

From Vision through nFOG and to new Structure -- Compiled by Ric Tieman 11/3/2013

While preparing the Structure Task Force report to prepare you to vote on the proposed Standing Rules, I realized that some of you will be new to the Presbytery and others may have lost the strand that connects the last five years together, as I have and so I needed to re-read where we have come from, what we have tried, considered, rejected, and revised, and help you understand just how we got to November of 2013.

This is a pasted together summary of snippets gleaned from the presbytery minutes and reports published on the website, leaving out the ideas that did not fly while trying to represent the progress of not only the Vision Team and Structure Team but also including some reports of the nFOG Team. (Some references below will be to the past BOO, but the concepts still are valid)

-rt

*** → 2008 -- Vision Team meeting August 2008**

Initial Thoughts on Purposes for the Visioning Task Force

- ❖ To gain an understanding, a vision, of where God may be leading the presbytery and the churches it serves. – *To Envision*
- ❖ To position the presbytery staff and structure, mission and ministry, and financial resources to support the emerging vision. *To Position*
- ❖ To unite the Presbytery to the degree possible through the grass-roots, listening-visioning process in the pursuit of the emerging vision. *To Unite.*
- ❖ To define the center, direction, ministry, mission of the Presbytery (who we are) so that Churches may more easily identify and define themselves within Yellowstone Presbytery. *To Define.*

To be pursued in a context and era of diminishing resources and regional, national and denominational uncertainty.

*** → 2009 -- Presbytery November 2009**

09-79.1 – Presbytery moved to adopt the following Yellowstone Presbytery Vision Statement:

Yellowstone Presbytery – guided and sustained by Scripture, the Holy Spirit, and prayer – is a community rooted in the love of Jesus Christ.

We will

Gather Together for God’s glory and spiritual synergy.

Equip and Encourage disciple-making congregations and leaders for living the Gospel ... intentionally becoming more like Christ; ably sharing our faith; impacting our communities; worshipping in loving response to God; and mutually supporting and training leaders.

Go Out to join Christ in Christ’s mission in our communities, Montana, and the world ... embodying and sharing God’s Good News; loving and serving, as we are commanded, in our words, actions, and relationships

*** → 2010 -- Presbytery 22 February 2010**

Presenting a New Draft Structure

Presbytery 101-Understanding Presbytery

Premise 1: The Church is the Creation of, the Servant of, the Body of, the Beloved in Jesus Christ for the purposes of displaying the loving reign of God in the world.

Matt. 16: “...on this rock I will build my Church.”

Eph. 2:10: “God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works.”

I Cor. 12 and Rom. 12: The connected Body of Christ – all necessary.

Rom. 5:8: “But the proof of God’s amazing love is this... Christ died for us.”

Premise 2: The Presbytery is Body of Christ made up of the PCUSA Churches to lovingly display the reign of God through a given region.

Traditionally, we are connectional for the purposes of:

Governance

Training and Equipping / Nurturing

Mission Together

Networking together

Worshipping

The Responsibilities and Powers of Presbytery, from Presbyterian Polity for Church Officers, by Joan S. Gray and Joyce C. Tucker

- Mission [G-11.0103a,b,c] – Council, Vision Team, Mission Committee
 - Develop strategy/vision for our region
 - Link and Coordinate efforts of the churches
 - Lead programs to carry out the ministry of the larger church
 - in our area
- Duties to Congregations [G-11.0103f,g] – Committee on Ministry
 - Provide help, guidance and resources
 - Provide regular pastoral visits
- Powers in regard to Congregations [G-11.0103h,i,j,k,x,y] – CoM
 - Organize New Churches
 - Divide, dismiss, and dissolve churches
 - Control location of churches
 - Oversee pastorless churches
 - Review minutes of sessions
 - Act on requests for exemptions regarding real property
- Powers in Regard to Ministers [G-11.0103 n,o,p] – CoM
 - Ordain, receive, dismiss, install remove and discipline
 - ministers / similar Commissioned Lay Pastors (CLP's)
 - Establish and dissolve pastoral relationships
 - Designate other than pastoral ministries
- Candidates [G-11.0103 l,m,q] – Vocations Committee / CoPM
 - Receive Candidates for Ministry
 - Elect readers of Ordination Exams
 - Receive Candidates for professional service other than
 - ministry of the Word.
- Inclusiveness [G—11.0103 d,e,] – Committee on Representation
 - Show inclusiveness in its structures
 - Help churches to be inclusive
- Judicial Powers [g-11.0103 r, s] Permanent Judicial Commissions;
 - Investigative Commissions
 - Serve as the Court of the Church
 - Exercise original jurisdiction
- Administration [G-11.0103v,w]—Council and Committees, Staff
 - Establish a Nominating committee
 - Establish and oversee the work of its agencies, committees, and
 - commissions –
- Relating to Higher Governing Bodies [G-11.0103t] – Council /
 - Presbytery
 - Elect commissioners
 - See that orders are carried out
 - Propose matters of common concern
 - Vote on amendments to the constitution.

- ❖ Adjectives to describe the current system...
 - Governing / uniformity of practice
 - Stable/ Stationary
 - Worship, etc. is front-led
 - Hierarchical / permission-giving
 - Processed-Based
 - Predictable / comfortable
 - Teaching
 - Presbytery-focused

- ❖ Moving towards new adjectives:
 - Releasing for ministry
 - Discipleship / missional
 - Participatory
 - A flattened , more accessible structure
 - People/Community based
 - Reasonable Risk/ Faith Generating
 - Broader ways of Resourcing
 - Church Focused

- ❖ Structure Includes
 - Open Groups: Gathering, Encouraging and
 - Equipping, Sending... Reflecting and processing Discipleship
 - Participatory to your interest
 - Idea-generating / access-giving.
 - Relationship / team-building
 - Listening places – Person to person; church to church; leaders and commissioners; all for the voice of God. II Chronicles 20... Who might the Holy Spirit be falling upon?
 - Draw structure as of now, suggested for 2010...

- ❖ Structure for Transition year of 2011...

Maintains

 - Mandated committees.
 - Functioning Council
 - Current Staffing for additional “anding” (allusion to Tinker Toy example)

But the life of the presbytery is shifting toward the Three Action Groups...

 - Vision Statement-powered
 - “Open membership”
 - Prayerfully elected leadership team in each.
 - Discipleship of the participants
 - Prayer and sharing
 - Actions which...

- “And” - Network
- Are listening and participatory
- Resource
- Inspire
- Team – build between leaders and churches.

*** → 2011 Presbytery Meeting February 2011**

11-009 – Vision Team – Ric presented the presbytery’s Vision Statement which was approved by the presbytery in November of 2009. He then talked of the four strands of implementation of the statement (Practices, Relationships and Partnerships, Process and finally Structure). The current focus for implementation is Practices such as Dwelling in the Word.

*** → 2012 Presbytery Meeting March 2012**

nFOG Task Force Report: DRAFT OF ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL

Yellowstone Presbytery (Our Life Together as a Council)

- I. Who We Are
- II. Our Vision
- III. Our Operating Principles
 - Practices
 - Relationships and Partnerships
 - Processes
 - Structure (org. chart and community/committee duties)
- IV. Our Rules for the Conduct of Our Work (Standing Rules, Planning Calendar)
- V. Our Policies and Guidelines that Direct and Support our Work
 - Personnel Policy
 - Sexual Misconduct Policy
 - COM Guidelines (possibly a separate document but referenced here)
 - Planning Calendar
- VI. Our Resources

Balance Sheet (updated annually)

VII. Other

- Designated/Restricted Funds Descriptions
- Budget (updated each year)

- Westminster Spires
- St. Timothy's Chapel
- Covenants and Partnerships
 - Rocky Mountain College
 - Christus Collegium
 - Glacier Presbytery
- Articles of Incorporation
- Annual Corporate Filing Papers
- Insurance Coverage

Introduction of the FOUR STRANDS

Fulfilling the Presbytery Vision Statement:

Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Don't assume that you know it all. Run to God! Run from evil! Your body will glow with health, your very bones will vibrate with life! Honor God with everything you own; give him the first and the best. Your barns will burst, your wine vats will brim over. But don't, dear friend, resent God's discipline; don't sulk under his loving correction. It's the child he loves that God corrects; a father's delight is behind all this. Proverbs 3:5-6 (The Message)

Guiding Principles for Vision Team as we draft a plan to fulfill the Vision Statement:

- ❖ Practices
- ❖ Relationships & Partnerships
- ❖ Process
- ❖ Structure
 - Scripture, prayer, guided by the Holy Spirit
 - Rapid cultural change requires ongoing adaption
 - Fulfill Vision Statement
 - Disciple making
 - Dynamic Healthy Congregations
 - Join God in God's vision; trusting in God
 - Connectivity, churches, leaders, commissioners, dreams
 - Representative interactive grass roots
 - Creativity — Artistry balanced with
 - Tradition — Constancy
 - Grounded in Constitution (Books of Order & Confessions)
- Presbytery is all of US

- Every Member
- Every Church and affiliated organization
- Encouraging a culture of innovation
- Financially Responsible as we walk by faith.

In order to live the vision that we have embraced, the presbytery will observe the following **practices** as core to our life together.

1. DWELLING IN THE WORD at all committees, teams, and Presbytery meetings
2. PRAYER is a core practice in all our gatherings and our life together between meetings, including:

Practices: Tuning Hearts, Minds, and Lives to Discern, Discover, and Embody Christ's Mission Together

Worship at Presbytery meeting with intercession for 2-4 Churches Voluntary prayer times

Monthly conference call prayer meetings

Call to presbytery wide prayer as appropriate

Prayer calendar for churches, pastors & leaders

3. Fasting — individually and as a body
4. WORSHIP, including sacraments, is a central component of our gathering as a Presbytery.
5. CARING FOR AND CONNECTING WITH THE CHRIST IN ONE ANOTHER - Informal and small group times at every presbytery meeting
6. ON GOING, MUTUAL DISCIPLESHIP OF PASTORS AND LEADERS
7. THREE FOCUS GROUPS AT PRESBYTERY (Gathering, Equip and Encourage, Sending Out) – Ongoing study, exploration, dreaming, discerning the mind of Christ together
8. DOING MISSION TOGETHER i.e. before Presbytery partnering with our congregation there, other Spirit-directed efforts within our bounds or outside, partnering with others

*** 2012 → Presbytery Meeting November 2012**

Relationships / Partnerships: The Presbytery is Us

Therefore, as Gods people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Bear with each other . . . Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect Unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Col 3:12-15 (NRSV)

- One in Christ
- Encourage . . .
 - Efforts in connectivity — “Tinker Toy ‘Anding’”
 - Mutual Discipleship Groups of Pastors / Lay Leaders
 - Collaboration and partnerships in mission, equipping, . . .
 - Between those with passion for particular mission
 - Church to church
 - Networks
 - Individuals to individuals
 - With other presbyteries / judicatories / denominations
 - • Mutual resourcing from within and outside Presbytery
 - Church to church
 - Leader to leader
 - Networks
 - • Informal conversations including those whom we may differ
 - • Prayer for each other
 - Publish a prayer calendar
 - Prayer meeting in congregations.
 - Presbytery wide prayer conference call

Process: Journeying Together

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart . . .
 Jeremiah 29: 11-13 (NRSV)

- Presbytery
 - Pursue practices and relationships and structure
 - Distill and communicate this four streams process toward fulfillment: Practices, relationships and partnerships, structure, and process
 - As we follow Christ, fulfill the Vision
- Council provides visionary leadership for presbytery, maintaining focus and ongoing equipping
 - Keeps the Vision Statement in front of Presbytery so Presbytery can be the spiritual, missional, leadership body
 - Listens to God’s Spirit through the voice of the Presbytery
 - Carries out responsibilities as framed by Standing Rules
 - Model mutual discipleship
- Council helps committees and ministry teams

- Prioritize mandated and emerging ministries
- Prayerfully evaluate effectiveness
- Add, combine, discontinue committees as appropriate
- Encourages connectivity for Presbytery life and ministry to all levels of Presbytery
- Church—Session — Leader focused and equipped for their mission/discipleship in Christ
 - Communication of Presbytery vision to encourage congregation vision
 - Letter & questionnaire for sessions
 - E-Newsletter with stories, equipping for discipleship, and fostering connectivity.
 - Blog on discipleship
 - This point Intentionally left blank for your ideas
- Connecting and communicating through the uses of technology

*** → Presbytery Meeting February 2013**

Rationale for a Strategic Vision-serving Restructuring of the Presbytery:

1. The presbytery has adopted a new vision statement for our mission and ministry in our shifting culture. A new structure is needed to provide a vehicle for ministry and mission in today's realities. We do not believe that the current structure serves the vision adequately. Our committee model is outdated, and too many committees need too many people to fill them. The structure needs simplification at the least and a radical reframing to fit the new vision at the most.
2. The PC (USA) has recently adopted a new constitution which encourages new forms of structure for fresh creativity and more autonomy in each church and presbytery context. Drafting new structures is encouraged by the larger Church.
3. The Presbytery has already begun to alter its practices, its relationships and partnerships and its processes to support the Vision. Now it is time to carefully, strategically and creatively address a new structure, while seeking to preserve the best of our traditions and practices.
4. The current structure is no longer financially sustainable. In 2012 we projected a deficit of \$26,000; in 2013 we expect a deficit of over \$40,000. And in 2014, of about \$80,000. The reasons:
 - 1) A decrease in per capita to the Presbytery as populations and memberships shrink in many counties of Montana; partnership funds from the PCUSA which were \$75,000 in 2004 have been decreasing steadily and will be -\$0- in 2014.
 - 2) Creative structuring and creative funding is needed.
 - 3) Money follows vision, mission and ministry, and people.

5. The Presbytery is all of us. Every leader and member in every church. The Holy Spirit desires to strengthen, speak to and work through every one of us. Ideas, new ministries, new mission can come through any one of us at any time. A new structure is needed to provide for a freer flow and initiation of ministry and to equip and empower more of our Montana Presbyterians.
6. Specifically, we hope to implement a new structure which will:
 1. Grant greater freedom, flexibility & responsibility for decision-making and mission initiation to the local churches and to gatherings of local churches, leaders and members in the regions of the presbytery.
 2. Increase connectional relationships and partnerships – building community - between churches and leaders in the churches in each region.
 3. Increase the interest and participation of lay and clergy and particularly of younger Presbyterians in our churches.
 4. Increase the opportunities for the disciple-making and mission-pursuing in our local congregations and in groups of congregations, per our Vision Statement
 5. Be financially sustainable in common sense and faith.

February 20,2013 Version 5

*** → 2009 -- Presbytery June 2013**

13-041 – Vision Structure Task Force Report – George reviewed the process that the Task Force had used to date. Dan Holland reported that under the current structure the presbytery will run out of money on October 20, 2016. Debbie presented the proposed changes to the Leadership Cabinet and noted that these had been approved by the Leadership Cabinet. George shared some additional thoughts on the rationale for change. Comments from the members were received and recorded. It was pointed out that the Nominating Committee would need assistance in finding the skills necessary for filling the Leadership Cabinet positions.

, Presbytery voted to set aside the Standing Rules so that committee members, whose terms had been extended to June 30, 2013, could continue to serve until December 31, 2013.