



# The Grapevine

CONNECTING THE CONGREGATIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF DETROIT

January 2014

## The State of the Presbytery



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

As I look back at 2013, I see much for which to be thankful. I can only highlight some of the things that happened.

The fact that General Assembly is coming to Detroit became real last year. The Committee on Local Arrangements, chaired by the Rev. Peter Smith, and Vice Chaired by the Rev. Dr. Sue Ellis Melrose, recruited the committee chairs and members. There is much to be done, and these committees are now making plans for greeting commissioners at the airport and hotels, planning Assembly worship, planning Sunday morning worship in congregations, and providing tours for Assembly guests and family members which will show the breadth of the city of Detroit. In July, an Executive Coordinator was hired, Elder Diane Agnew, a member of Grosse Pointe Memorial Church. I am grateful for all the work of the leaders and members of this effort. COBO Hall renovations are progressing nicely to show off Detroit and the River. This opportunity to serve as a Presbytery shows how much the Presbytery has to offer.

Early in the year the Leadership Training Day highlighted congregations that are growing in worship and/or vitality. The Rev. Dr.

Richard Brownlee visited the pastors and asked them a series of questions. Each church had a different story, but the common denominator was a desire to show Christ to the surrounding community. Once they decided to change course and serve in different ways, they began new ministries to reach people they were not serving at the time.

Later in the year a different group of pastors were asked to share stories about how they engaged their elders in the work of ministry. These pastors brought elders who shared their excitement about ministry. This desire of congregations to find new ministry and life was augmented by a study of congregations called "Holy Conversations." Fourteen congregations participated in conversations to answer three questions posed by Gil Rendle: Who are we? What is our Purpose? And Who is Our Neighbor? The aim of the study is to evaluate whether the mission of a congregation is following God's call to serve the members and the community.

As we think about congregations serving their community, the Presbytery also showed commitments to the community. Elder Raul Echevarria is leading the effort to begin a new church in Southwest Detroit. The Rev. Dr. Clint Cozier, an experienced New Church Developer, is looking to start a new church that will serve those who frequent Howell Conference and Nature Center, which is the Presbytery's conference center.

Many outside groups and individuals attend weekend experiences, company team building meetings, and school education events. That is the base they hope to serve. Both of these new church developers are making inroads into the community to see how a church can make an impact. Building on what was learned from previous efforts, they hope to succeed.

Other things to highlight are the work of strong teams and committees. They continue to do their work, supporting the mission of the Presbytery to strengthen congregations to be missional, pastoral, and prophetic. The new Multi-cultural Ministry Team led a workshop for congregations on the Belhar Confession, led by the Rev. Jaco Bester, a mission partner from South Africa. They also led an event focused on reconciliation in the metropolitan area. The Men's Fellowship and the Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Detroit continue to serve the community and enjoy gatherings for support. During the summer the Presbyterian Youth Connection took almost 100 youth to the General Assembly's Youth Triennium. Additionally, they hosted a Youth Mission Blast and many mission opportunities, such as Martin Luther King Day of service and remembrance. It is a joy to see youth from city and suburb learn and grow together. Another growing aspect of the Presbytery is the richness that diverse leadership provides.

Continued on Page 2

Continued from Page 1

The Committee on Nominations was able to increase representation by our Korean brothers and sisters. While we were sad to lose Fran Anderson, a Tribute Fund was set up to receive donations which will provide the money to complete the wells in Kenya, and to support mission co-workers. Before the year's end, the first installment was wired to Kenya.

I also have some concerns.

Last year we were over \$40,000 short in per capita and once again the Shared Mission budget decreased. Some revenues were put towards hosting General Assembly instead of per capita and Shared Mission. Some churches think they only owe what members give. So we are down in revenues. The good news is that churches want to be a part of hosting the General Assembly. Additionally, the Trustees are compensating for the deficit by allocating revenues from the Presbytery's Capital Fund to the Operating Fund.

The Presbytery continues to suffer membership decline. In the last ten years, the presbytery lost almost 9,000 members, down from 36,000 to 27,000. Why is this happening? As I visit congregations, I see some of our congregations only meeting their own needs instead of turning outwards to show the love of Christ. I continue to believe what Gil Rendle says: the call of the church is to show the world the love of Christ. Rendle is direct when he asks, "Who is your client?" Is the client the church member or the mission field? We are called to grow as disciples, and that includes care for our members and vital worship that opens us to experience the living God. But as the Methodists say, we are called to make disciples who will change the world. Our purpose is, as Jesus said, to put our light on a hill and show it so that people around us will see our good works and give glory to our God who is in heaven.

So I look to help our teams and committees to help congregations show Christ to the world, so that we may join Christ in building the Kingdom. I look to help congregations

grow through workshops and Holy Conversations that help congregations discover new mission. Christ calls us to be countercultural. He longs for the church to reflect its community in diversity and gifts. I believe that God calls us to lift those who are hungry physically and spiritually.

There are congregations that are growing in vitality. They heard God call them to ask who is not there whom God wants them to serve. They look for what breaks the heart of God and they make a plan to reach those folks. My prayer is that passion will grow in our churches, ruling and teaching elders together, to reach the lost sheep in our community. My hope is that the Presbytery will put the needed resources to help the congregations that are ready to reach out. My dream is that congregations will reach out and ask for help.

Thanks be to God for the work that we have been given to accomplish! Thanks be to God that God has not finished with us yet, but has much more to accomplish through the body of Christ!

### Clergy Ordination Anniversaries

ALLEN, ROBERT	10
HANNA, RAAFAT	35
POLKOWSKI, WILLIAM	35

#### The Parish Paper

Our organization's purchase of photocopy rights for The Parish Paper INCLUDES

1. Permission to provide copies to our staff and the congregations within our constituency in any of the following ways: E-mail, Postal, newspaper, newsletter, meetings, training events, and our Website.
2. Permission for each congregation within our constituency to (a) photocopy or electronically distribute for local use as many copies as it needs, (b) post them on its Website, and (c) quote sentences and paragraphs.

**Your congregation does NOT have permission** (a) to delete the copyright notice on page 2; (b) to re-write, paraphrase, or change the wording of sentences and paragraphs; or (c) to give ANY THIRD PARTY—other than your staff and constituents—permission to photocopy or reprint (in any quantity, no matter how small, whether for free distribution or for sale).

#### Presbytery of Detroit

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
17575 Hubbell Ave, Detroit, MI 48235  
313-345-6550  
313-345-7250 (fax)  
Info@detroitpresbytery.org  
http://www.presbyteryofdetroit.org  
http://www.synodofthecovenant.org  
http://www.pcusa.org

#### Staff

*Executive Presbyter*  
The Rev. Dr. Allen D. Timm, ext. 203  
*Stated Clerk*  
The Rev. Edward H. Koster, ext. 201  
*Director of Outdoor Ministries*  
Richard Grant, 517-546-0249  
*Resource Center Director*  
Joanne Higgins, ext. 215  
*Hunger Action Coordinator*  
Artheillia Thompson, ext. 207  
*Executive Assistant*  
Beverly Knox, ext. 204  
*Office Manager*  
Sandra K. Jensen, ext. 220

#### Accounting Manager

Bev Auger, ext. 209  
*Office & Bookkeeping Clerk*  
Rhonda Barley, ext. 200

#### Consultants

*Hands-on Mission*  
Mary Lloyd, 313-247-0792  
*Transformation of Congregations*  
The Rev. Estelle Aaron, 216-280-1338  
*Youth Hands-on Mission*  
Charon Barconey, 313-770-5822  
*Interfaith Ministries*  
The Rev. Wm Gepford, 313-933-4086

# THE PARISH PAPER

## IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FOR ACTIVE CONGREGATIONS

Coeditors: Herb Miller and Cynthia Woolever - [www.TheParishPaper.com](http://www.TheParishPaper.com)

January 2014 - Volume 22, Number 1

Copyright © 2014 by Cynthia Woolever

### Big Ministry Trends for 2014

In his book about underdog strategies, Malcolm Gladwell recounts the biblical story of David and Goliath as a metaphor for the unexpected advantage. He gives examples of what he calls “the David opportunities,” those “occasions in which difficulties, paradoxically, turn out to be desirable.”<sup>1</sup> He claims that there is unexpected freedom that comes when people believe they have nothing to lose. He writes:

You see the giant and the shepherd in the Valley of Elah and your eye is drawn to the man with the sword and shield and the glittering armor. But so much of what is beautiful and valuable in the world comes from the shepherd, who has more strength and purpose than we ever imagine.

People of faith know that challenges for the church, in the long run, have always made it stronger.

#### David and the Church Face Goliath

For five decades, large-scale shifts in the economy, public values and beliefs, and social institutions have rocked the landscape for congregations and their leaders. What are the most significant trends calling leaders to creatively rethink what it takes to declare the gospel today?

**Missing generations in congregations.** Worshipers are older on average than the U.S. population. This age gap shows signs of increasing over time—up from an average worshiper age of 51 in 2001 to a projected average worshiper age of over 60 by 2020. The statistics reflect another ministry-altering age profile—the declining participation of worshipers under 45 years of age. Further, less than half of worshipers today have children still living at home.<sup>2</sup> Fewer congregations in the future will draw worshipers from all four generations (those with birthdates earlier than 1946; the Baby Boomers with birthdates of 1946 to 1964; Generation X born in the early 1960s to early 1980s; and the Millennials born after 1980).

**Decline in weekly attendance.** Fewer worshipers report attending worship services weekly. Instead, over the course of an average month, the percentage of worshipers attending all four weekend services dropped 2–5 percent compared to only a decade ago.

**Growing numbers of unaffiliated adults.** About one in five adults in the United States do not identify with any religion. The percentages are even higher among young adults under the age of 30. In fact, 30 percent report no religious affiliation. Over the past five years, the number of unaffiliated American adults soared to 33 million.<sup>3</sup>

**Increasing diversity among members.** The racial-ethnic makeup of congregations appears to be moving in a direction that reflects the diversity of the general population. As recently as 1998, almost three out of four congregations were predominately non-Hispanic, white churches (80 percent or more of the participants were white). That percentage dropped to 57 percent of congregations attracting more than 80 percent non-Hispanic whites by 2012. In addition, the latest study reveals that 44 percent of congregations have some African American families participating.<sup>4</sup>

**Greater concentration of worshipers in large churches.** The average congregation has fewer than one hundred people participating in worship or



BIVOCATIONAL MINISTRY WAS  
A GOOD FIT FOR PASTOR BOB.

other activities. Yet the typical worshiper attends a large church. The largest 10 percent of congregations draw more than half of all worshipers. Although this is a long-term trend, evidence suggests that the concentration of worshipers is rising.

**More small churches.** Other factors, in addition to the trends already mentioned, contributed to the surge in small churches. Many denominations planted churches fifty, seventy-five, or one hundred years ago in growing population areas. Those same communities stopped growing decades ago and some even experienced population decline. Thus, thousands of rural and small-town churches across America are located in places with fewer and fewer people.

**Smaller budgets.** Church expenses continue to escalate while the membership and resource base shrinks. One in three congregations reports a declining financial base. Funding one or more staff positions includes providing salaries, housing allowances, health-care benefits, and retirement plans. In addition, congregations further strain their budgets through building maintenance, electricity, and heating costs. In real dollars, most congregations raise more money than ever before, but their budget demands far outpace the monies coming in through contributions, endowments, or facility rentals.

**Fewer full-time pastors serving one congregation.** Although the majority of pastors still serve one congregation as a full-time minister, already about one in six Protestant pastors are part-time clergy. A common pattern among conservative Protestant churches is the bivocational pastor—holding down a secular job *and* a ministry position. One in three conservative Protestant pastors are bivocational compared to only 6 percent of mainline pastors. Multipoint or yoked parish assignments—where one pastor serves in two or more churches—is a more common among mainline Protestant pastors. Currently more than one in ten parish assignments involve multipoint service.

**Lack of consensus about the pastor's role.** The authority for pastoral leadership is based on (a) the calling to ministry as a vocation and (b) a profession built on education, training, and capabilities. When members place greater emphasis on calling than competence, disappointment and church conflict often result.<sup>5</sup> Effective pastoral leadership requires a complex set of gifts and skills. Congregations need help articulating their primary mission, and then expressing this identity in worship, programs, and organizational structure. When members disagree about how ministry tasks should be carried out, their diverse perspectives about leadership style creates another layer of frustration and potential conflict.

**Weakening institutional support for parish ministry.** Denominational agencies—regional and national—and seminaries supply much-needed support for pastors and congregations. As the number of congregations and members decrease, the funding that congregations used to send on to support their work also dropped off. Staffing and mission program cuts, little continuing education for clergy, modest lay leadership development, and crisis management become the norm. Pastors feel it—they are expressing less satisfaction with the denominational support they receive.

**Multiplying channels of communication.** The explosion of new technology invites congregations to make use of mounting avenues for reaching out to members and the community. Finding leaders and members adept at new media use proves challenging for many congregations. Innovative technology use raises new questions about appropriate boundaries and ethical issues as congregations seek to share an ageless message.

### Look for the Desirable in the Difficulty

Failure and defeat happen because well-worn strategies produce remarkably consistent results. God's work in the world depends on people of faith seeing with new eyes—the advantage or strength that is not obvious. Moving through difficulties always requires change and the willingness to let go of the past. Discuss these questions with others in the congregation.

- Looking back over the past ten years, which of these trends have had the greatest impact on our congregation's effectiveness?
- Reflecting on the congregation's future, where do you see openings for renewed creativity, strength, and purpose?
- What new strategies could we try to accomplish our ministry goals?

1. Malcolm Gladwell, *David and Goliath* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2013), Kindle edition.
2. Research drawn from Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce, *Leadership That Fits Your Church* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2012).
3. Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/10/09/non-es-on-the-rise>.
4. David Briggs, *Ahead of the Trend*, The Association of Religion Data Archives, <http://blogs.thearda.com/trend>.
5. Jackson Carroll, *As One With Authority*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011).

Title	Date	Location	Body
Presbytery Meeting - Installation of Moderator and Vice Moderator	Tue, 01/28/2014 - 4:00pm to 9:00pm	St Johns Presbyterian Church, Detroit	Presbytery Meeting - Installation of Moderator and Vice Moderator St. John's Presbyterian Church, 1961 E. Lafayette St., Detroit, MI 48207; 313-567-0213 at 4:00 pm. Dinner Reservation Required.
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 02/03/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.
February PWPD Gathering	Wed, 02/05/2014 - 9:30am to 1:30pm	First Presbyterian Church, Royal Oak	Location: First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak Lunch \$8.00 Reservations by January 31 See January Prism for other details
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 02/06/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team
Leadership Training Day	Sat, 02/08/2014 - 8:30am to 4:00pm	First Presbyterian Church, Dearborn	Leadership Training Day, Saturday, February 8, 2014 at The First Presbyterian Church, 600 N. Brady, Dearborn, MI 48124. Check-In begins at 8:30 a.m.
From Middle Passage to Global Crisis	Sat, 02/15/2014 - 8:30am to 3:00pm	First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham	Multicultural workshop From Middle Passage to Global Crisis with Dr. James Perkinson, Ph.D.
PWPD Coordinating Team	Thu, 02/20/2014 - 9:30am to 12:00pm	Presbytery of Detroit	Coordinating Team meeting for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Contact Joan Lockard to have time on the agenda.
Presbytery Meeting	Sat, 02/22/2014 - 9:00am to 1:00pm	Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church, Grosse Pte Wds	Stated Meeting of Presbytery at Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church, 19950 Mack Ave, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236; 313-886-4301 at 9:00 AM No meal at this meeting.
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 03/03/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 03/06/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team

Title	Date	Location	Body
What is Competent Leadership in a Diverse Changing World	Fri, 03/07/2014 - 7:00am to 4:00pm	First Presbyterian Church, Royal Oak	Multicultural workshop What is Competent Leadership in a Diverse Changing World with Eric H. F. Law
PWPD Women's Retreat 2014	Sat, 03/08/2014 - 8:30am to 4:00pm		SAVE THE DATE Annual PWPD Women's Retreat: Saturday, March 8th, 2014 8:30-4:00 Rosedale Gardens Presbyterian Church in Livonia Keynote Speaker: Reverend Doctor Lorolie Andrews Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30 " Tired? Worn Out? Come and be refreshed by the Spirit."
What is Competent Leadership in a Diverse Changing World	Sat, 03/08/2014 - 8:30am to 12:30pm	First Presbyterian Church, Royal Oak	Multicultural workshop What is Competent Leadership in a Diverse Changing World with Eric H. F. Law
PWPD Coordinating Team	Thu, 03/20/2014 - 9:30am to 12:00pm	Presbytery of Detroit	Coordinating Team meeting for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Contact Joan Lockard to have time on the agenda.
Pastoral Response Team Workshop	Sat, 03/22/2014 - 9:00am to 12:00pm	Westminster Presbyterian Church, Detroit	Pastoral Response Team Workshop 9:00 am - Noon in Calvin Hall at Detroit, Westminster
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 04/03/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team
Far West NCD work morning at Howell Nature Center Chapel	Sat, 04/05/2014 - 9:00am to 12:00pm	Howell Conference and Nature Center	The Far West NCD is sponsoring a work morning project at the Chapel of the Howell Conference and Nature Center on Saturday, April 5, 2014 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM followed by a picnic lunch. Please let us know if you plan on attending so we can make plans using this form: <a href="http://goo.gl/N1ZWun">http://goo.gl/N1ZWun</a>
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 04/07/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.



Title	Date	Location	Body
PWPD Coordinating Team	Thu, 04/17/2014 - 9:30am to 12:00pm	Presbytery of Detroit	Coordinating Team meeting for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Contact Joan Lockard to have time on the agenda.
Presbytery Meeting	Tue, 04/22/2014 - 4:00pm to 9:00pm	First Presbyterian Church, Brighton	Stated Meeting of Presbytery at First Presbyterian Church, 300 E. Grand River Ave., Brighton, MI 48116; 810-227-7411 at 4:00 PM. Dinner Reservation Required.
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 05/01/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 05/05/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.
PWPD Coordinating Team	Thu, 05/15/2014 - 9:30am to 12:00pm	Presbytery of Detroit	Coordinating Team meeting for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Contact Joan Lockard to have time on the agenda.
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 06/02/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 06/05/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team
General Assembly	Sat, 06/14/2014 (All day) to Sat, 06/21/2014 (All day)	COBO Hall	The 221st General Assembly (2014) will be held in here Detroit, Michigan - June 14 - 21 at Cobo Center.
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 08/04/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 08/07/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team
PWPD Coordinating Team	Thu, 08/21/2014 - 9:30am to 12:00pm	Presbytery of Detroit	Coordinating Team meeting for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Contact Joan Lockard to have time on the agenda.

Title	Date	Location	Body
Presbytery Meeting	Tue, 08/26/2014 - 4:00pm to 9:00pm	Lake Shore Presbyterian Church, St Clair Shore	Stated Meeting of Presbytery at Lake Shore Presbyterian Church, 27801 Jefferson8533; 4:00 PM Dinner Reservations Required.
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 09/01/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 09/04/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team
PWPD Coordinating Team	Thu, 09/18/2014 - 9:30am to 12:00pm	Presbytery of Detroit	Coordinating Team meeting for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Contact Joan Lockard to have time on the agenda.
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 10/02/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 10/06/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.
PWPD Coordinating Team	Thu, 10/16/2014 - 9:30am to 12:00pm	Presbytery of Detroit	Coordinating Team meeting for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Contact Joan Lockard to have time on the agenda.
Presbytery Meeting	Sat, 10/25/2014 - 9:00am to 1:00pm	Milford Presbyterian Church, Milford	Stated Annual Meeting of Presbytery at Milford Presbyterian Church, 238 N. Main Street, Milford, MI 48381; 248-684-2805; 9:00 AM No meal is served at this meeting.
Coordinating Cabinet Meeting	Mon, 11/03/2014 - 10:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	The Coordinating Cabinet coordinates and advises the Ministry Teams and the committees of Presbytery.
Planning and Visioning Meeting	Thu, 11/06/2014 - 9:30am to 11:00am	Presbytery of Detroit	Monthly meeting of the Planning and Visioning ministry team
PWPD Coordinating Team	Thu, 11/20/2014 - 9:30am to 12:00pm	Presbytery of Detroit	Coordinating Team meeting for Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery. Contact Joan Lockard to have time on the agenda.