responsibilities and liabilities for St. Tim's which is part of the Presbytery and also has our EIN. George and Debbie are working with Jack Bell and Dan to re-establish communication and a supportive relationship.
- b. We are, with others on PMT, needing to work on the many aspects of educating, meeting with, supporting, encouraging, helping sessions and PNC's of our churches in pastoral transition: Dillon, Big Hole, Lewistown, Jordan, Hysham, Miles City, and now Jim Kidd is gravely ill, White Sulphur Springs. Several other churches will have pastoral transitions in the next 2-4 years.

- c. Stated Clerk transition and all needed for the re-evaluation and this process.
- d. George serves as staff resource to the Rep Nom Ministry team, which meets Tuesday night.
- e. We both, along with Debbie Blackburn, resource the LC and PMT.

Personal –

We celebrated our 40th Anniversary in August and are deeply grateful for God's gifts of love, grace, and the love and support of family, friends, churches and colleagues across the decades, including you all.

We are pondering God's leading to offer a marriage enrichment event in the next year at very reduced cost, as gift and thank offering.

George's mom celebrates her 90th in November and all who are able are gathering to celebrate. She is downsizing again and moving to a smaller apartment. Kathy's mom has a few new health challenges.

Prayers for them and our kids and grandkids always appreciated.

** Continuing to explore New Worshipping Communities across our presbytery. And Equipping and sending the gifted into ministry.