Please forgive typos. My brain is on AutoCorrect…

CP = Commissioned Pastor – presbytery decides where they serve, commissioned to a particular service in that position

Sacraments

Moderate Session

Weddings

* What are training requirements? What’s missing, anything? (creating a foundation, not a full education)
  + Polity
  + Understand the sacraments and reformed worship
  + Training in reformed theology
  + Pastoral Care
    - New Covenant requires CPE for inquirers and candidates – Not for CREs
  + OT and NT
  + Christian Ed.
  + Certificate
  + Preaching
  + Psych review\* and background check
  + Leadership for racial ethnic congregations

Things missing…

* + Be explicit in the need for practical experience, with follow-up (including sermon delivery)
  + Moderating skills – working well with session(s)
  + Cont. education requirements
  + Background in basic administration
  + Have input from moderator of session AND a mentor
* How do you support them? (Mentorships)
  + Encourage relationships with presbytery office/COM – want them to be comfortable calling for help/guidance
  + Relationship with colleagues
  + Regular check-ins with them before they have to reach out for help
  + Pastoral Leaders, includes CREs – continuing education opportunities
  + Spiritual direction – introspective piece
  + Lectionary groups, workshops specific to CREs
  + Training/standards for the mentors
  + Academy between the presbyteries
  + Does every presbytery actually assign mentors to their CREs?
    - While in process
    - Longer they are around, less mentoring happens
  + How are CREs accountable?
    - COM
    - Annual report
  + How are CREs related to each other?
    - Going through academy together created a bond between them
* Common Consensus for service across presbytery lines?
  + With evaluation from individual presbytery
  + COM agreeing to share jurisdiction
* Do we references checks between Presbyteries?
  + Yes
  + More willing to look within the Synod
* Provide a list to the other Presbyteries to place calls to current CREs – beneficial?
  + The individuals are majority not serving by their choice
  + Some had intention to serve in a certain place and weren’t able to

* Training for leaders to work with small churches?
* Putting together training teams for area gathering or individual congregation
* Combined officer/leader training; annual retreat on three year rotation – pastoral with congregational leadership; presbytery wide; pastoral leaders with Christian educators
* What training? Conflict resolution; spiritual formation; mission/vision; Presbyterian 101; finance/resource evaluation; family systems theory; how small churches function; process evaluation and theology; spiritual leadership; ad hoc – who to call/consult?, support team

2. Resources for those struggling with finding pastoral leadership/creative, multipoint church

* How well do we know the context of the congregations that we serve?
* Check the MIF for what has been said

1. Sharing pulpit supply across presbytery boundaries? What’s the process and is it similar across presbyteries?

* Approval by COM
* PCUSA; preferably ordained (New Covenant); can include candidates/inquirers
* Some include policies, rates, travel distance
* Those that have completed CRE training
* Authorized to serve sacraments or not
* “No process needed”
* Need to be on a list somewhere
* Presbyteries have different guidelines for laboring in and out of bounds.

1. Comparing notes & presbytery guidelines

Cimarron: 4 churches yoked – how do we support each other? Joint officer training, other events. Might call one pastor to share – each has 1 Sunday a month with broadcast for the other three

Palo Duro: Wichita Falls with remnant after dismissal

New Covenant: one shared across presbytery lines

Pines: 4 churches with one pastor (for 10 years) – each has session, each church has worship; 3 congregations yoked – each has session, with quarterly joint meeting – everyone would go to the one church where preaching happened

South Louisiana: 2 small churches in the bayou, one with CRE – now working to have CREs to serve other congregations, too

E. OK: had 7 parishes working together, some of which have closed; 3 point parish that shared a secretary with printed bulletins for Sunday worship (might not know who is preaching, but they have a bulletin); outside of Tulsa it is a presbytery of small churches with regional councils (7-8 churches); might federate (two congregations of different denominations coming together to become one congregation); shared PW, mission, education; no one is forced from on high

Indian Nations: one congregation bought new location and built, now dwindling – possible merger with another congregation that would have two campuses under one umbrella

COME TOGETHER

Training Requirements

Tres Rios: 10 classes – OT/NT, theology (18 yrs ago), revised about 6 years ago to use the certificate programs offered through the seminaries. Relationships seem to be missing now with less interest.

Cimarron: Certificate programs from APTS/Dubuque

E OK: Certificate programs from APTS/Dubuque now, formerly had their own training program; offer scholarships for studies

Arkansas: used to have a lay academy, but it has faded away, now doing certificate programs

Grace: no process in place now, relying on certificate programs; preparation formation process with mentoring, practical applications; in recruitment phase currently

Indian Nations: certificate programs

New Covenant: certificate programs; addition of understanding of polity, spiritual direction or CPE

Pines: certificate programs

South Louisiana: certificate programs; possible addition of CPE and internship

Palo Duro: Dubuque

(Mission: hurricane preparation)

Overall: There used to be a lot of interest, but not as much now.

Need for consistency between presbyteries.

Teacher/student interchange is lacking with recorded classes

Mentorship needs proactive relationship and practical experience

More training on polity – moderating meetings, Book of Order

Is there a need for psychological evaluation?

Offering something for higher theological education

Tools for transformative ministry and hospice care for congregations

Accountability

Reference checks between presbyteries

Annual reports/review/evaluation – COM could meet with session

Continuing education requirements?

Support

Presbyteries felt that they did not do a good job supporting CREs. There were thoughts around colleague groups, study groups, and other relationships.

Possible support from synod through networking opportunities

CRE can support the work of COM by sharing information about the congregation

Relationships to COM

Member of church, not the presbytery

Voice and vote at presbytery meetings – depends on commission

Session hires and fires – commission is through presbytery, session can initiate the conversation to terminate the commission

Commissioned by the presbytery – could be at a presbytery meeting

Who has oversight?

Where is the membership of the CRE? Who serves as their pastor?

Service across Presbytery Lines

It is happening – processes are being developed

Portability would be helpful

Submit to reference checks

Demographics

What are you commissioned to?

How long?

Church size/ministry setting

Training completed

What training do you want or need? Technology; polity; what is the need for denomination? Manual of Operations

What are the barriers to training?

What are you most called on to do?

Needs/Desires

Retreat/network across the synod – survey to be sent to explore this further

Synod COM Event – Saturday

How do we avoid creating a “class” structure?

* There is already a class structure
* We have a problem understanding baptism – there are no levels
* Leadership needs to work hard to interpret for congregations – pastoral leaders regardless of role
* Ecclesiastically we separate roles – how do we equalize “classes”
* Compensation demonstrates the inequality – BOP sets it up
* Perception is not equal across the denomination
* There are hierarchies in the church – gender and other factors
* People need education about being Presbyterian

CRE benefit options – recent increases have made the cost prohibitive

* Seminary debt makes it difficult to serve in small churches where compensation is lower
* Overall cost of healthcare is expensive

What are the tasks of transitional ministry vs. interim ministry?

* Deal with grief, denominational ties, new leadership, celebrating history, preparing for the new pastor, identity and direction
* Now it is to go in and help them to make necessary changes to go in a new direction – intentional transitional ministry

What has your COM been doing to have honest conversations with congregations thinking of going to ECO?

* Gracious reconciliation and dismissal procedures
* Administrative commission can act with authority of presbytery
* Establish trustworthy
* Building relationships helps connections
* Respectful dialogue
* The more visibility from presbytery, the less they are likely to leave with reframing relationships

Is it possible to work with the seminaries about courses offered?

* Presbyteries have standards to meet
* Tim, Ruth and Lynn will contact APTS

How do we better nurture pastoral leaders – spiritual direction for CREs?

* Certified spiritual directors assist individuals along the journey
* EAP program – 6 visits per issue
* Colleagues can help

In light of nFOG, how are presbyteries restructuring COM, and why?

* “Congregational and Pastoral Care” committee (CPCC)
* 2 of 6 ministries – “Pastoral Relationships” (PRM); “Formation” works with congregations
* Better communication is needed

“Old” churches who have “old” money and are unwilling to let go

* “One bite at a time”
* “If you die with money in the bank, it goes to me” … begin to explore partnerships with presbytery and other entities

What more can the synod do to facilitate service across presbytery lines? Not just for CREs, but also for occasional supply lists, interims, etc.

Non-Presbyterians serving in Presbyterian churches