

These may be days of opportunity for the Church. The nation is reeling in contentious issues. People are positioning and posturing and challenging. While the country remains strong in some ways, there is no universal agreement on what principles of both our nation and Scripture mean and which are emphasized nor how they are to be applied. The future is unpredictable, and unpredictability can encourage anxiety and/or a retreat from courage and compassion for others into taking care of “me and mine.”

However, if, as God’s “called out ones” we remember we have a high and holy calling as citizens of heaven *ahead* of all earthly allegiances, challenging times have been and continue to be ***God’s opportunity for the Way and ways of Jesus to be shown in and through us as the community of Christ’s disciples despite obstacles or outward differences of race, age, status, political affiliation. Our churches and country need God’s faith, hope and love, God’s ways, lived out and spoken into this leadership vacuum. The Spirit may well lead to a fresh appreciation(as well as perhaps fresh opposition to) for the Gospel.*** Forty-five years ago, Francis Schaeffer posed the timeless question that must be answered by each generation of the Church, “How shall we then live?” It is time for the presbytery, the pastors and sessions, and churches in their contexts to ask it again.

In January and February 2016 the Leadership Cabinet outlined **Four Goals for 2016**. These have continued to focus a great deal of our work and frame this report prepared before the Cabinet’s final discussion and discernment of **Goals for 2017**. Please see Leadership Cabinet report.

I. *Emphasize Disciple-making in our congregations and in our presbytery*

- a. Camping / Youth: Curt Kochner and George are planning for another camping session at Westminster Spires. **See Curt’s thorough report, give to scholarship offering!**
 - i. Exploring Plans: Hiring a program director. Kara Todd, who attended Westminster Spires growing up and has been there the last few summers.
 - ii. Jr-Sr High Presbytery Winter Retreat will be held at FPC-Bozeman, Feb 24-26
Share info and sign up, all info @ <http://www.yellowstonepcusa.org/camp.html>
 - iii. The Camping and youth Budget is included, and has been approved.
- b. Rockhaven Camp is preparing for a new season. **Info: Jody**
- c. College-age ministry: i. PresbyCats at FPC-Bozeman is having another strong year, planning a mission trip. **Info: Dan K.**
 - ii. Rocky & MSU-B. continue important ministries , updates later in the year.
- d. Congregations, youth & Whitworth Fellows, Year 2 (see Yellowstone Currents in fall)Six Fellows served in six Churches (Anaconda/Big Hole, Manhattan, Lewistown) and at Westminster Spires Camp.
Year 3 2017– We have applied for a grant for 6 WU Fellows, 4 are confirmed. The primary emphasis will be on discussing and exploration with congregations and presbytery regarding applying the crucial research in Growing Young Info: Further info closer to mtg:Kathy

We have applied for a PCUSA DREAM grant to better fund this effort. Applies to leaders, congregations. Info: Kathy See attached

e. Pastors and Leaders:

- i. YP's *Minds and Hearts Set on Christ*, cohort of pastors studying preaching and spiritual formation expresses seeing fruit of many kinds. It took break for December and January. Our 10-pastor group will meet monthly beginning again in February. **For info: George**
- ii. The Four Pastor Clusters meet in Butte, White Sulphur Springs, Billings and Miles City. **Info: George, Kathy for White S.**
- iii. **Whitworth Fellows, DREAM grant and Growing Young research are very important for our leaders and congregations not only college students. Our goal is to function in an integrated, collaborative fashion, NOT in silos** (referring to dangers and limitations of this, written about by Patrick Lencioni)

iv. Presbytery Retreat, February 10-11 Transformed and Mobilized!

Loved & Called – Gifted – Equipped – Sent. Dr. Stan Ott will lead the extended equipping session on strengthening our congregations by understanding our 4-fold calling and identity, exploring why UNLESS we become Equipping – Sending leaders and congregations, not only are we not living into our calling as disciples and churches, but our congregations will dwindle and most likely die. He will include review of our spiritual gifts & how leaders and congregations can help ALL ages discover, develop and deploy them, along with some lifegiving shifts churches can make with stories and helpful steps. Please see accompanying info & flier. The hoped for transformation in a congregation will be slow or can stall without unless a team along with pastor!

II. ***Clarify the Covenant with Glacier and explore other partnerships for future collaboration.***

- a. **Major Synod Development:** The Synod became a 'reduced functioning' synod as of Dec. 31. No more Synod Executive, only very Part-time Stated Clerk, so the Presbytery staff, and presbyteries, will need to assume more responsibility. Presbytery staff are already working informally together to create new patterns of communication and partnerships in ministry. **Info: Kathy, Jim Tarr our new synod commissioner.**
 - i. ***WNLT has been discontinued and Synod is working on a process where several presbyteries may apply for equipping event.***
- b. **Glacier** We are working collegially with Marsha Anson, EP- Stated Clerk. See LC report.
- c. **Active partnerships:**
 - i. *Whitworth University, Office of Church Engagement (2 grants)*
 - i. *Within Synod (most active) Wyoming Presbytery, Pueblo Presbytery*
 - ii. *Board of Pensions – Seminars, call to health, etc.*
 - iii. *PDA – new grant for St. Andrew for hail damage to church & garden.*
 - iv. *United Methodists / Lutherans –on providing pastoral leadership*
 - v. *Suggestions?*

III. ***Build community in the presbytery, continuing to grow our communication.***

- a. Communications Team – **Info: Kristin Willett**
- b. Yellowstone Currents – **Info: Susan Thomas**
- c. Facebook – **Kristin, Jack Bell, George**

- d. Presbytery Sunday in early October
- e. ****Dwellings in the Word for Session resourcing/devotions are now posted on the presbytery website. **Info: George**
- f. Pastor Clusters build community in regions.
- g. Please pray for the pastoral search in Jordan and pastoral needs and search in Anaconda/Big Hole churches. Suggestions?

IV. Focus on spiritual nurture of pastors, leaders and potential leaders by understanding and using spiritual gifts.

- a. In the Spiritual Formation-Predaching Cohort, we have touched on our own spiritual gifts and those of the others in the cohort and will continue this in 2017.
- b. George continues to offer spiritual direction to four of the presbytery pastors.
- c. Research several inventories, processes one of which which we hope will be considered and used by EACH congregations as part of their elder/officer training, education and making and sending disciples of ALL ages, including youth and young adults. **Info: Kathy**
- d. **We need to ensure broad training and then helping pastors/sessions/congregations in the advantages and importance of the shifts to becoming equipping – sending congregations with/for ALL ages, including integration of spiritual gifts across the presbytery.** Our workshop Transformed and Mobilized with Rev. Dr. Stan Ott is merely one step in an ongoing process..
- e. **DREAM grant -**

Other Items to Report:

- A. We continue to be grateful for and involved with supporting the work of the PMT in many areas: individuals, BoP related matters, churches in transition Dillon, Geysler, Jordan, Anaconda and Big Hole & other needs.
- B. Our 2016 Year-end campaign to help fund our position is starting. Your generous giving, *after gifts to your congregation, have made all the difference. **We thank God and your generosity and prayers. We exceeded our budgeted goal of \$35,000, raising a little over \$39,000! We are humbled and grateful for over \$13,000 in contributions for 2017.***
- C. Kathy continues to serve: Board of Trustees of Whitworth University as universities face opportunities and enormous challenges on many fronts; one of the Yellowstone Presbytery commissioners to Synod. She trained commissioners/Delegate with Debbie Blackburn and they attended the General Assembly in June.
- D. George serves on the Board of Rocky Mountain College, member of two Board Committees.
- E. We meet quarterly with the other Synod Execs, a gathering which must assume significantly more leadership and importance as the Synod has voted to move to reduced function.

Personal Items to Report: Daughter Gillian and husband Peter have returned to Bozeman. She is now a fulltime Spanish Instructor at MSU; he continues his work remotely for Chipotle.

Chip and Staci and boys, in Spokane, and our mothers are well. We thank God!