



The Grapevine

CONNECTING THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF DETROIT

November 2011

Month of Mission:

What God is Doing Through PCUSA Mission and How We Can Help



by the Rev. Dr. Allen D. Timm, Executive Presbyter

Once again thanks go out to Elder Fran Anderson and her workgroup for the Month of Mission. This year's Month of Mission was the 31st such occurrence. It is a month when any session which asks, may have a mission speaker at an event. The 35 plus events also included Presbytery Assembly where we heard Frank Dimmock speak about mission in Lesotho, South Africa, and the Rev. Jane Holslag at The Presbyterian Women of Detroit gathering at Second Mile Center share her work in Lithuania.

At the Month of Mission breakfast, we heard the following reports:

- Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado talked about their ministry along the USA border with Mexico. Their ministry of comfort provides water for immigrants, and in cities they teach families how to garden so they can grow their own food. In Mexico, they are working to share faith in Christ and to start new churches.
- Dorothy Gartrell and the Rev. Gordon Gartrell talked about their mission work in Brazil, recounting experiences they have had in small and large churches. Their work in evangelism starts with the children. Their VBS program attracted 110 neighborhood children, and work with dental, medical, and nutrition showed their relevance to the families. They assist with sharing faith, and starting new churches.
- Kristi Rice came from Congo without her husband, because he is ill with malaria, one of the costs of being a mission co-worker. She said that their work in ending hunger and providing jobs helps people see their faith is real, and they join Bible studies. One member of a Bible study asked for prayer for her

neighbor, so the group went and prayed. Observing the outdoor prayer service, another neighbor asked, "Will you pray for me, too?" Evangelism at work.

- Roger Marriott is a mission co-worker in the remote sections of Guatemala. During the last ten years he has partnered with the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Guatemala. His call is to help farmers to plan their crops and learn how to run their farms as a business so they can provide food for their families. He serves as a witness to Christ's love and justice.
- Jim McGill talked about his work in Malawi with the Synod of Livingstonia. He shares the living water of Jesus Christ as he helps villages find water in a country where only 3% of households have running water, and 25% do not have access to safe water.
- Sharon Curry started as a Volunteer in Mission in Ethiopia, and now is about to start as a mission co-worker in South Sudan. Her work in evangelism starts with organizing the church, and through the church the entire village, to set community goals.

Two speakers represented the General Assembly's Office of Missions,

- After spending 10 years in Africa, Dr. Michael Parker has coordinated international evangelism projects. He asked that what he said not be put in newsletters because mission co-workers he described are finding ways to enter countries that have been closed to missions for many years, and their work is sensitive. God is opening doors for the good news to be shared. In one prison where a chaplain was allowed, 50 women were baptized after hearing the good news of Jesus Christ.
- Bruce Whearty, a former mission co-worker in the South Pacific and Ethiopia, answered questions you might ask about missions. Why does the church do mission? Because mission to the church is as fire is to burning. It is the essence of the church. Why should we go into the

world? Jesus modeled going beyond borders, and he sent his disciples into the world to make disciples. Why should we pay \$83,000 per co-worker? Because their meager salaries are supplemented by the cost of housing and travel, along with the support in the General Assembly Office. Why should we support Presbyterian Mission when there are plenty of good agencies doing mission? Because God has called us to mission and there still is plenty of need to show the world Christ's saving grace.

Three themes spoke to me as I heard these mission co-workers tell their story.

- Each shared their passion for evangelism and new church development.
- Each showed how their love and justice ministries led to opportunities to witness to the love of Jesus Christ. Telling the story led to small group Bible studies and new church plants.
- Each was grateful that the Presbytery of Detroit supports their work and invited them to tell their story.
- Stories pointed to how prayer relationships with local congregations made such a difference in their work.

Thank you, Presbytery of Detroit, for supporting this effort. It helps us to know we are part of a larger picture that God is doing in the world. This month of mission shows love in a tangible ways to the people who are sacrificing much to share the gospel. (Continued on pg 2)

Thank you for your support to Shared Mission of the Presbytery of Detroit, because your giving contributes to this world wide effort.

Bruce Whearty invited each congregation in the presbytery to contact him to see how they can stand with and support a mission co-worker. It can be done through shared mission. It can be done through email. If you are interested, contact Bruce at Bruce.Whearty@pcusa.org. Or call him toll-free at 800-728-7228, ext 5057. Ask how to make a Mission Connection!

Detroit Presbytery Mission Co-Worker Support

Church	2010	2011, Jan 1—Sep 30
Bloomfield Hills—Kirk in the Hills	Second Mile Fund (A General Assembly Fund)	
Dearborn—First	WM program Darlene & Paul Heller—Malawi (left service)	World Mission program
Dearborn Heights—St. Andrew's	Anne Dayanandan—India	Anne Dayanandan--India
Detroit—Southwest United	Second Mile Fund	Second Mile Fund World Mission program
Garden City	Dave & Sue Thomas—Mexico (leaving service—2012)	
Howell—First	World Mission Personnel	World Mission Personnel
Livonia—St. Timothy	Mike & Nancy Haninger—Congo (left service)	Bob & Kristi Rice--Congo
Port Huron—First	World Mission program	World Mission Personnel
Rochester Hills—University	Susie Frerichs—Mexico (leaving service, 2011)	
Royal Oak—First	Mark Hare—Haiti Debbie Blane—South Sudan	Mark Hare—Haiti
St. Clair Shores--Heritage	Barbara & Larry Moir--Ethiopia	Barbara & Larry Moir--Ethiopia
Troy--Northminster	Aliamma & Jacob George—South Sudan	Aliamma & Jacob George—South Sudan
Ann Arbor—First		Second Mile Fund Gary Payton—Russia
Ann Arbor—Westminster		Gwen & John Haspels--Ethiopia
Southfield—Filipino NCD		Cobbie Palm--Philippines
Waterford Community		Second Mile Fund

Clergy Ordination Anniversaries

MARIANNE GRANO 5
CATHARINE McCLOSKEY-TURNER 30

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THE PARISH PAPER

IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

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Should We Unleash the Power of Congregational Planning?

A traveler on an October flight to Chicago was seated by a little boy who was obviously traveling alone. The little boy seemed nervous, so the traveler tried to engage him in conversation: "Do you know what you want to be when you grow up?"

"No," the boy replied. "I don't even know what I'm going to be for Halloween!"

That level of planning is not a big liability for little boys, but it is for most organizations. What allowed Walmart to replace Sears in retail market share? Why did Southwest Airlines steadily increase market share at the expense of American, Delta, and United? It seems that in older companies the leaders tend to drift into the future while focused on what worked in the past.

Does that kind of drifting-mentality happen in congregations? In most churches, the answer is yes. Like corporations, congregations do not *consciously* resist planning. Their failure to plan more often rests on the assumption that they are *already doing* sufficient planning. "Isn't that what we're doing at all these meetings of committees and governing boards?" one pastor asked.

But all of those meetings throughout the year sometimes blind church leaders to the fact that they are not watching the congregation's overall, big-picture direction. Thus, the church easily begins acting like an ocean liner in which the engine room is in perfect running order and the galley puts out excellent meals—while the ship sails confidently toward abrupt connection with a rocky coast ten miles ahead.

After a church decides that drifting into the future is inappropriate behavior for an organization that God has called to serve the people in its surrounding community for decades to come, its leaders must understand the value of an effective planning process.

Why Do Congregational Planning?

Several centuries ago Niccolo Machiavelli warned us in his book, *The Prince*, that "There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things."

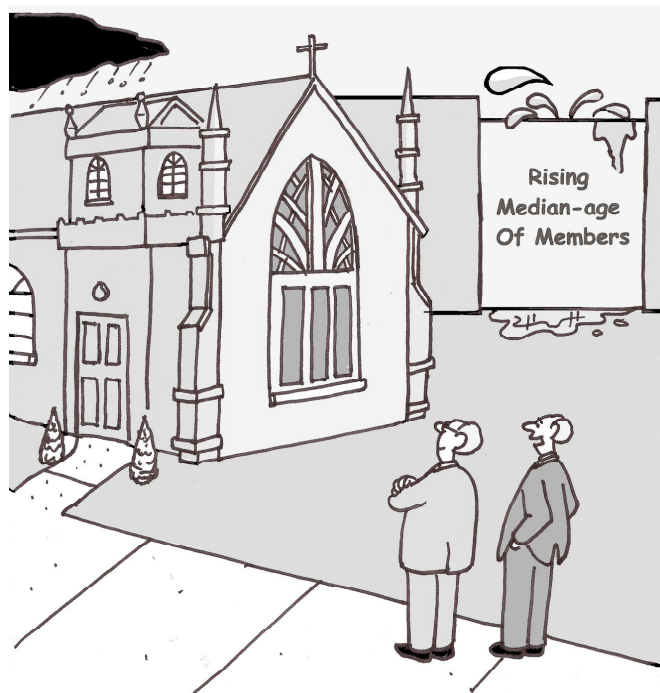
Why, then, should a church bother with planning? Without continuously fine-tuning its overall focus and ministries, a church can (a) feel satisfied with itself and (b) experience long-term failure in its health and vitality.

1. Planning keeps a church connected with the needs of people in its surrounding community and culture. The Moravian Book Shop, founded in 1745 by a congregation in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, is the oldest bookstore in the nation. Why did that church establish a book store? Because at that point in history, in that community and that culture, making books available to people was a significant ministry.

Does every church need a book store? Not necessarily. But every church needs to frequently and systematically involve its attendees in asking, "In our community, on this page in history, what can we do to help the largest possible number of people enrich their lives by loving God and loving their neighbors?"

2. Planning keeps the older age groups in touch with the thinking and needs of younger adults, their teenagers, and their children. F. Scott Fitzgerald said, "At eighteen our convictions are hills from which we look; at forty-five they are caves in which we hide."

Planning keeps generational viewpoints connected in ways that produce new insights, so that their church has great years in its future, not just in its past.



"The church has been here for 76 years. I don't think we need to be concerned about its future."

3. Planning helps us to respect what other people want, not just what we want. The thinking and aspirations of every church member are driven by “what I want most for myself and my congregation.”

When influential church members get frozen in the trajectory of what they want, they often lose the ability to hear what others want. The communication produced by an effective planning process helps unfreeze the perspectives of well-meaning people who, without realizing it, are building failure into their church’s DNA.

4. Planning helps us to reduce and prevent the pain of congregational conflict. Historical facts—such as ten-year worship-attendance trends and Sunday school attendance trends—are important to a church’s future. Such statistical facts tend to surface during an effective planning process. And the *feelings* that people have regarding those *facts* are equally important.

When parishioners have an opportunity to communicate their strongly held feelings in non-threatening circumstances, (a) wounds often heal, or are prevented, and (b) churches often find solutions to complex problems.

5. Planning helps us to overcome our inclination to retreat to what worked in the past, so common during times of anxiety and stress. People who grew up along the Mississippi River know that, during times of duress, the only direction a crawfish will move is backward. When a church experiences the stress of changing times, changing pastors, changing finances, or changing circumstances, the temptation to retreat to what worked in past years—rather than figuring out what works in the present—often exerts a strong pull. An effective planning process can prevent that often-fatal reflex.

6. Planning helps us to overcome the church-killing idolatry to sameness. Examine the sleeve of a man’s coat and you find two buttons, and sometimes three, or maybe four. Why? Custom put them there—and kept them there. We are told that in the monasteries of centuries past, the monks wore long robes that made eating their soup difficult—so they sewed buttons on their sleeves to keep them out of the soup.

Churches tend to retain all kinds of buttons from decades past, and their members are loath to remove those vestiges of what served a vital purpose in years past—once-valuable traditions that are no longer meaningful to most of their people. [J. Wallace Hamilton, *Still The Trumpet Sounds* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1970), p. 171]

A good planning process helps a church to trim non-productive buttons with fewer painful repercussions. By doing effective planning, we can claim that middle ground between destructive idolatry to sameness and frenetic idolatry to every new theory.

7. Planning helps us keep our congregation’s crucial ministries in balance. Five behaviors marked effectiveness in the ancient church: *Kerygma* (proclamation of the Gospel); *Koinonia* (community/fellowship); *Diaconia* (compassionate service); *Didache* (teaching the Christian

faith); and *Leiturgia* (worship/communal prayer). Effective planning strengthens achievement in all five of those behaviors—protecting a congregation from leaving out one or more ministries crucial to its future.

8. Planning generates hope. John Steinbeck eloquently wrote, “Hope implies a change from the present bad situation to a future better one. The slave hopes for freedom, the weary man for rest, and the hungry food. And the feeders of hope, economic and religious, have from these simple strivings of dissatisfaction managed to create a world picture which is very hard to escape.” [John Steinbeck and Edward F. Ricketts, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* (New York: The Viking Press, 1941), p. 72]

Hope is not a church’s only important ingredient, but without hope, fear and anxiety drain church batteries of productive energy. An effective planning process provides hope for journeying into the future.

9. Planning helps keep Christ central. A hospital visitor saw these words on an inhalation therapist’s tee shirt: “Breathing is life. Everything else is details.” In churches, as in all other aspects of life, some matters are central; others are peripheral. When their people confuse central matters with peripherals, a congregation’s magnetic pull and life-giving power decreases.

10. Planning drags our future into the present so we can influence its quality before it happens. Long-range thinking tends to improve our short-term decision-making.

We take the first step toward higher achievement in ministries when we concentrate on our most result-producing priorities. An effective planning process helps us to identify those priorities.

There is never enough time to do everything, but there is always enough time to do the essential things. An effective planning process helps us to identify those essentials.

The Bottom Line

One way to summarize the purpose of church planning is by quoting an American Indian proverb about the environment: “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our grandchildren.”

We do not merely inherit a congregation from our grandparents; we borrow it from our grandchildren. The big question: What strengths will our congregation have when we return to our grandchildren what we have borrowed? An effective planning process answers that question in a positive way.*

*From the “Free Resources” section of the www.TheParishPaper.com Web site, download two options for congregational planning—plus several dozen optional how-to church-effectiveness resources that committees and ministry teams can use to voyage with confidence into the future.

Presbytery of Detroit Calendar of Events

To have your Churches event posted please send the information to sandy@detroitpresbytery.org.

November 2011	
22	Presbytery Meeting at Royal Oak, First, 529 Hendrie Blvd., Royal Oak 48067; 248-541-0108
24	Presbytery Office Closed Thanksgiving
24	Detroit, Westminster 29th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner 11:00 am - 4:00 pm. Click here for flyer
24	Detroit, St. John's <i>Giving Thanks, Giving Back</i> Thanksgiving Day Dinner 11:30 am - 4:00 pm. Click here for flyer
December 2011	
6	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
6	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
9	Statistics link open for input.
9	Canton, Geneva presents the Capital City Ringers in concert 7:00 pm at the church 5835 N. Sheldon Road, Canton, Michigan 48188. Click here for more information
10	Men's Advent Communion Breakfast at Livonia, St. Paul's, 27475 Five Mile Rd., Livonia 48154. Keynote speaker is Lloyd Carr, retired head coach, U of M Football Team. Click here for flyer
10	Farmington, First Holiday Concert 7:00 pm at the church 26165 Farmington Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48334. Click here for more information
23-Jan 2	Presbytery Office Closed for Christmas and New Year Holiday
January 2012	
3	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
3	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
6	Presbytery's books close at 5:00 pm please make sure the 2011 Per Capita and Shared Mission are submitted
16	Presbytery Office Closed in observance of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday
24	Presbytery Meeting at Mt. Clemens, First, 168 Cass Ave., Mt Clemens, MI 48043; 586-465-0461. Installation of the Moderator & Vice Moderator
26-28	Calvin Symposium on Worship at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI. Click here for more information or contact Bob Szwed, Chair of Congregational Life Ministry Team at bszwed@yahoo.com
February 2012	
7	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
7	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
18	Leadership Training Day with Gil Rendle at Dearborn, The First, 600 N. Brady, Dearborn, MI 48124
22	Deadline for Statistical Reports input.
28	Presbytery Meeting at Detroit, Fort Street, 631 W. Fort St., Detroit, MI 48226; 313-961-4533
March 2012	
6	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
6	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
10	Presbyterian Women's Annual Retreat "Tenders of the Flame" at Orchard Lake Community 5171 Commerce Rd, Orchard Lake, MI 48324. Click here for more information
11	Daylight Saving Time begins- set clocks ahead one hour
21-24	ETS hosts 2nd Annual Women in Leadership Conference. Click here for more information
April 2012	
3	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
3	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
17	Retirees, Spouses, and Survivors Luncheon at Westland Presbyterian Village at noon with Ernesto Badillo our Board of Pensions representative
24	Presbytery Meeting at Redford, St. James, 25350 W. Six Mile Rd., Redford, MI 48240; 313-534-7730

May 2012	
1	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
1	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
28	Presbytery Office Closed in observance of Memorial Day
June 2012	
5	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
5	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
26	Presbytery Meeting at Novi, Faith Community, 44400 W. Ten Mile Rd., Novi, MI 48375; 248-349-2345
27-July 8	Summer Youth Institute at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Apply at www.pts.edu/syi
30-July 7	General Assembly meets in Pittsburgh, PA
July 2012	
3	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
3	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
4	Presbytery Office closed in observance of Independence Day
August 2012	
7	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
7	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
27	Presbytery Meeting at Livonia, Rosedale Gardens, 9601 Hubbard Ave., Livonia, MI 48150; 734-422-0494
September 2012	
3	Presbytery Office closed in observance of Labor day
4	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
4	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
October 2012	
2	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
2	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
23	Presbytery Meeting at Allen Park, 7101 Park ave., Allen Park, MI 48101; 313-383-0100
27	Month of Mission Breakfast
November 2012	
4	Daylight Savings Time Ends - set clocks back one hour
6	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
6	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
22	Presbytery Office closed for Thanksgiving Day
22	Detroit, Westminster 30th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner 11:00 am - 4:00 pm
27	Presbytery Meeting location TBD
December 2012	
4	Taizé Worship 7:00 pm at Dearborn, Littlefield
4	Healing Service 6:00 p.m. at South Lyon, First
24-25	Presbytery Office Closed for Christmas Holiday
31-Jan1	Presbytery Office Closed for New Year Holiday
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