

**Report of the Transition Team
Stated Meeting of Presbytery
January 27, 2009**

Re: The Strategic Plan of the New York City Presbytery
Fostering Relationships in our Life Together

Peace and Grace to you all!

After two and a half years of working with the approved strategic plan of the Presbytery*, hearing the concerns and questions of members of this presbytery, visiting with members from over 50% of our congregations, and amending the document to incorporate the ideas and suggestions we have heard, the Transition Team is fulfilling its charge to create an implementation of the plan.

At this meeting, the Transition Team will present the rationale with a power point slide show outlining the proposed motion below. We hope to answer your questions and concerns at the Presbytery meeting.

Our motion follows:

In response to the Strategic Plan passed by the Presbytery and our call to mission in Jesus Christ, the Transition Team recommends that the presbytery:

- Change the work of the Presbytery from the current ministry councils (Council on Congregational Ministry and Nurture, Council on Administrative and Support Services, Council on Witness to Society and the World) to the seven mission-focused areas specified in the Strategic Plan and according to the merging of current work with the Plan.
- Create a manual of operations (in accordance with G-9.0405) to celebrate mission, encourage flexibility, foster relationships, be revisited every five years, and replace the Standing Rules.
- Appoint through the General Council, a task force to coordinate the final rollout process and write said manual of operations to take effect no later than September 2009.
- Recognizing that some administrative functions cannot change due to the requirements of the Book of Order and New York State law, keep the essence of the work of these administrative entities but simplify their structure and encourage them to further their missional focus.
- Dismiss the Transition Team with thanks.

The current Transition Team

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* The strategic plan of New York City was originally approved at the May 2006 stated meeting.

The Presbytery of New York City:
Embodying God's Love
Proclaiming God's Word
Promoting God's Justice
Growing in Faith and Size, Seeking the Welfare of the City.

* * *

Our Mission, as the Presbytery of New York City, is to embody God's gracious love in Jesus Christ through our ministries, our congregations, our partnerships, our service and witness, and our common life together. As a manifestation of Christ's body, we proclaim God's Word and promote God's justice to all persons and in all places public and private, throughout New York City, striving to grow in faith and size so that all may hear and experience the Good News of Jesus Christ.

In fulfilling this mission, we are called to:

- Discern and develop the most faithful strategies for the mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in New York and lead their implementation.
- Guide, support, and supervise our sessions, inquirers and candidates for ordination, Commissioned Lay Pastors, Certified Christian Educators and Ministers of Word and Sacrament in accomplishing effective ministry.
- Witness to the fullness of God's kingdom by living in community with one another as diverse peoples unified in and through Jesus Christ, striving always to increase both the diversity of our membership and the strength of our community.
- Identify, resist, and contend with both church and secular powers that separate, divide, or demean peoples.
- Foster respect, cooperation and care in our ecumenical and interfaith relationships, honoring differences, and striving for and joining in common cause wherever possible.
- Cultivate creative and responsible stewardship of the human and financial resources for ministry entrusted to the Presbyterian Church (USA) in New York City, and seek new models and methods that help ensure the most faithful witness to Christ across the city.
- Seek the welfare of New York City in every way—including economic, education, and social—giving counsel and aid in time of crisis or transition, and giving voice to the Reformed Tradition's commitment to ministry in the public sphere and for the public good.

NEW YORK CITY PRESBYTERY

Vision Statement

The Presbytery of New York City:

Embodying God's Love

Proclaiming God's Word

Promoting God's Justice

Growing in Faith and Size, Seeking the Welfare of the City.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, our Mission as the Presbytery of New York City is to embody God's gracious love in Jesus Christ through our ministries, our congregations, our partnerships, our service and witness, and our common life together. As a manifestation of Christ's body, we proclaim God's Word and promote God's justice throughout New York City and around the world, striving to grow in faith and size so that all may hear and experience the Good News of Jesus Christ.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Fostering Relationships in our Life Together

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To Be Determined

1. What We're Doing

In 2003 the Presbytery of New York City began writing a new mission statement. There was energy and enthusiasm... and doubt and distrust, all present in the members and congregations of the Presbytery. The mission statement took a year to complete. General Council took on the next step with enthusiasm, designing strategy for putting the mission and the vision in place. The workgroup, consisting of 2004-2006 Council members, an additional invitee from each council and committee, and a few others to 'round out' the group, met from May through December of 2005.

Any strategy is made real by those who convey it and those who carry it out, and by the opportunities and challenges present in the system itself and in the surrounding culture. In the Presbyterian system, and particularly in The Presbytery of New York City, many voices work together to speak and act together. The goals presented here challenge us to do that.

This strategy paper takes a major new turn: it challenges the congregations to a 'self-assessment', (see 'Strengthening Congregations' and Addendum II) to discern and define where they are in their congregational life so that the larger body of the Presbytery, working collegially, can join in applying human resources and assistance where they are most needed and in the ways that are most helpful. If we are able to do this, it will begin a bold new way of working together and a faithful attempt at following our own rules: to apply resources to promising points of ministry.

2. Whose We Are

At the beginning of his letter to the people of Corinth Paul asked the question: "Whom do you serve? Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas... or Christ?" In this Presbytery we all seek to serve Christ, but the face of Christ seems to appear differently to each of us, and often we do not stop to learn how it appears to others. The urgency of bringing the message, the urgency of evangelism, the urgency of justice, and the prevailing urgency of witness in a city full of need often inhibits us from stopping to perceive how others see Christ. But if we are truly to represent the Reformed witness to and in the most diverse city in the world, listening to each other must form the central nourishing energy of what we do together. For listening leads to understanding, and understanding leads to wisdom, and wisdom leads to faithfulness and faithfulness leads to a greater possibility of moving Christ's Kingdom forward. *"Let us bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. So, then, whenever we have an opportunity let us work for the good of all, and especially for the family of faith". (Galatians 6: 2, 10).*

3. Where We Are

New York City

New York City: A city of over eight million souls who come from around the world and across the United States. Some people live amidst cascades of wealth while others struggle for daily survival. There are towering opportunities, and there are very real structures of limitation. The ministries of the Presbytery of New York City occur within this city of hope and struggle . . . within a nation torn between competing trends of generosity, expanding systems of injustice, heartwarming active compassion, and self-interest in idolatrous proportions . . . and within an international context marked by increasing networks of relationship and tragic inequality and violence on an epic scale.

The power of the Holy Spirit, the redemptive passions of the human heart, and the political realities of choice available to us mean that a great potential hovers over all that we dream in our ministry, and amidst all that we can hope to achieve.

The Presbytery

The Presbytery of New York City includes approximately 110 congregations and worshipping communities spread across the five boroughs. This community is nearly as diverse as the city itself. Its diversity includes race, nationality, gender, wealth, poverty, politics, sexual orientation, culture, education, and place of birth. However, individual congregations are relatively homogenous, making it difficult to celebrate the gifts of the spirit in a single setting or way. We find ourselves called to Christian love for people of many different persuasions in the hope that our common ministry will transform, refresh, and fulfill the world's deepest hopes. This call is both exhilarating and daunting.

(1) Challenges

Over the last fifty years the presbytery has declined in membership from more than 55,000 to less than 18,000 while the number of congregations has remained constant. Our median congregation is unusually small. Leadership is often strained and tired. Lively, growing congregations evoke respect and provide valued leadership, but also experience envy. In many places, problems grow old and fester unresolved. We are called to new patterns, new kinds of leadership, and new approaches to stewardship.

Our buildings are in various states of age, repair, and use. Many small churches lack enough income from pledges to sustain ministry and maintain their facilities. When congregations rent space, their tenants may or may not enhance the mission of the congregation. Sometimes tenants thrive despite the congregation's decline. With real estate at a premium, congregations themselves and the entire Presbytery struggle with questions of use, subsidy, and even sale of property. Most congregations rely solely upon their annual income though some have endowments and find that the responsible use of that income for mission creates additional challenges. The Presbytery itself has an investment portfolio in excess of twenty million dollars and a carefully monitored policy determining the rate of its use.

(2) Needs

The needs of the churches and the people in this Presbytery are many, sometimes in competition with each other.

The Presbytery needs:

1. Leadership that understands that our diverse membership has differing understandings of spiritual renewal, education, stewardship, and leadership.
2. A recognition that renewal will probably take different forms in different places.
3. A way of connecting the spirit present in congregational life with the resources of the gathered Presbytery
4. A theology of stewardship that looks to the future with hope.
5. Ministries that focus on attracting youth, young adults, and young families to our churches.

We believe that our congregations need:

1. Clear, appropriate opportunities for spiritual renewal, education, leadership development

2. New paradigms of church life to supplement and sometimes replace “familial” patterns of interaction in small congregations that offer satisfaction and real support, but which make it difficult for new people to feel at home.
3. Ways to discuss social issues and make mission commitments
4. Assistance in times of crisis and transition; creating and implementing a vision for Renewal
5. Understanding of values and resources of the Reformed tradition and polity

(3) Opportunities

This plan celebrates new opportunities and resources. Some of them are:

1. We have new staff leadership with high level of ability and respect
2. We can now use information technology to ease communication and share helpful, exciting information quickly and easily
3. We have learned to welcome a variety of initiatives, not necessarily needing participation of everyone or to be “large scale”.
4. Churches that have already successfully gone through major changes leading to renewal or radical change have experiences which can help others.
5. A number of clergy and members are interested in growth in the faith and willing to commit time to this priority.

4. WHAT GOD IS CALLING US TO DO

A. Spiritual Renewal

Goal: To embody God’s gracious love in Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, through our ministries, our congregations, our partnership, our service and witness, and our common life together, “living in community with one another as diverse peoples unified in and through Jesus Christ, striving always to increase both the diversity of our membership and the strength of our community” (from the Mission/Vision Statement)

To act as a body that is a witness to and for the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God

To participate in what God is calling us to be and to do in recognition of whose we are

Action Steps

1. Hospitality

- a. Presbytery
 1. Create an atmosphere of welcome at Presbytery meetings
 - a. Offer ways for new elders and ministers to become acquainted with PNYC
 - b. Encourage all at Presbytery meetings to greet one another

- c. Rotate Presbytery leaders and members to greet at the doors before meetings
2. Worship
- a. Create opportunities for clergy/elders to lead in worship
 - b. Invite churches to participate in a Presbytery-wide choir to sing once a year at the September Presbytery meeting
 - c. Encourage all members of Presbytery to be present and to participate in worship

Responsibility: General Council, all members of Presbytery

- b. Congregational Life
 - 1. Offer opportunities for church members to share their faith journeys
 - 2. Encourage the practice of hospitality in congregational life
 - 3. Encourage new member classes
 - 4. Identify resources that support spiritual renewal in churches

Responsibility: CMN, church Sessions and congregations

2. *Generosity of spirit*

- a. Establish a climate that respects the work and worship of Presbytery and all other meetings, so that the Spirit of the Living God is at the center and the dignity of the meeting is maintained
- b. Care for one another during meetings, especially at times of debate and disagreement
- c. Put aside side conversations, cell phones, and other distractions so that we all might be fully present in our time together
- d. Hear others in and through prayer and worship

Responsibility: All members of Presbytery and church Sessions and congregations

3. *Responsibility of/for self and community*

- a. Take time to listen to others' perspectives, thoughts, and concerns
- b. Reflect God's presence in our lives by offering respect toward one another especially in and through our words, language choice, tone and attitude, using special care during times of debate and disagreement.
- c. Treat each other as we would have others treat us.
- d. Be open to the Spirit of God enabling each of us to think, feel, act, and respond in new ways

Responsibility: All members of Presbytery and church Sessions and congregations

4. *Prayer*

- a. Encourage the Presbytery and its entities and churches to engage in various styles of prayer
 - 1. Encourage church boards and congregations to pray for one another and for others both in the Presbytery and beyond

2. Engage one another in prayer, as individuals and in our common life, and celebrate our diversity through the practice of prayer
- b. Provide opportunities for open corporate and/or individual prayer before Presbytery meetings
- c. Be open to prayer during meetings (of Presbytery, Presbytery entities, Sessions and congregations)
 1. Remind all members that prayer is never "out of order" during the meeting
 2. Allow time for silent prayer during meetings
- d. Include a prayer and a scripture for meditation in the call packet for preparation of the Presbytery meeting

Responsibility: General Council, all members of Presbytery and church Sessions and congregations

5. *Community Building*

- a. Create on-going opportunities for building community and fellowship within the Presbytery
- b. Facilitate pulpit/choir exchanges and congregational interaction and partnerships
- c. Facilitate Presbytery attendance at ordination/installations through attention to scheduling and adequate advance notice
- d. Develop and implement opportunities for fun and fellowship in the Presbytery, e.g. encourage wider participation in the softball league; create other team activities, picnics, Presbytery-wide dance, concert, or other gatherings

Responsibility: General Council, CMN, COM, members of Presbytery, church Sessions and congregations

6. *Reflection*

- a. Practice the presence of God in listening and hearing, sharing and openness

Responsibility: Everyone

- b. Create ongoing opportunities for spiritual growth through shared theological reflection
 1. Establish "open conversations" on theological, ethical, or denominational issues of common concern on mornings prior to Presbytery meetings that begin at midday
 2. Provide opportunities for congregations to host theological reflections/conversations, opening the way for more people to be involved
- c. Invite speakers to Presbytery meetings for common reflection and growth
- d. Encourage and engage in common Bible study and prayer at Presbytery and congregational levels
- e. Offer common liturgies for use by congregations and at Presbytery meetings
- f. Offer resources for occasions of worship, out of the diversity of the Presbytery, for use during worship at Presbytery and congregational gatherings

Responsibility: General Council, church Sessions

Note for Spiritual Renewal: Presbytery bears a larger responsibility/commitment to churches without pastoral leadership. Direction and guidance can be found under the leadership development piece.

B. Strengthen Congregations

Goal: “Discern and develop the most faithful strategies for the mission of the PCUSA in New York City and lead their implementation.” (Mission/Vision Statement). Give practical assistance and support to congregations for discerning, articulating, embracing, and expanding their mission for Christ in New York City in the 21st century.

Action Steps:

1. Conduct comprehensive mission survey for neighborhoods that seem particularly conducive to new church development or congregational re-development.
 - a. Survey to be completed within 12 months of strategic plan’s adoption.
 - b. Survey to be parallel effort (not sequential) to following action steps.
2. Expand membership of CM&N and assign the following action steps as its priorities for the next 3-5 years.
3. Develop a comprehensive self-assessment tool for helping congregations determine what their needs and strengths are in conducting their ministry.²
4. Develop a resource network from within the Presbytery to consult with congregations on various aspects of ministry (worship, evangelism, funds development, mission/vision discernment, strategic planning, etc.).
5. Recruit and train 12-15 facilitators to assist with self-assessments.
6. Recruit a pilot group of 12-15 Sessions to participate in the initial program.
 - a. Sessions, working with facilitator, complete self-assessments.
 - b. Session representatives (pastor & clerk participation required) meet as a cohort in retreat setting for shared evaluation.
 - c. Organize and implement comprehensive program of follow-up and follow-through to help congregations address identified needs.
 - d. One year into follow-up/follow-through process, conduct thorough evaluation with all participants.
7. Assuming pilot experience is successful, open process up to Presbytery
 - a. Recruit additional participants for resource network to handle increased need.
 - b. Publicize “success stories” from pilot group widely (Presbytery Day, meetings, website, newsletter, solicit re-development awards, etc.)
 - c. Replicate process across Presbytery by inviting any congregation to participate.
 - d. With at least one year’s advance notice, require process as part of mission review, as part of applying for funding from Presbytery, and as part of making property decisions.
8. Within three years of completing mission survey, identify pilot congregations willing to embrace alternative models of congregational ministry.

- a. “Parish partnership” – this would involve a cluster of congregations served by an ordained pastor and a group of commissioned lay pastors that would collaborate through shared mission and ministry.
 - b. “Entrepreneurial ministry” - this would involve one or more congregations who would sell their property, invest the proceeds in an endowment, and draw funds from that endowment each year to support its mission and ministry (space rental, personnel, administration, program, benevolences, etc.)
 - c. Other models appropriate to urban 21st century context
 - d. Details on these and other models to be developed by CM&N.
9. Encourage “linkage” among congregations of difference as a means of learning and sharing experiences that would lower the barriers of mistrust and distance and encourage openness, mutual sharing, and networking as partners in ministry.

Responsibility: Congregational Ministry & Nurture (Expanded)

For Pilot Project: Task Force made up of CMN, COM,

CWSW, BOT, CASS

C. Nourish Leadership

Goal: “To guide, support, and supervise our sessions, inquirers, and candidates for ordination, Commissioned Lay Pastors, Certified Christian Educators, and Ministers of Word and Sacrament in accomplishing effective ministry.” (Mission/Vision Statement) To create and maintain a more informed, cooperative, and flexible leadership that will help to strengthen congregations, expand public witness, build spiritual strength, restore commitment to connectionalism, and increase transparency and trust across the Presbytery

Action Steps:

1. Lay Pastors

- a. Offer opportunities for continued education in scripture, Reformed theology, polity, stewardship, strategies for change, and cultural context.
- b. Create ongoing mentoring, coaching groups, and support programs for lay pastors
- c. With mentoring and supervision, commission lay pastors to serve congregations.

Responsibility: Committee on Preparation for Lay Ministry (CPLM), COM

2. Leadership Development and Training

- a. Offer more opportunities for leadership development for clergy, elders, deacons, trustees, and laity in scripture, Reformed theology, polity, stewardship, strategies for change, and cultural context.

Responsibility: CM&N, CPLM, and Congregations

- b. Provide training for Moderators and Chairs of all Entities.

Responsibility: General Council, Executive Presbyter, Stated Clerk

3. Commissioners to Presbytery

- a. Provide orientation for new commissioners to Presbytery.

Responsibility: Moderator and Stated Clerk

- b. Encourage all commissioners to report to their Sessions.

Responsibility: Commissioners [cf. G-10.0102p(01)]

- c. Continue commissioner workshops as part of leadership development events.

Responsibility: CM&N

4. Clerks of Session

Build leadership development for Clerks of Session

Responsibility: Stated Clerk

5. Clergy

- a. Provide an orientation and welcome packet for new ministers to Presbytery.
- b. Build an ongoing collegium for pastors dedicated to relaxation, reflection, education, spiritual renewal, leadership development and sharing.
- c. Encourage continuing education and community building opportunities for pastors.
- d. Develop a Presbytery-wide strategy for recommending parish associates where they can be most useful.
- e. Identify and address the challenges of bringing pastors to congregations in the Presbytery, with particular concern for racial-ethnic congregations.
- f. Promote adequate compensation and benefits for all pastors.
- g. Encourage the re-institution of the Synod-wide COM/CPM workshop
- h. Train moderators of sessions in churches without pastors in ways to support church renewal
- i. Encourage the use of sabbaticals and investigate funding opportunities to assist congregations during such time.

Responsibility: COM

- j. Increase awareness for COM, CPM, and CDC in particular issues for receiving ministers from other denominations.

Responsibility: Executive Presbyter

6. Candidates

- a. Explore greater use of our candidates in mentored situations in congregations

Responsibility: CPM and COM

D. Make a Public Witness

Goal: “Identify, resist, and contend with both church and secular powers that separate, exclude, or dehumanize people.” (Mission/Vision Statement). For the Presbytery and all its congregations to be engaged in mission, caring for the people of the city, the nation and the world and working to change structures of injustice at home and abroad.

Action Steps:

1. Give priority attention over a period of two years to one critical social justice issue through an education/action campaign throughout the Presbytery: provide materials and programs, including borough-based or for other smaller groupings.

Responsibility: CWSW

2. Develop and publicize justice networks to link congregations and individuals working on particular issues.

Responsibility: CWSW in consultation with CM&N

3. Develop and implement a comprehensive media/PR plan: press releases, interview-positioning, etc. This would include media training for key spokespeople (EP, the Stated Clerk, the Moderator, etc.) and briefings for local media who need to know who we are, what we do, why we do it.

Responsibility: CWSW/General Council/Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk

4. Communicate outreach opportunities using the PNYC web site, in the newsletter, in classes before Presbytery meetings, in Presbytery Day workshops.

Responsibility: CWSW, with other entities as appropriate.

E. Stewardship

Goal: “To cultivate creative and responsible stewardship of the human and financial resources for ministry entrusted to the Presbytery of New York City, and to seek new models and methods that help ensure the most faithful witness to Christ across the city.” (Mission/Vision Statement) To embody biblical values in our use of resources of wealth and property, placing mission before comfort, familiarity, and prestige.

Action Steps:

1. Regularly explore our Presbyterian understanding of the collective nature of our resources and our connectional relationship in human and financial terms.
2. Strengthen congregations’ stewardship by training their leaders in ways to maximize giving potential, hold regular stewardship campaigns, use annual budgets, and monitor giving. Encourage use of Church Financial Campaign Services.
3. Help congregations understand and utilize their physical facilities as resources for mission rather than objects of it.
4. Direct presbytery resources to sites of clear mission potential
5. Recruit from among the constituencies of Presbytery and related agencies and institutions, professional personnel willing to contribute service on a pro bono basis to congregations
6. Develop and implement grantmaking and fundraising strategies to support mission within the Presbytery of New York City and beyond, following training from appropriate professional organizations.
7. Encourage linkage options between diverse congregations
8. Explore the creation of a Presbytery Development Corporation to facilitate, guide, and support congregations which are exploring different building options, and to function as the primary corporate entity to broker funding and construction.
9. Align Presbytery budget with its vision and strategic plans.
10. Revisit current policy on mission funding/financing from Presbytery portfolio, to determine its adequacy for budgeting to meet the challenges of this new vision.

Responsibility: CASS, Board of Trustees, CMN, Property Manager

F. Communication

Goal: To build up the community of Jesus Christ among Presbyterians in New York City, sharing information more broadly to help increase participation, openness, transparency, and trust in the continuing life of the Presbytery.

Action Steps:

I. The Presbytery commits to the strategic use of technology to communicate and share information throughout its life and work.

- a. Restructure the Presbytery website to make it more user-friendly and more informative. Keep the site up to date with current information. Update the site regularly.
- b. Evaluate and upgrade if necessary the systems and processes used to maintain the presbytery's address list to encourage timely updates, allow for future expansion, and centralize multiple directories. Such system should allow for a connected public online directory of churches (including links to congregations' websites) and a private online directory of churches, clergy, commissions, committees, councils and boards.
- c. Integrate paper and electronic mailing lists so that members can choose to receive call packets and other communications electronically or on paper.
- d. Establish an ongoing confirmation system to confirm receipt of announcements and other mail, both electronically and on paper.
- e. Publish a weekly or biweekly electronic newsletter to feature the latest information about upcoming events, ensuring that every congregation and worshiping community has at least one subscriber.
- f. Maintain a consistent format and style among all communications (print, electronic, etc.) so that Presbytery information is easily identifiable.
- g. Explore the use of a secured online system for sharing sensitive or confidential items with committees and presbyters.
- h. Investigate "phone tree" structures to communicate upcoming meetings with and to committee members by moderators.
- i. Send to each member church, at the end of each year, a Presbytery annual report to be included in the Report for the Annual Meeting of the congregation.
- j. Use the Presbytery's website to feature the latest information about what is happening among, and for, Presbyterians in New York City.
- k. Work with congregations who do not have access to a computer to acquire a computer so that they can receive necessary information in a timely manner and make information available to others in the congregation.
- l. Place the Presbytery's master calendar of events online. (See Standing Rule V.A.12. for existing policy.)

Responsibility: CASS

- m. Communication strategies to those outside the Presbytery are found at “Make a Public Witness,” action steps #3-4.

II. The Presbytery commits to other communication practices that build community.

- a. Establish roundtables for theological and spiritual reflection and conversation (see “Spiritual Renewal,” actions steps #2-3).
- b. Include all fellowships and developing congregations in Presbytery-wide mailings and events for congregations.
- c. Include a workshop on speaking across boundaries and other similar communication topics at Presbytery Day.
- d. Encourage clergy in various areas of the city to gather at least twice each year to build relationships and discuss opportunities for mutual ministry.
- e. Investigate conducting a “presbytery annual meeting” with written summary reports from each committee, council, and entity of the past year’s achievements and the coming year’s goals.
- f. Commend the model of the Bronx Churches to other areas of the Presbytery to build relationships and share information.

Responsibility: General Council

Implementation: While CASS and General Council have specific duties toward this goal, all entities, congregations, and members of Presbytery should expect some changes in their working life as appropriate systems are implemented.

G. Youth in the Church

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” *Mark 10:14*

The Presbyterian Church has set forth five intentions of Youth ministry.

To call young people to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

To respond to the needs and the interests of young people.

To work together, youth and adults, in partnership.

To be connected to the whole church, community, and the world.

To include all young people, reaching out and inviting them to belong to the community of faith.

(from <http://www.pcusa.org/youthministry/pyc.htm>)

All ages of children and youth are as much the church as anyone. For the purpose of this document generally youth are under 18.

Goal: To embody Christ's spirit toward youth by creating opportunities at Presbytery and in congregations to introduce youth to Jesus, nurture their spiritual growth and foster their faith formation in order to prepare them for service to God and society.

Action Steps:

I. Presbytery

- A. Implement, as applicable within the context of the Presbytery, the Five Intentions of Presbyterian Youth Ministry.
- B. Continue to support and encourage congregational participation in the Youth Triennium, and explore other annual trips for leadership development and mission.
- C. Develop opportunities for Presbytery wide worship services led and planned by youth.
- D. Support and enable multi-church children and youth activities planned by youth and adult facilitators.
- E. Encourage congregations without children or youth to become mentors / build relationship with children and youth.
- F. Assist congregations to engage children and youth in ministry through staff resources, training for teachers and youth leaders, regularly updating the Resource Center and resourcing Vacation Bible School curriculums in ways that are appropriate to the various contexts of the presbytery, i.e. urban ministry, justice concerns, etc.
- G. Encourage youth and young adult participation at Presbytery meetings. Explore means to establish Youth Advisory Delegates to Presbytery meetings.
- H. Explore new models of including youth and young adults in leadership roles throughout the presbytery and its entities, such as shorter terms, special representation, and/or advisory positions.
- I. Celebrate and highlight youth ministry accomplishments throughout the life of the Presbytery, such as Midpoint and Website.
- J. Continue supporting Camp and Conference ministries for children and youth.
- K. Create network to share ideas and resources for Christian Education among congregations that may share similar needs, challenges, and resources, enabling them to find resources for racial/ethnic, urban, multicultural, and multigenerational settings.

Responsibility: CM&N

2. Congregations

- A. Implement, as applicable within the context of the congregation's community, the Five Intentions of Presbyterian Youth Ministry.
- B. In congregations without children and youth, reach out to community groups to determine the needs for children and youth in the community that can be met by the church.

- C. Explore new approaches to Confirmation Classes and Christian Education.
- D. Encourage youth leaders to support and participate in Presbytery sponsored youth meetings and activities.
- E. Partner with nearby Presbyterian Churches in children and youth ministry events, such as confirmation classes and worship.
- F. Seek participation in worship by children and youth and participation and input by youth in worship committee meetings.
- G. Encourage children, youth and young adults in their spiritual life and in leadership to discern their calling as Deacons, Elders, and Ministers of Word and Sacrament.
- H. Explore ways to include youth in listening processes and congregational leadership so that they may become more integrated into the full life of congregations.
- I. Provide space for youth to create programs for youth in the context of adult partnership/shared ministry as mentioned above.

Responsibility: Church sessions, congregations, CM&N